



WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



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Chairmans chat

Welcome to another edition of Windscreen, I hope you all had a good Christmas and New Year.

We have had a few functions already including a very interesting talk from Neil Cunningham (photo on front cover). Anecdotes from his life and motorsport history as well as being a stunt driver on the James Bond films and Top Gear live shows had us all on the edge of our seats.

We had our darts match with the usual suspects showing the rest of us up with their misspent youth, and last week our first table top rally of the year proving once again we need to get young Mr. Samuel into a rally car.

Next event is the AGM on 7th March .

There will be a series of nav scatters starting in April. We are going to run 4 throughout the year and it will count towards a championship, there is no need to register, if you compete you will automatically be entered and score points.

The plan is also to have a summer autotest championship which again will have 4 events to be held at Dunvant rugby club.

Happy motoring and I will see you all at the AGM.

Huw

Tatty Black and White Golf - Part one, history and development up until 2011 season

Well after lots of promises to do a write up for Windscreen here is something that may (or may not) interest you all. It's a bit of the history and development of the 'Tatty Black and White Golf' which, I would like to think by careful development, enabled us to win the 2011 Trident Engineering Welsh Hillclimb and Sprint Championship. I'll start with an outline of the cars competition history and then a summary of its development to the 2011 season specification.

The car started out its competition life as a circuit racer in the Welsh Saloon Car Championship in around 2002 with another sister car (in a matching blue and yellow chequer livery). The cars were built and campaigned by two lads from Cardiff. They then progressed on to the National LMA Eurosaloons Championship which evolved out of the old Slick 50 Road Saloons Championship. The cars seem to have been quite well known on the circuits, and seem to have been some of the few cars running from Wales. The car still gets recognised now from its circuit racing days as it still retains its original black and white chequer livery.

It's Tatty nickname is a reflection of the fact it is still in its original racing paint and stickers as due to the hard fought nature of these Championships it retains many of the battle scars [panel damage] sustained during those days. Its circuit racing days were ended when both cars were involved in a crash that resulted in them being towed off track and parked up back at their HQ. The blue car was stripped and sold off in parts and that was going to be the fate for my car, and the reason I went to see it in the first place. I actually went to buy the gearbox with Quaife diff plus a roll cage. When I got there my car was still in one piece and the cage was still installed. We discussed a price for the complete car and a deal was done. The plan was to re shell it with another shell I have here but like most plans things changed.

To be fair the guys actually delivered the car to me as someone in SMC had purchased the trailer it was on (I can't recall who now). Once in the yard I had a good look over it and established that the chassis was actually very straight and in good shape under the tatty exterior so it was drafted in to use as it was.

The engine was two events old when I purchased the car and apart from knocking a few dents out and changing a broken wheel not that much was needed. That was 2008, I did a few trackdays to see how it went and all seemed ok, it had enough speed and handling for my experience. I then Joined SMC and entered Llys y fran Hill climb to see what it was all about. Suffice to say I enjoyed, so the seed of endless debt and cold nights and weekends in the garage was sown!! Over the winter I added an MBE ECU and loom for some decent engine management (using only the ignition side for now), fitted twin 45 Dellortos, rebuilt the front Leda struts, tidied up some bits and pieces, put a set of soft A048's on and used the car for the 2009 season. We managed to do enough to win 2.0ltr Mod Prod that year but in reality we simply turned up more than anyone else in the class! Looking at the competition it was clear that the car needed some major development to be a serious competitor.

We then took 2010 off to build a more competitive car. It was decided that both the engine and chassis needed some serious attention. The engine was the first to be sorted:

The engine was totally rebuilt with new with custom Wiseco forged pistons (actually VW 16v turbo pistons decked by 2mm), the block and piston were decked to get the correct squish and achieve 13.5:1 compression. The already well developed TSR D Spec race head was sent down to JMR in Plymouth to go on the flow bench and be re-reported along with new waisted stem Stainless steel valves, a Schrick 320 degree cam was fitted to compliment the Schrick valve springs and titanium caps already fitted, a Spiess throttle body set up was sourced from a Dallara Formula 3 car and fitted and along with some SBD uprated injectors all linked up to the MBE ECU. ARP hardware through out, steel head gasket and topped off with a Spiess F3 Dry sump rocker cover, this was just to effect really as it is a bit tricky filling it with oil now, but it looked cool.

A custom alloy foam filled fuel tank was fabricated with approx 4 gallon capacity and this was designed to fit in the std position under the rear seats on the passenger side (to try and offset the weight of the driver somewhat!). On the other side a swirl pot, red top Facet lift pump and Pierburg high pressure fuel injection pump were installed. Space was designed in to take the exhaust system with some alloy sheet fabricated up to form some heat shields backed with heat reflecting material to keep the heat away from the more vulnerable (explosive!) areas.

The Ashley tubular exhaust manifold was machined out to suit the new porting at the head end and then the resulting holes plated and welded back up. A 2.5" stainless steel exhaust system was fabricated to run up the centre of the car. With all this lot installed and connected up it was off to Mosleys rolling road for Vince to set it up, initially just to get it running. 200 miles were put on it and then back to fine tune it. After some more tweaking mid season in 2011 we had 217bhp at the crank to play with, with matching torque, which is pretty good for a non crossflow 8v engine! We took the car along to the Club GTI track day at Curborough late in 2010 to give the engine a run and see how it went. The car was quick enough and was running with the 4 wheel drive turbo cars but did seem to be struggling for traction on the straights and out of corners. Whilst it had a Quaife diff fitted it should have been better than it felt. Following more discussions and further research with various people a new suspension design was decided upon to try and sort this issue out.

The engine came out again and the chassis was stripped, the rear beam and back suspension uprated with a new braced rear beam design, bespoke roll bar and beam bracing all with rose jointed fittings. A pair of alloy drop plates/spacers were machined up to regain the rear suspension geometry and increase suspension travel. Following some discussions with Gaz a deal was struck and some custom alloy bodied Gaz struts were manufactured and fitted – thanks Gaz.

We designed and fabricated some bespoke tubular wishbones and mounts for the front end, rose jointed all round. The front suspension geometry was all changed to suit the increased power and achieve more traction as well as cornering grip. The guys at Trident Engineering made up a number of items from drawings to allow the bespoke front anti roll bar to be fitted as well as to achieve the new suspension geometry settings. The track was widened by approx 50mm front and rear. Spring rates were changed again but the Leda dampers were retained. A Quaife quick rack was installed although it turned out the rack on the car was a non VW replacement and the Quaife kit will only fit a genuine VW housing. My spare MK1 was once again robbed of some of its parts and the rack refurbished and re fitted along with solid rack mounts! At the same time rose joints were fitted to the trackrods and the mounting position changed from standard to suit the new front end.

The gearbox was rebuilt and a 4.47 final drive installed. A new cable change gear shift mechanism was designed and fabricated to allow the gear lever to be re positioned inside the car and to create space under the car for the new exhaust system to clear better. The fuel and brake lines were re made and run inside the car. The ride height was reduced again and VW motorsport Grp 2 fibreglass wheel arches were fitted front and rear to cover the wheels which were now 15" x 7.5J shod with Dunlop tarmac slicks, plus the matching front valance. I then spent a day in the garage adjusting the corner weights, ride height, tracking, camber front and rear etc.

The car was completed two days before the Bank Holiday sprint at Llandow in May 2011. A half day test was booked at Llandow to check it all worked and nothing fell off. Got away from work late as normal, loaded up and off to the track. Did a few laps on std road tyres to check it was all tight, then a few quick laps to check nothing broke and it didn't throw itself off the track and then back in to the pits. Up on axle stands, wheels off and a good check over. A few items needed to be re-torqued, nothing too bad, so on with some slicks and two quick runs. It all felt ok, bit of understeer still at the end of the session, but it seemed to be carrying quite a bit of corner speed and was riding the curbs well with plenty of grip so only the times would tell.

Next time I'll do a summary of the 2011 seasons events unless you've all had enough by now.....

Tony Barber

Llys y Fran July 2011

In a year where summer sunshine was hard to come by, the 17th July hillclimb at Llys y Fran was at least dry, and we were able to give everyone the chance of 3 practice runs, along with 2 timed runs, and there was even time for a Top Ten run, before rain curtailed the fun. There was a pleasing level

of support from the REIS Insurance HSA (Hillclimb and Spring Association), 7 Oaks, Bridge Tyres and The Trident Welsh Championships.

There were strong entries in both the SP & 1B classes with a giant entry of 7 cars in Class 1B!

Visiting driver Jason Andrews from the 7Oaks club took the honours in SP, with his fellow 7Oaks member David Balderson causing some interest by running his MGF on Gas, and I don't mean he had extra beans for his breakfast, more that he was using LPG, and was quick enough to take 2nd in class, before driving the car all the way home to Orpington in Kent! James Samuel in 3rd and Graeme Proctor 5th upheld Swansea MC honours.

Class IA was a personal battle between HSA son & dad combo John & Roy Dowding with Roy coming out on top.

In a 7 strong Class 1B, Andrew Webber in his Lotus Elan took another Class winners trophy back to 7Oaks, pushing our own Neil Watkins into 2nd place. New Swansea Motor Club member, John Jenkins driving a Renault Clio Sport was on the pace on his debut, but was swamped by a horde of Mazda MX5s from the HSA.

In the Scooby-Doo battle in Class 1C, our own Andrew Meek was beaten by a very quick first run by Nigel Burke. Swansea member Nick Knight, giving his Fiat Bravo turbo its first run on the hill, also had a quick first run.

In Class 1H, Bridge Tyres & Wheels boss Mike Potter was the quickest of all the Scoobies, but was running on the different tyres allowed in the ASWMC regs, and was then set to haul himself and the car back to Taunton. It's a long trip but Mike loves our hill and feels the trip is well worthwhile.

Swansea member Ken James, who lives in Mathry, which is quite near to Llys y Fran took Class 2A Class 2B was a family affair with Dai (the Legend) Llewellyn up against his son Ben (legend in the making?) Ben has made real progress since his first event with us in May, and his best run was only .61 secs slower than Dai's class winning and FTD time.

Swansea member Martyn Ferris took Class 3A with his best time in his 2nd run

Adam Phelps of the HSA took Class 3D with a quick first run but Swansea MC member David Champion was involved in a close battle for 2nd place in the Swansea Mets Locost, with only 5/100ths covering the rest of class. A bit more homework over the winter could be in order.

In Class 4a Swanses' Kevin Cole was in a class of his own, metaphorically speaking as Alun Probert kept him company and kept him honest. Kevins' class winning time of 46.47 secs only 1/10th away from beating Dai Llewellyn to the FTD, but he was the winner of the Paul Bentley Trophy as the fastest Swansea member at the July meeting. The trophy is kindly provided by Chris Jones who is one of our regular Clerks of the Course (Paul & Chris were brothers).

Other performances of note included Huw Jones, who is now putting his scrutineer skills into practice, and the whine from the straight-cut gears on his Mini made it sound like midnight in any small town in the 1960s. Eifion Jones and Richard Hearnden contested the Classic GT class, with Eifions' Lotus Excel beating Richards' MGB GT.

There was a good local entry in Class 7 and in the Road Rally Classes Lloyd Bettinson took 7A in his Peugeot 106 with John Rossiter taking 7B for Swansea MC in his Ford Escort from Andy Lewis and his Escort mk5. On Saturday night at the local pub, Tafarn Sinc, Andy Lewis gave Tony Parker the low down on his unique 2.3 litre V6 Ford Escort Mk5. Apparently there has been some concern in road rally circles that cars should have their original drive train; ie Front wheel drive cars should not be converted to rear wheel drive, like the conversions done on some Mk3 Escorts. However the Mk5 did have a model in its range that had 4 wheel drive, so Andy has had his car made over with Ford Scorpio parts. Very ingenious!

In the Stage Rally Classes Eurig Howells was on his own in 7C but there was a massive 9 car entry in 7D! Hill specialist and St Clears slider, Graham Hollis won with a first timed run of 47.51, but Robert Tout from Ammanford in his Evo 8, ran him close with a super quick 2nd run and was only .29 behind. Local driver Jason Davies, who was close to rivalling Hollis in the sideways stakes, is the son of local legend Martin Davies, and was 3rd on his hill debut.

There was just time for a Top Ten run off with Dai Llewellyn taking it with 46.16, but Kevin Cole was only 3/10ths behind with Ben Llewellyn only another 5/10ths behind. Next up were the Class 7D lads and this time Robert Tout & Jason Davies turned the tables on Graham Hollis. Peter Barrett, Alun Probert, Tony Barber and Tim Moreton completed the runners. There was only time for one run, which all we usually do, and that was finished just as the rain, which had been forecast for earlier in the day, started.

Rob Allender

MGA ----- Sows Ear to Silk Purse -----At a price!!

Rebuild of a 1961 MG A 1600 Mk 2 Coupe



Those of you with fairly long memories will recall that I ran an MG A coupe for a few years having done various historic road events including Monte Historique, Winter Challenge and Liege Rome Liege - being a Belgian event it actually went to Venice! - the last event was the Winter Challenge in 2005 - 7th overall- and unfortunately we dropped a valve on the way back probably as a result of too much autoroute driving on a 4.5 diff.

Having been rescued by my insurers the car eventually arrived back in Swansea about three or four weeks later.

The plan was to re build the engine which was duly set in motion but then I thought I should do something about the shell, I knew it was not that good but when I stripped it down I found that there was more fibreglass than metal, beautifully done but still not metal, so I looked around for a replacement USA shell and eventually found one in Carlisle. Money changed hands and the shell came back to Swansea.

With a new, well different, shell I did not need the old one so set about removing it, the fibreglass wings came off, the bonnet boot and doors were retained, and also the roof, as the roof of the replacement was damaged and I thought that it may come in useful.

I was now left with a naked chassis which turned out to be as damaged and corroded as the shell, and after sending photos to Bob West an MG A expert from Yorkshire and several phone calls I decided that the only answer was to search for a replacement chassis, unlike the Austin Healey or TR 2,3 or 4 replacement new chassis are not available so it would have to be a good original.

After a lengthy search I eventually found one in Egham in Surrey with a firm called Moto Build and once again money changed hands and the chassis came to Swansea as well.

With both elements available I thought that the first thing to do was to get the shell blasted, repaired if necessary and primed. It took some time to find anyone who would do this but eventually I came across AWP Engineering in Narberth who agreed to do it.

Its a daunting task trying to deal with fitting an old shell and chassis together particularly when its well known that no two shells or chassis are the same, and when you remember that it helps to put the thing together straight and level and to the dimensions given in the workshop manual.

After a while I realised that I would probably not be able to make the necessary alterations myself so asked Wynne Pickersgill of AWP whether he could do it.

When I first met him he was rebuilding the ex Duez Prodrive BMW M3, and shortly after was rebuilding the ex Gabrielle Konig Viva GT for Tom Callanan and Frank Fennell to do the French Tour Auto (this car was reckoned to be the only entrant on the Tour Auto where the car was worth less than the entry fee for the event!), Wynne said he had not done any thing like this before having spent most of his time on Escorts and the like but he had done a great job on the cars I had seen there so I was quite happy to entrust the chassis and body fitting to him and his colleague Jim.

They actually made brackets for their jig to ensure that the chassis and body fitted properly.

Over the months the work progressed and eventually important decisions had to be made like what colour etc, and as my wife didn't like the original Dove Grey, she thought it was boring, we decided on BRG from the 1962 MG B. While the shell was being prepared for painting the chassis returned to Bishopston where I was able to refit all the suspension parts and the engine and transmission turning it into what could have been a driveable rolling chassis. Then off we go again to Narberth for Wynne to trial fit the shell to the chassis - this was satisfactorily carried out followed by painting and the shell was finally fitted to the chassis.

The removable parts, wings doors etc were painted separately while the car was back in Swansea for head lining, screens, wiring, dash, trim etc and, would you believe, back to Narberth for a final time for fitting of doors, bonnet and boot, and eventually back to Swansea so that I could fit all the bright work, make new door cards and generally finish the whole project off. Well, as those of you who have embarked on a similar project will know it's never really finished.

It seems odd that I can get all this into two pages when the operation started in 2005 and wasn't finished till autumn 2011.

What the hell am I going to do on my days off now????

Stuart Phillips



Tony Parker car impounded by police

Our Chief Timekeeper Tony Parker had an unfortunate experience which is worth re-telling to illustrate what can happen. Tony has been doing the timing for the Britpart British Cross Country Championship, which you may have seen on Top Gear, when Richard Hammond did a feature on a team of disabled servicemen and women who are aiming to complete in the 2013 Dakar Rally.

Anyway Tony was on his way to the Mid-Wales event, towing the small caravan he uses, from Oxford, when he felt something hit the caravan!

“At first I thought maybe a deer had run out from the side of the road. However when I stopped, I saw it had been a motorcyclist, who had been trying to overtake a line of cars, and had run into a car coming in the other direction. He must have bounced off my caravan and unfortunately into the path of the car behind who ran him over and killed him! The police came and took over the site and kept us for 5 hours, taking statements and measurements, the police helicopter also took some overviews. Then the police asked me to take what I wanted from the car, as they were impounding all the cars involved, until after the inquest, which could take 6 months to complete! They drove me to the next town and dropped me off! I had to phone the organisers and they came and picked me up and then were kind enough to take me back home after the event. I have now had to buy some more transport in the meantime”

Diary Dates 2012

Next event:

March 7th – AGM at Dunvant RFC. 8.00 for 8.30pm start.

Odds and

Those of you who missed Neil Cunningham’s talk missed a rare treat. Neil has raced all sorts of cars in all sorts of Championships as well as doing stunt driving on Quantum of Solace and being part of the Top Gear Live team with GT teammate Ben Collins (the disgraced Stig). One of the anecdotes which stands out in my mind was his description of doing Le Mans in the Morgan Aero 8, pootling down Mulsanne at about 175mph at night when the works Audis go by with just a flash of the high intensity lights at about 220mph. Also his time in Nascar where he learned techniques like balancing understeer or oversteer by driving beside another car so that the airflow off the other vehicle counteracted the undesirable trait depending which side of the other car you drove on – at 180mph. It made us mere mortals realize what it takes to be a top flight racer.

A big thank you to all my contributors for this issue – so many that I have held over part 2 of Ken Davies’ article on his 924 until the next issue, when hopefully it will be joined by the story of Tony Barber’s Championship winning season.

..... Ends