



WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



**Tony Barber and Tatty Mk 1 GTi Trident Welsh
Sprint and Hillclimb Champions**

November 2011

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Chairmans chat

Hello everyone and welcome to another Windscreen and as we come to the close season I would like to pass on my congratulations to Tony Barber for winning the Trident Welsh Sprint and Hillclimb Championship. This championship has been a very successful stamping ground for Swansea motor club members for the last few years over many classes and long may it continue.

On the social scene we have had a trip to Skidz karting centre in Swansea for an endurance race and with six teams of 4 drivers we had a fantastic evening with some very close racing and only two laps separating first and second place after two hours of motorsport. I look forward to our next visit.

Next event is our Christmas party on 7th December which promises to be a great night as always. Please let Christine know if you want to come and I will look forward to seeing you there.

Looking forward to next year we have decided to change the format for the social nights. We are going to run a series of table top rallies, navigation events and autotests to count towards a club championship. The idea being that the table top rallies will give some training towards the navigation events and anyone will be able to compete and have fun. More details will follow in the New Year newsletter.

See you all soon...

Huw

Season Finale at Wiscombe

Wiscombe Park is one of my favourite venues, hence my decision to compete in the end of season double header, over the weekend of 3rd and 4th September. My wife and daughter joined me this year, although they did go shopping for the weekend rather than spectate!

There were some very interesting cars there over the weekend. A very nice replica of Hannu Mikkola and Arne Hertz's Audi Quattro caught my eye. Unfortunately it caught the scenery on the Sunday, which was a crying shame. Still, I did tell them it would probably polish out, which didn't go down too well if I am honest.

Car of the weekend though, was a space framed single seater, with a Supercharged Honda engine, with over 600 + BHP. To see that go off the line was a sight to behold; the engineering put into the build was fantastic, so I took a few snaps to share with you. I think you would agree that you would have to be either brave or mad (both would help) to blast that up the hill.

Great weekend and Swansea Motor Club's Tony Barber in his Golf wrapped up the Trident Welsh Championship there, so well done and congratulations to Tony!



Cornish Farmtrack to Racetrack – Part One

For 12 enjoyable seasons I raced with the Historic Sports Car Club, competing in the popular series for 1970's production sports cars in a 1970 Porsche 2.2 litre 911E, but the 911 passed to a new owner at the end of 2005 - I never should have sold it! Since then I've been eager to return to the great atmosphere, unrivalled camaraderie and close racing that typifies the series, but trying to find an eligible sports car that ticks all the boxes and at an affordable price is difficult.

That dilemma was however, more simple to resolve than I first thought; what about an early Porsche 924? It should prove to be a reliable, competitive and well-balanced steed to run in the up to 2 litre class and with modest running costs too.

Seen by many as the poor relative of the Porsche model range, I've always considered the 924 to be vastly underrated and currently good examples are quite plentiful. With a total production run of 134,000 between 1976-1988 and the earlier 2 litre model making up more than two-thirds of this and fitting neatly into class D of the 70's series, it should be more than capable of racing competitively with fellow classmates which include Triumph GT6, Lancia Beta & Monte Carlo, Alfa Romeo and, up to now, the class conquering but fragile Jensen Healey.

I soon found a suitable car on the internet, a 1979, umpteenth-owner, guards red example without a sunshine roof, electric windows or air conditioning. From the photographs it looked OK, but located in deepest Cornwall so I bought it 'unseen' by plastic.

From Truro, the 924 was delivered to Exeter where I collected it a couple of weeks later and had a chance to see my potential racecar for the first time. I was not disappointed, although it seemed to have been a farmer's main form of transport with hay, corn and mud littering the boot and interior.

I had an uneventful drive back to south Wales with early autumn monsoon like weather testing the wipers and demister, the engine however, of Audi 100 and VW LT lineage, seemed tired and jaded but the 5 speed gearbox, also from the Audi parts bin, seemed to work smoothly – we were in business!

Back at Andrew Morris's famous workshop we stripped out the seats and interior, welded in load-bearing plates and bolted in a Rollcentre full cage with side protection bars, we installed fixing points for six point harnesses. The motors and mechanism that raised and lowered the headlights was removed, bonnet catch modified and safety pins fitted.

The engine was lifted out and combustible sound deadening in the engine compartment stripped away, we removed the front suspension and rack complete with cross member, which we degreased & painted ready to reuse.

A friend had kindly donated a standard 924 engine he'd removed from an abandoned race project which was reputedly a strong and lusty unit, a little newer and with less miles than the original. For reasons that I won't go into, this engine had been sitting, suitably cocooned, in a garden in Somerset for three months before I was able to collect it!

Once back in the workshop this engine was cleaned down and, using the best bits from each unit, bolted into the engine bay, before we fabricated a suitable exhaust system, without the large middle silencer box.

New front brake discs and braided brake pipes were fitted, together with Mintex racing pads before the rear drum brakes were treated to new cylinders, relined and new wheel bearings fitted all round. We noticed the fuel pump was weeping petrol and replaced it and its 'cotton reel' rubber mountings.

The front lower wishbones were corroded so we replaced with new, albeit without the earlier antiroll bar mountings, so we cut the mountings from the old and welded to the new before refitting using Rotaflex nylon bushes. Next, we fitted new knuckle joints to the rack and built up the front sub frame to refix to the car.

I located some reconditioned LEDA front struts and uprated springs which were now fitted; brake lines were connected and bled using Castrol Racing fluid resulting in a healthy brake pedal. The closed circuit breathing system was modified and we were almost ready to fire up the engine which had remained an unknown quantity! I needn't have worried as, after the usual dramas of wrong plug lead sequence, duff starter motor and u/s battery, it eventually fired and ran sweetly – phew, what a relief!

We now fitted racing bucket seats, after the sound deadening had been painstakingly scraped off the transmission tunnel and floor saving a remarkable 6 Kilos! Next, a plumbed-in Lifeline 2.25 litre extinguisher, battery cut-off switch and all pull-cables routed and fitted. By now the car proudly sat on a new set of 195X60X14 Yokohama AO48 tyres, de rigueur among competitors in the series.

As the early 924 does not have a rear spoiler, reputed to add significantly to the low drag coefficient Dr Porsche gave to the car, I fitted a rear hatch I'd had in my garage from a later model 924. The necessary safety stickers were added, towing eyes painted yellow and we were ready to road test and seek that prized MOT certificate, but not until some final tweaks to the mixture.

At this point any sensible person would have taken the car to a local circuit for testing, but the 2011 season was fast running out so my 'testing' would have to be at a race!

Ken Davies



SHAKEDOWN – WALES RALLY GB 2011

For the third year in a row, the shakedown stage of Wales Rally GB was to be in a new venue. This year Huw Richards (Stage Commander) and I, James Phillips (Deputy Stage Commander) were asked to run the stage at the Service Park in the Builth Wells Showground.

Our first meeting with the mid Wales co-ordinator Steve Gregg took place in September where we were presented with a draft map of the stage and the first thing we did was delete the double usage loop as this was tried and failed last year at Cardiff. Other than a few tweaks it was a nice little stage and as it was located right next to the service park, the teams would love it.

As part of the build up to the event, we (Huw and I) get a lot of emails, mostly Health & Safety documents, amendments to timings etc, some of which overlap and can cause confusion, as an example our stage was due to start at 8am, 9am and 12pm...

Once all of the timings are in place, we have to allocate junctions to all of the registered marshals (online through the rallystageteam.co.uk website), set up the timing crews and arrange to collect all of our stage equipment. This was held centrally in a lovely warm community centre in Tirabad where the guys in charge were quick with a brew (cups & a teapot! No saucer mind and my dad would have had a fit as the milk wasn't in a jug, but still..).

As the rally approached, on the Sunday before, Huw and I made our way to the Sennybridge Army Camp to pick up our vehicles (transit van for me and Land Rover pick up for Huw, it needed a hyper active collie in the back to be truly effective!). Having left early on a fantastic clear November morning our first job was clear the frost off the screens and then make our way home, pausing only to move some bits and bobs (well if you have a free transit you need to make the most of it).

The following day we headed up to Builth Wells via Tirabad to collect our stage equipment (arrows, more rope than a bondage dungeon according to Huw, signs, stakes, metal posts etc). Once we got to Builth we could have a good look around the stage to check the layout, formulate a plan for the setting up teams (coming up on the Tuesday) and just 'get a feel for the stage'. A quick meeting with the service park manager, Tim, and we were on our way home again.

Tuesday morning I collected Owen Gibbon (stalwart of the shakedown stages) and headed up to Builth, Huw made his way up and we met the rest of the team there. We quickly allocated jobs out, put all of our kit into Steve Lloyds car (we were staying over due to the silly o'clock time we start on the Wednesday).

Setting up carried on at a pace, lots of red and white tape, arrows, junction numbers, warning signs and so on. We also had to put out rolls of yellow spectator tape on the bottom parade area as 5000 spectator tickets had been allocated.

Despite the volume of work required we had just the right number of people to help out and we were done by 3.30pm which allowed everybody the opportunity to have a look around the service park, and to really get up close to the teams (if you were there on the Tuesday you were there for a reason so the teams didn't mind you poking around and asking questions).

Once we regrouped at the stage start, we were told that Steve had left for home and would be back in the morning, no problem. And then it dawned on us, he had all of our overnight kit in his jeep!, frantic phone calls were made and messages left as we tried to get hold of him before he had gone too far..

In the meantime we checked into the onsite B&B, and despite fearing the worst it turned out to be fantastic accommodation, spotlessly clean, modern bathrooms (the water was just a touch orange though..). Once we had checked in we met in the lobby to pack all of the marshals bags ready for the morning. It's one of those jobs that's an utter pain in the arse on your own but fantastic with 6 people. Basically it involves filling a carrier bag with programmes, pens, stickers, badges, passes, whistles etc each one handed out to the marshals as they sign on.

As this was being done, Steve turned up with all of our gear, apparently he looked in the mirror at Brecon and saw a massive piles of rucksacks etc that weren't there on his way up! Thankfully he returned and we are grateful to him for that.

With a 5am start the next day, we had a quick wash and brush up and headed into town for some food and a well deserved ale..

Sadly the town was lacking in atmosphere and you'd have been hard pushed to see that the final round of the World Rally Championship was taking place. Still we found a nice pub, had a cracking gammon and chips and some splendid Rev James (sadly there wasn't any foccacia or hummus or even Greek olives available which was a disappointment for Owen "its flat bread" Gibbon).

After a bit of banter we made our way back to our digs and crashed out (well, some of us did, some of us felt the need to wander around at 1.45am! – I think it was the spirit of the Rev James).

The dreaded beep beep beep of a 5am alarm call and I stumbled into the shower (still orange water, possibly fake tan? Do farmers do much fake tan?). Once we all assembled and made our way to the stage start (all of 500yds) Owen "fair-trade" Gibbon and I made our way through the stage to check all was in place, open some gates and make sure it was ready for the marshals to make their way through.

I then headed back to the start to help the signing on team re-allocate some marshals and just keep an eye on the signing on process. Once the signing on was clear, we awaited the arrival of Spec1 who would go through and make sure they were happy with the stage. Unfortunately our biggest problem was spectators, there were 2 in the space designated for them and approx 2000 standing on the banking where they shouldn't be. We also, because of the location next to the service park had an awful lot of media, who despite having a job to do can be an utter pain in the arse as they stand where they want to..

We quickly had to redeploy marshals from the main spectator area to the 'new' spectator area to ensure everybody was well back and safe...some were ok, some, as per usual knew far better than we did.

Once we had moved people the stage was ready to go live at 9am (they finally agreed a start time!). Once the stage is up and running its relatively easy to run*, the crews keep coming round (the works teams are contracted to do 4 runs), and they have allocated times, priority drivers 9-11, other 11-1pm although priority drivers can turn up at anytime and go through.

Unfortunately we had to hold the stage for 15 mins as the media 'luvies' were standing in dumb places so I went through with the Events Safety officer in the 'WRC Manager' branded Freelander..it adds a certain gravitas to telling them to move. Which they did.

*I should point out though that we had to pause the stage at 9.05 as Dani Sordo took a cut that nobody ever thought people would and clouted a photographer who was standing in the gap, however the photographer refused treatment so we carried on!

With no further dramas, the stage ran like clockwork for the rest of the morning and as the drizzle moved in and the cars became more spaced out, the spectators drifted into the service park to see the top crews and teams.

At 1.30 we closed the stage and the rain started and so did the clear up!. Thankfully it doesn't take too long as the marshals were fantastic and did a great job of clearing their respective junctions so we packed it as neatly as possible in the van so it would be easy to unload in Tirabad and then once we had said our thanks to everybody Huw and I made our way to the Service Park managers office, to hand over our part to him and to help them shift some lighting rigs.

We then headed off to Tirabad to unload the van at the equipment store and another brew. And that was our final job of the event, done and dusted 30 hours before the event actually starts...it's a weird feeling being back in work on Thursday morning waiting for the event to unfold knowing that your part is all over (we do though help out on the weekend).

Next year its September and another new venue as Builth Wells is booked up, so we hopefully will have another go at a proper stage as its going to be a qualifying session for the running order of the event so it will be a bit more pressure.

James Phillips

Diary Dates 2011

Planned events for the rest of this year are:

Dec 7th – Xmas party

Odds and

Our front cover photo this edition shows the famous Tatty Mk 1 GTi with driver Tony Barber standing behind the engine bay.

..... Ends