



WINDSCREEN

The Magazine of Swansea Motor Club



March 2008

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT.

Welcome to another edition of Windscreen. Although still early in the year, many members are busy with preparation and re-fettling their cars for another season. And if you have a cold and draughty garage like me, the weather so far has not been that encouraging for play. Maybe it's an age thing but all the quick little jobs you try and knock off the list, seem to take much longer when it's cold and damp.

The 2008 seasons are underway for the WRC and F1 fraternities with Sebastian Loeb and Lewis Hamilton setting the pace in their respective disciplines. I must say that it is good to see that the wasteful image of 'fuel burning' has been removed from the qualifying procedure in the F1 world. Not the image motorsport needs in these anti-car times.

Our Club Dinner is coming up at the beginning of April. As before it will be held in the Gower Golf Club at Three Crosses. Neil has circulated the menu choices, so please let Chris Gibbon know if you are going and what you would like to eat straightaway. Chris has to confirm numbers and choices to the golf club before we go.

Although Sally and I couldn't get there for the Darts night, I hear the evening sprang a few surprises, with the reigning champion being disposed of in the early rounds along with some other high hitters. Well done to our new Champion.

The other news on the horizon and cause of a few rumours is the threat to the Murton Rovers by developers. I attended a meeting at the club held by the Murton Rovers committee. It appears that outline planning permission is being sought with a view to the building of 5 new houses. At this time we are still in a position to use the club and all the normal facilities. The plans are yet to go before the Planning Committee of the Council and it could be sometime before the plans are possibly accepted. If they are turned down or subject to amendment, then there will be a longer time delay. The Murton Rovers committee have requested their lease to be renewed, as from the end of March. If the plans get the go-ahead, the club will still be entitled to a period of notice of six months. So either way we do not have to leave in the near future. We will keep you all in touch with events as and when there is any further development to report.

Our Annual General Meeting took place in a different setting this year. Due to a booking oversight by the young lady behind the bar, we ended up in the main bar. Despite AGM's being universally unpopular with the majority of people, we had a good turnout of members. We only had 1 nomination for the committee, from Ken Bowman. With an existing vacancy on the committee Ken was duly elected and the previous committee members were sentenced to another 12 months. Welcome on board Ken, we look forward to working with you.

Mike Jones.

Welsh Association of Motorclubs Annual Presentation Dinner

Swansea Motor Club members were on the receiving end of numerous awards at the 2007 awards ceremony held at the Metropole Hotel Llandrindod on Saturday 26th January. Once again it was the Sprinting and Hillclimbing contingent bringing home the crystal and Wilkinson Sword.

Champions of their respective classes were, Leighton Hughes 1C, Andrew Meek 1D, Martyn Ferris 3A, Paul Perkin 3B and Martyn Whitland 4A. Neil Watkins was crowned outright Champion for 2007 and a very popular one at that from the rapture of applause on receiving the much coveted Esso Cup.

Our very own Alun Morgan was also on the receiving end. As the last 2 awards were approaching, the one to avoid being the Wooden Spoon for “Stirring”, Alun appeared totally bewildered on hearing his name but once again the hall erupted into applause from all sectors of motorsport as he received the Wilkinson Sword Award for his unrelenting contribution to all aspects of motorsport over the years (see cover photo). Lets hope he secures the Sword with a big enough nail, Ouch !!!

Post presentation consisted of chatting and planning for the 2008 season which is rapidly approaching. For many, this continued into the early hours of Sunday morning, there were many bleary-eyed competitors at breakfast on Sunday.

Club members, I'm pleased to report behaved impeccably though some joker (Papa Bailey) did find time to fill my jacket pockets with spent raffle tickets and cutlery which were only discovered back in Swansea, - watch your back Papa !!!!

Andrew Meek

Darts Night

The February social was the annual darts night at Murton Rovers and turned out to be a very hotly contested affair. Sixteen heroes and heroines signed on for the task of trying to hit a small target from a range of several feet – it was obvious from the word go that there were some more skilled in the art. There was even a rumour that some of the more professional ones had been practising!

The first match saw Huw Gibbon dispose of Tony Jones, then Mandy Bowman triumphed over Nick Meakin in match 2. The third match saw a rerun of last years final with Neil Watkins meeting Rob Allender, but this time Rob came out on top, so last years champion was knocked out. Young Emyr Meek then met Jeff Clement and it was youth that triumphed, but in the next match maturity succeeded as Joan Roberts overcame Tim Watkins. Geraint Meek was another representative of the youth fraternity but was stopped in his tracks by Anthony Bailey. The next match saw another shock as previous champion on a number of occasions Derek Davies met Julie Samuel but Mrs. S did him on the doubles. The final match of round 1 saw Neil Samuel and Andrew Meek contest one of those games when nobody could hit the double – just as the adjudicator was calling for nearest the bull to settle it Neil got lucky and hit the elusive double.

So after the first round the pre event favourites were both out and the title was up for grabs.

Into the quarter finals and Huw v Mandy saw Huw go through, then Rob knocked out Emyr, followed by Anthony triumphing over Joan. The last match of the round saw Mr and Mrs Samuel go head to head but, as usual, Julie was too good for Neil.

The semi finals paired Robert with Huw and Julie with Anthony. A good struggle between the professional pairing saw Huw go through before Anthony defeated Julie.

The final was a tense affair but Anthony eventually succumbed and Huw Gibbon was crowned champion. A big thank you to all the participants for providing great entertainment for the onlookers and to Chris Gibbon for keeping them all in line.

Perhaps a bit more practise needed for next year

Neil

Sport Relief

Robert & Marion Allender did the Sport Relief Mile in Swansea and report that “it was so cold and wet we kept our coats on and it was too crowded to get up a speed but we did it in about 20 mins.”

Well done, Rob – part of your recuperation from your heart op.

So far they have raised and banked £130 and there are still some pledges to come in!

Many thanks if you made a contribution, but there is still time if you want to join in, or give some more.

Just send a cheque payable to Sport Relief 2008 to:

Robert Allender
50 Trallwn Road
Swansea
SA7 9XA

Autotest

Not content with doing the sport relief mile and running our hillclimbs, Rob Allender has been busy chasing up a venue for an autotest, to bring grass roots motorsport back to the club. He has now reached agreement with the owners of Swansea airfield to use part of the old disused runway and the date has been set for the evening of May 21st.

Several members of the committee are going up there in a couple of weeks time to check out the site and get an idea of the sort of tests we can lay out. Initial indications are that the entry fee would be about £10 and the event will be closed to club.

The intention is to use the club timing gear to time it so Rob and Neil get more practise with our kit as we move ever closer to making ourselves self sufficient in the timing of our events which is a big cost saving to the club.

This really is an event you can bring the shopping car to and have lots of fun so I hope you will support it.

Arnold James Rallying - Wyedean Rally

The first event of the season for the Arnold James crew saw the usual motley band meet up in Chepstow. Driver Nick James had travelled from St Albans along with Tabs and Little Nick, co driver Bill Robertson had come down from Dolgellau and Steve Lloyd and I arrived from Swansea. The Evo 8 had been down to Promax at Llanelli for conversion to forest spec and Dilwyn Earland was running it for the event. It nearly didn't make the event because of a lack of suitable wheels, the supplier quoting long delivery times. Thanks to the efforts of Prof and Paul James, who were also doing the event, a number of spare wheels were purchased from Paul at the last minute and the car was ready.

There were no problems at scrutineering and the event got underway in beautiful weather, a real change from the awful wet conditions which had preceded it.

The boys jumped into the car as their start time approached and Nick fired up the engine, or he would have if the starter motor had not chosen that moment to go AWOL. Some frantic activity to remove the sump guard, get the starter out, spray it with WD40, check it on a spare battery and reassemble everything saw the crew make their start slot. Why do cars do that?

Steve, Dil and I played chase car and went to the end of Stage 1 where we were happy to see car and crew emerge safely. Nick wanted a small change to the rear dampers so a quick bit of roadside repair saw the changes made and he was off to stage 2. There was emergency service after this stage but nothing further was needed and the crew headed for stage 3, which was also safely negotiated, then it was just the blast round the Race course before main service back in Chepstow. Nick was fairly philosophical, the times were not good but he hasn't been in the forests for several years and was just trying to learn the car on a surface which is very different to the tarmac he is used to.

There was emergency service again at the end of stage 6 so we went straight there but there was no sign of the car at the due time. Tony McWhirter had been running just in front of Nick so we checked with him and he thought the car had been two behind him at the stage start. We checked with the stage finish crew but they had no record of the car being missing, then a radio car reported that the car was stopped in stage 5. We headed for the end of 5 but there was no sign of the Evo, then the phone rang and Tabs reported that the crew were up near Speech House. After a bit of searching we located car and crew parked on the forecourt of the Speech House Hotel – they had retired when the rear diff blew and had parked up close to the main road at a forest gate. Somehow they had met a guy with a key to the gate who had let them out then towed them to the hotel with his land rover. In one of those bizarre coincidences that seem to happen in rallying it turned out he had been to school with Tabs – weird.

So in the best traditions of Arnold James rallying we retired to the pub – literally.

Next event the Red Dragon on Saturday.

Neil

Paul James and Prof finished 41st overall after a steady run but that is all I can report as Prof has not provided me with any details (hint, hint).

Diary Dates 2008

April 16th - Tabletop Rally

May 11th - Llys y Fran Hillclimb

May 21st - Autotest

June 18th - Pub Run

July 16th - Barbecue

July 20th - Llys y Fran Hillclimb

Club Dinner – last chance

The club dinner takes place this Friday evening at GOWER GOLF CLUB - FRIDAY 4th APRIL, 7.30 for 8pm - £20 per person. If you have not already booked Chris Gibbon will take late entries **TODAY** so ring her on 01792 232644 or e-mail chrisjgibbon@btinternet.com

MENU - Soup of the day or

Thai spiced fishcake with a sweet chilli dressing or

Baked garlic mushrooms glazed with Welsh cheese

- Braised shank of Welsh lamb with mashed potato and a rosemary and redcurrant wine jus or

Pan fried salmon on a warm potato salad and a hollandaise sauce or

Supreme of chicken with a white wine and mushroom sauce

Choice of desserts on the night

Coffee and mints

Odds and

Congratulations to Pete and Vicky Salter, who celebrated the safe and timely arrival of baby Oliver just before Christmas.

Talking of Peter, he has now recovered from a broken shoulder and a hernia operation which had rather curtailed his racing but has his competition licence back and should be seen out and about in the Toyota Celica GT4 within the next three months.

The club will have a stand at the Singleton Show on May 5th so if anyone wants to display their car get in contact with Mike Jones on 01792 362281 immediately.

The EMCOS Stages 2008 takes place on Saturday 24th May at the former RAF Down Ampney nr Cirencester Gloucestershire. It is a qualifying round of the CMSG Stage rally championship supported by BP Motor Bodybuilders and Engineers. The entry fee this year has been reduced to £160 to ensure a full entry. Supplementary regulations and entry form are obtainable from Toby Harris at 21 Boakes Drive, Stonehouse, Glos GL10 3QW, or at toby@emcos.co.uk or via www.emcos.com

The Altratech 061 Road Rally will take place on 10th/11th May 2008 run by Stockport 061 Motor Club Limited. While it is not part of the WAMC Road Rally Championship the event doesn't clash with any rounds and the organisers would be delighted to see Welsh crews make the trip to compete in the Peak District. SRs for the event are available for download from http://stockport061.co.uk/061_Road_Rally_2008/index.htm together with a link for on-line entries and payment through Paypal.

If you have any queries please do not hesitate to give Andrew Chambers a call on 07801 712671 or by e-mail secretary@stockport061.co.uk

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