



Festive Wheelbase

The Club News Magazine From Darlington & District Motor Club

**Merry Christmas & A Happy New Year
to all our members and hope that you get everything you
wish for at this special time of year**



**The 2007
Annual Dinner & Prize Presentation Night
Saturday 17th February 2007
Kings Head Hotel Darlington
More details page 12**

**Important Notice
December Club Night
Christmas Party 8th December**

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National Marshals Award

Bob Wright, chief marshal at the Croft Circuit, has been voted the winner of the prized Alexander Forbes MSA Marshal of the Year Award 2006 by the UK's governing body of motor sport, the Motor Sports Association. As a member of the Darlington & District Motor Club as well as the Mull Car Club, Wright's sterling contributions at race, rally and rallycross meetings at Croft are renowned but, driven on by his enthusiasm for all forms of motor sport, he's also active in many other competitive fields and far-flung regions throughout the country. The Wales Rally GB, Jim Clark Rally, Ulster Rally, HERO Malts, Tour of Mull and Manx Rally as well as race meetings at Oulton Park and Knockhill are just some of the nationwide events that regularly benefit from his wealth of marshalling and training experience. Additionally during 2006, he has also been a keen supporter of the Volunteers on Motorsport initiative, offering advice and wisdom to many prospective new marshals across all disciplines of the sport.

Leeds based Wright first started marshalling nearly 35 years ago and today spends more than 100 days a year attending around 70 different events right across the country. "My first experience was on the 1972 RAC Rally at the Esholt's Sewage Works in Bradford but it was during the early eighties that I really became hooked," he recalls. "It was then that I realised just how much fun you could have in motor sport with a great crowd of people."

More recently Wright has been keen to reinvest his knowledge and experience to the benefit of hundreds and hundreds of newcomers to marshalling. "About ten or 12 years ago I joined the team that trains new marshals. I'd hate to put a finite figure on the number of people I've trained. Initially we did two or three days a year but more recently we've been doing anything up to a dozen training days," he continues.

Wright will collect the prestigious Alexander Forbes MSA Marshal of the Year Award trophy as well as a cheque for £250 at the MSA's annual Night of Champions ceremony held in London during January. The ceremony is attended each year by some of the most famous names in British motor sport.

"Winning this award really hasn't sunk in yet," admits Wright. "I've put a lot of time and effort into all forms of motor sport but it's still a terrific honour to be recognised by my peers." Allan Dean-Lewis, Head of External Affairs at the Motor Sports Association comments: "Wright is unique character, well known and liked throughout the UK. He has played a major role in the on-going success of Croft but he has an amazing habit of making notable contributions in the most unexpected places. There can surely be no more deserving person for this award." The hard-working efforts of two further marshals also have been recognised by the MSA via the presentation of Highly Commended certificates. Paul Harris was singled out for his hard work promoting recruitment drives within the British Motorsport Marshals Club in the South Midlands while Liam Carton was acknowledged for his exceptional contributions to marshalling in Northern Ireland.



Chairman's Chat

Where to start is the question, another year is almost gone and another on the horizon so just enough time to have a quick look back at the year that was 2006.

January with the Jack Frost Stages, which saw a maximum entry and some good hard competition, unfortunately it ended on a bit of a sour note when the fastest man on the day was protested by another competitor for not carrying a spare wheel, this regulation will be different in 2007.

February brought the Rallycross Superseries to Croft and a good entry assembled in what was a hard fought day and set the rallycross year on its way.

April brought us the Easter Monday sprint which again was the opening round of the MSA Championship, this event nearly came a cropper as a victim of its own popularity, we had so many people wanting to take part we took on too much and nearly came a cropper, fortunately we got away with it just, sorry folks but we will be taking less entries in 2007.

May next and the first of our two race meetings and once again

we had the Uniroyal Fun Cup with us, also at this meeting we had the BARC Formula Renault Championship and our own NSSCC, any one who says endurance races are boring should try this there were varied battles going on through out the race and the end result first and second separated by just a couple of seconds, the Renaults were quick and entertaining and our NSSCC put on a couple of good races, The following weekend we were at Lydden Hill in Kent for the next instalment of Rallycross Superseries where we encountered the wettest drought region of the year again fast and furious at the best track in England, well the south of!

September was our next meeting with the annual "Bit of a Do" where the faithful few take on the task of feeding the 5000, well not quite that many but by god it feels like it and running a packed race meeting for 190 competitors. Saturday sees the daytime catering for the NSSCC and our invited guests total about 250, night time brings the BBQ where this year we fed about 330 people. More food on Sunday and then at the end of it go on Holiday!

October and it's back to Rallycross this time 2 weekends in a row at Croft first of all it's the turn of the MSA British Championship and then the following week the Rallycross Superprix, two weekends of fast and frantic action which event was the best, well the first had less grief and aggravation but the second had all the Norwegians so I will leave it up to you to decide.

In between all that we assisted at events for many other clubs at Home and Away ran the NSSCC and we also found time to go to work and earn a living.

All I can say is "Bring on 2007" In the meantime have pleasant festive season and see you in the new year.

Steve.

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ROGER ALBERT CLARK RALLY

Report Re: Croft .. SS9 & 10 and SS26 & 27
My sincere thanks to all who ventured out on Friday, 17th Nov. to assist in the setting up of the Croft stages of the Roger Albert Clark Rally 2006, without you, Kevin Hutchinson, my deputy, and myself would have had a long difficult day. On behalf of all, thanks to the club for lunch .. much appreciated. As for the event itself, thank you to the 20 or so club members who assisted, my sympathies to those that were dragged elsewhere, you missed a great session. Several members were 'landed' with a very steep learning curve when it came to timekeeping, you coped admirably but there again the teaching quality was of a very high standard! The

cars came; they competed twice on Saturday almost all in the dark and then departed for the borders. The minimal clearing up was left to a few while some drifted North, THANK YOU! With the adverse weather on Saturday night ... two or more inches of snow in the Ae forest at Dumfries ... including driving rain and gales, it was good to see the stage set up had basically survived the weather. 3 straw bales were replaced at speed by the circuit 'BEAR', the signs were re-erected quickly, albeit some were 'Australian' style! and the whole stage restored well before due time.

Again, the cars came and competed and went, the result of the Roger Albert Rally being decided on the last 2 corners of the last stage! ... when a spin and stall by Easson allowed Jimmy McRae to gain more than the 24 seconds needed for victory. As for memories of the event ... many .. club members enjoying themselves comes top of the list. The member with the prayer mat comes second .. it worked .. generally, the fact that the rally was decided on the last stage was superb. The noise of the Stratos at speed through the Esses on a quiet evening was something ... regretfully silenced down from its 'heyday'. The sight of Steve Bannister, the overall winner in a modified Mk2, flat out on the main straight on his last lap was very nice ... when he was already 10 minutes up on his nearest rival! Finally for those that do believe!! .. the superb effort put in by the collection of erstwhile MSA stewards and Clerks was a sight for sore eyes... they all had a great day doing jobs their memories and bodies thought they had forgotten .. Thank you As for the future, we are yet to receive an invitation to assist on the Xmas stages, but if anyone wants to have the day out .. drop me a line or call.

Our own 'Jack Frost stages' is on Sunday 14th January names to me ASAP availability form somewhere?? ALL jobs are up for Volunteers on a first come basis. Steve G will be holding a 'setting up' training session on Saturday 6th January and again on 13th Jan. if there is a need. Names to him for those 2 occasions.

Thank you again Bob .. (PITH ... to my enemies)



Roger Albert Clark Rally

All of you that have helped, watched this years event.

Well, what can I say !

You all should be proud of what we have achieved, once again another great event, and one where, at the Finish presentation the competitors heaped loads of praise on the marshals and spectators they saw throughout the event. They commented that at all the time controls, and throughout the stages - I don't know how they had time to notice that, even in some terrible weather, especially the snow on Sunday morning, they were greeted by smiling, cheerful and very friendly people. A real compliment to you all.

Over the three years the event has created a reputation to everyone as being so friendly and having a family atmosphere its all down to **you all**, so **thank you very much on behalf of the organising team.**

One major problem we have had over the weekend (Sunday) and still have as I write these thanks is with our website, in Newcastleton yesterday when we were running the PC there, we were told by passing spectators that the website was not working. Firstly, we know it had over 14,000 hits on Saturday, quite an achievement you'll agree, so maybe it couldn't take the pressure and collapsed or it could be a provider problem due to system upgrading which we did encounter some 6 weeks ago, I apologise for any inconvenience this may have caused you and we hope to have it back up and running as soon as possible so please keep watching for news and comments about the event.

With that in mind many of you may not know the outcome of the main event and the drama that occurred late on, please don't quote me on the times, I was extremely tired and didn't get a copy of the results or write them down, but here goes.

On the main event as the cars left Kielder, car 4 - Jeremy Easson was leading by about 2 min 18 secs, from Car 7 - Jimmy McRae, and car 5 - Gareth Lloyd. At the final stages at Croft racing circuit, Jeremy's, throttle cable broke and he lost all the time he had built up on the other pair, allowing both Jimmy and Gareth to pass him such that he eventually finished the event

third - what a blow! So the winner of the event was Jimmy McRae, who commented at the presentation how lucky he was... a week last Monday he didn't have a car or navigator, but luckily for him things came together just in time. Also in his hay-day he never actually won the original 'RAC' so he was especially pleased on this performance.

At the presentation Jimmy heaped praise on everyone organisers, fellow competitors, marshals and spectators. One comment he made to us all and especially of Colin Heppenstall, the event Rally Manager, the man who has built the event to what it is today and leads the organising team. Jimmy said that he started yesterday at 7.30am in Carlisle and by 1.00pm he had done 60 stage miles and then made some comment that being a full day in some WRC championship!!!!!! Also at the presentation, Jeremy Easson received probably the most applause and a standing ovation for his third place....he was robbed of sure success at the last hurdle.

I don't know how many marshals turned out but someone mentioned over 1500, again a tremendous response. I know from personal experience that thousands of spectators went out to watch the action, and its been a long time since the queues have been so long in getting into Dalby on Saturday. Again I've heard already from marshals and spectators how tremendous it was and they're already told me to keep in contact for next years event. I'm still so tired from this years event that I'm not even thinking about next years just yet.

Once again on behalf of the organisers and myself thank you for all your assistance and may we take this opportunity to wish you all a Happy Christmas and a safe and prosperous New Year. See you all next year!

Thanks.

Steve Cowley, Marshal & PC Co-ordinator.





Wright On

The end of October is a hectic time for the Organising Team and the Marshals with two major Rallycross events in seven days.

The first was the final round of the Quaife sponsored MSA British Rallycross Championship. Christopher Evans had already sewn up the Title at the previous event and decided to sit out this one, saving the car for the following week's Superprix. We nevertheless had a strong entry in all the classes.

Outright winner, after a very mature drive, was young Andrew Jordan in Will Gollop's Ford Focus. His second outright victory, Andy was a joy to watch, getting the lead then controlling the pace particularly in to the Hairpin. Whilst his fellow combatants tried to gain speed by throwing the cars at the corner, Andy merely ensured he could get the power down early by taking a slower entry speed and just drove away from them all, a technique used by Dave Bellerby, Ben Rennison and Julian Godfrey – all winners!!

The following week saw the two day Rallycross Superprix. A number of UK and Irish drivers had hired European cars with Chris Cake using Torben Moller's Seat, Andy Jordon in one of Per Eklund's SAABs with Olly O'Donovan in the other. Rally man and Superbike team owner, Paul Bird, had hired a Ford Focus but unfortunately the car wasn't up to the obvious ability of the driver, broke its gearbox and the team had no spare. The event wasn't without controversy following an incident in the Heats which saw Christopher Evans stranded on track and gain a rerun. The Superprix itself saw multiple European Champion Kenneth Hansen take the honours from Evans but the 'Drive of the Day' must certainly go to Kevin Procter who gave the first two a real run for their money in the diminutive Ford Puma. Two wheel drive entries were boosted by a strong Norwegian contingent in the Super National cars. An absolute crowd pleaser, this predominantly Volvo mounted class provide the last word in spectacle and showmanship. After a race long dice it was local lad Dave Bellerby who crossed the line first to a standing ovation from the partisan crowd. On Saturday, the Two Wheel Drive Superprix was staged and won by the Mercedes of



Wright On

Herbjorn Haug. On crossing the line, Herbjorn pulled up in front of the Norwegian transporters, jumped on to the roof of the car and took a bow. He then proceeded to do doughnuts whilst standing on the sill, waving to his team mates a real showman! Both events provided the best of Rallycross action and some excellent driving. We were lucky with the weather but both events ran slickly and a big hand must go to everyone involved. Yvonne and I dropped in to watch the Roger Albert Clark pass through Croft. Such were the number of spectators that the first available parking space was round at the Crossover. Having said that, we only had to walk about 10 feet to the fence to stand beside a straw bale chicane manned by the DDMC regulars. A number of cars had difficulty judging their stopping distance and one even managed to go between two bales without touching them!

So now its on to Christmas. Northallerton have the Christmas Stages rally on the 30th and then DDMC take the circuit for the Jack Frost Stages on 14th January. We'll be setting up the week before and could do with a few bodies to help and, of course, a full compliment of marshals on the day. If anyone feels like arriving for 6 am we always need help with the Scrutineering queues and the Service Area parking.

And Finally... You are probably aware that the operating of Croft Circuit has changed hands. Croft Promosport have passed control to BARC but the day to day management will remain in the capable hands of Tracey, as Manager, and Steve, as Accountant.

Have a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year,

Terry



NSSCC

The Non Championship B.A.R.C. Winter Series race on the 11th November produced some excellent racing with a win for George Brewster (Caterham CSR), following a race-long dice with Iain Cowie whose similar Caterham overheated towards the end of the race allowing George to claim victory in the first race. Race two saw Colin Simpson take victory from Richard Reed's Caterham. 23 starters made up quite a good grid and produced a great deal of interest in our 2007 Championship – let's hope it all materialises. At least they should get better weather as it was freezing cold with showers all day.



Of particular interest was Joss Ronchetti's Sunbeam Lotus, which some of you may remember from last year, still immaculate but now with close to 300BHP, very quick!

Picture left New Style Overall's seen at Croft 11.11.06

Again Congratulations to all our 2006 winners and thanks to all our competitors in 2006 for an excellent years racing.

**All the best to you all for Christmas and the New Year.
David**

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2007 Annual Dinner

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Accommodation is available at the Hotel prices are £65.00 per double room £35 per single room including full English breakfast.

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Secretary's Scribbling

Last time I grumbled about the price of cars but should we now be thinking as much about the cost of running our vehicles as the cost of purchasing them. As we have more and more likelihood of so called green taxes being imposed upon us by those in Whitehall with the possible introduction of nationwide road tolls and congestion taxes. this will allow them, through the use of better technology, to differentiate between nasty petrol guzzling cars, clean (sic) diesels, and electric/hydrogen/clockwork vehicles by charging (no pun intended) say £1 per mile for a petrol car and 20p per mile for a hybrid petrol/electric vehicle such as the Toyota Prius. All this will be done in the name of ecology as opposed to the true reasons of just another way of avoiding direct tax increases by milking drivers.

If you think this might be a good point and are therefore considering dashing out to purchase a Prius, you may be interested in the growing evidence that they're not as fuel efficient as they appear. Their low-emission credentials are horribly compromised by the fact that extraordinary quantities of energy and materials are needed to build, maintain and eventually, dispose of them. A research organization in America claims they don't even come close to being among the 50 greenest cars in the world. So don't believe that swapping cars will keep the money grabbing politicians out of your wallet.

The idea of this column is to allow people to express their thoughts.

Why not let me have your moans, groans or positive thoughts - write, phone or Email me: all contact information is on the web site.

The above opinions are mine and do not necessarily reflect those of the editor or other committee members.



Gulliver's Year

As another year comes to a close and boredom sets in I can reflect on another years Marshalling , apart from the Croft Meetings I have been lucky enough to have been to Dubai twice (24 hours and the FIA GT's) Qatar once (GP Masters), Zandvoort for the A1 GP, France The "Le Weekend " meeting organised by BARC and the Jersey Festival of Speed, as well as Donington Park, Cadwell Park (several times), Thruxton for the first time and Rockingham at the beginning of the season, my next meeting will probably be with the Bankruptcy Court!!!!. I have been to three Dunlop Motorsport Festival Meetings all having a varied mix of classes from Karts to Trucks, this formula can only go from strength to strength. We will have to wait and see what happens now that the BARC have taken over the running of Croft??.

Going back to this year, I know how lucky I have been to get abroad so often and it is good to see more of the Croft regulars getting a chance, Joe Powell went to the FIA GT's in Dubai and I believe he enjoyed himself, Charles Jones and Martin Cook I know are doing the 24 hours in Dubai in January, apparently Charles has never flown before so no disaster stories please, I did send him an E Mail showing the Plane flapping it's wings that was doing the rounds at the time of the Bird Flu Epidemic but with suitably modified words.

With being away I have missed the Rallies, our Jack Frost and the Roger Albert Clark (I bet you never missed me Bob?), I even missed the Rally Training Day (I got the wrong weekend). Congratulations to Bob Wright for winning the MSA Marshals Award I am looking forward to seeing the photo's (Leprechaun Hat, Tuxedo middle and Bermuda shorts?????) from the presentation night.

Here's wishing you all a Merry Xmas and a Happy New Year.
Gulliver.

PS: To echo Steve's usual request, I am not the only DDMC Marshal out there, there are many more of you, so come on lets be hearing from you.

Volunteering Form				
More details later .. But this is YOUR commitment!				
Jack Frost Stages, 14th January 2006				
Can you help on the day?	YES		NO	
Can you help with setting up 6th Jan.	YES		NO	
Can you help with setting up 13th Jan.	YES		NO	
Rally Marshals training @ Askham Bryan 28th Jan			YES	NO
Required subject	New	Sector marshal	Timing	Stage commander etc.
Rally Marshals training @ Gateshead 3rd Feb			YES	NO
Required subject	New	Sector marshal	Timing	Stage commander etc.
Race Marshals Training @ Croft 4th Feb			YES	NO
Required subject	New	Incident Marshal	Flag	Observer Etc.

Return this part to Bob Wright, by snail mail to 17 Blackmoor Court, Al-woodley, LEEDS LS17 7RS or scan & 'E' mail to 'bob.wright1@tesco.net' or view				
From (name):- _____				
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Race Marshals Training @ Croft 4th Feb			YES	NO
Required subject	New	Incident Mashal	Flag	Observer Etc.



Presentation Time



It was my pleasure to present the memento of 'The times you have had on the committee at D & DMC' to Graham on Saturday 18th Nov.

Bob



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