

****NB: for reasons of file size, this website edition does'nt include all the pictures, which are featured in our hard copy magazine****



Bournemouth and District Car Club are hosting a very interesting sounding talk on Thursday 4th May starting 8.00 pm, entitled 'Enduro Rally Evening'. Philip young is giving this talk together with a film show on the subject of this low cost formula. Admission is free. Venue is the Elstead Hotel Knyveton Road Bournemouth BH1 3QP.

There has been worrying 'pub talk' recently from members who have questioned the performance figures of their multi-£k engine rebuilds, only to be given the 'cold shoulder' from their engine builder. Surely their business relies upon word of mouth from satisfied customers? If you are spending God knows how much – you expect service.



FROM THE EDITORIAL DESK

- Caption contest
- Endurance Rally Evening
- Competition Engine Builders

The editor was inundated with speech bubbles for last month's caption. In the end Mark Hatton from Yately will be the lucky recipient of a bottle of Barolo at the next club night, from our very own super-model Sara Church – yes she is, ok, used to be a model of swimming costumes a few moons ago.

The bubble reads, from both parties in the shot – "You're dribbling"!

FROM THE COMFY CHAIR



Well here we are again, another month on and the FDMC competition calendar has started with the Spring Solo at Martinique Parade ground. 42 entries with Club members taking class wins and the team prize. No doubt everything went OK with everybody enjoying themselves. At least the weather was dry, if a little cold. Richard, I am sure, will have ensured that a report reached the web-site quickly and with any luck you may find something in this magazine about it.

I would have been there myself but took the opportunity to carry out some more preparation work on the "white beastie" in the hope that it will be ready for the Car-nival Stages in June. It has only taken about 6 years to get it this far so no pressure then!

Arrangements for the Dimanche Sprint are going well with entries coming in like never before. It is going to be a great day. My apologies, on behalf of the organisers, if you did not receive your regulations in good time. Our plan was to send them out with the last magazine but as with a lot of plans things went a little wrong. Due to a misunderstanding with the printer we ended up with sets of regs. that were the same size and weight as the magazine, making it more than a little expensive to send out in the same envelope. (We have the problem in hand for the Sprint Royale.)

Rushmoor Arena will need a lot of sweeping and setting up on Saturday 8th April, so if you are able to come and lend a hand then please let either Graham Skeggs or myself know. All you need to bring is yourself and a broom. We can supply the rest. If you cannot make it on the Saturday, then how about marshalling on Sunday. Dave and Carla Penycate are waiting for your call on 01428 648711 or e-mail on avalarf@aol.com.

Thanks go out to all of you who turned out for the AGM, it was great to see everyone. For those of you who were not there I have asked Martyn to include my report on 2005 in the magazine and sorry to those of you who were there! It was great to see all the Award winners present for the night even if most of them had no idea they were winners until hauled out of the 'audience' to accept their trophies! They were as follows:

Lloyd Roberts Trophy: Dave Dockree.

Burch Award (most enthusiastic competitor on FDMC events): Tony Meadows.

Robin Cup (most outstanding Club Member of the year): Richard Field.

Volunteer Trophy: Adrian King.

Treble Trophy (best article in the Club's magazine): David Walton.

Later on in the evening we had the competition for the Swain Trophy for the best photographic presentation taken at a Motor Sport event last year. This was won by Christine Martin with second place going to Paul Prescott. Third place was a three way tie for Carl Streatfield, Carla Penycate and that lady Christine Martin again! Well done to you all and to everyone else who entered pictures. With any luck some of these may appear in a subsequent magazine.

Also unveiled at the AGM was our new line in Club leisure wear. We now have a nice line in green polo shirts with the Club logo and name on them along with some baseball caps. Polo shirts will sell for £10 and the caps at £5. Now we have the logo and name prepared, ready to embroider, we can supply a larger range of clothing, with sweat shirts, fleeces, jumpers, tee shirts and even coats available from the supplier. If you are interested in something from this range then please talk to Ian Gaskell who will be more than pleased to order something for you.

Special mention should also go to those Club members who turned up to collect their awards at the ACSMC Awards Presentation. These were Sara Church, Ian Gaskell, Roger Hamilton-Lane, Keith Hazell, Ken Martin and Andy Silman. Thanks to Treloan Penycate for taking pictures of the group of winners. These should be on show somewhere in the magazine.

An unexpected but thoroughly well deserved award went to Dave and Carla Penycate. This was the Chairman's special award. This is only awarded when the ACSMC Chairman feels there is someone, or a group of people, who have done something particular for Motor Sport, that needs to be recognised. Dave and Carla were awarded this for their work as marshals and radio operators all over the country during the past few years.

On a different note does the F1 season look as if it is going to be a good one? The people who seem to be having the worst time of it so far are familiar to Mr Walton and myself to wit 'l'explorer incroyable beemer'. Two, very public and smoky blow ups, so far. Anyway there would appear to be the opportunity for drivers to overtake and not just in the pit lane. With any luck as the season progresses we should see more drivers winning. You never know even Jenson Button may win a race this year!

A big thank you also goes out to all of you who came out to help Ian and myself with the running of the Ringwood North stages on the Rallye Sunseeker back in February. A good day seemed to be had by all, with the notable exception of the crew of a Peugeot 106 Maxi that seemed not to know how to drive it properly. The car is fairly low slung at the best of times so what do you do when you arrive at the start line after something like 55 4-wheel drive cars have created ruts about a foot deep?

You put your car in the ruts, select 1st gear when the countdown begins and then when the green light comes on you give it a great bootfull of accelerator, let the clutch up and bury the front wheels in the soft gravel with the sump guard resting on the top!

6 or 7 minutes later after a couple of arguments and the help of a tow vehicle they got to start the stage. There is something to be said for competing on autotests and PCTs to teach you how to drive a car in different conditions.

Oh well, back to the In-sanitorium for a spot more convalescence. Pass the butter dish!

Be careful out there,

Steve Castle.

Annual General Meeting; Chairman's Report on 2005

I would like to start my Report on 2005 by saying a big thank you to each and every one of you who have helped make FDMC, what I believe to be one of the best Motor Clubs in the South of England. Our spread of events, both Competition and Social, are the envy of other clubs and their members. Our membership is steadily increasing, with people who are new to motor sport and

people joining, or re-joining, from other clubs. They recognise our events are good value for money, well run and above all fun.

As you will see from Ian's Competition report we had a good year with 10 events all running as planned. 1 PCT, 1 Grass Autotest, 1 Autosolo, 1 Stage Rally, 3 Tarmac Autotests and 3 Sprints. Apart from Race events and the current lack of a venue for Autocross we have things pretty well covered! We are also asked to help in the running and organisation of several major events in the South of England. On top of this we have members racing, along with more than a few marshalling at race meetings around the country.

Special mention should be made of Dave and Carla Pencyate for flying the FDMC flag up and down the country, as marshals and radio operators. Apart from one weekend in August last year, the dulcet tones of 'Farnborough 2' were to be heard in all sorts of places, Wales, Jersey and Rockingham to name but three.

Thanks are also due to all those who took on the jobs of Clerk of the Course, Entries Secretary and other officials for all our events. Without them the events just would not happen. 110 members scoring points towards the Lloyd Roberts Trophy shows how strong the support is for our events from within the Club.

On the Social Event front we continued to have 2 club nights per month with the second one of these being an "organised" event where possible. Among these last year were the Race Night, Quiz Night, Barbecue at Frimley Lodge Park, the Treasure Hunt based in Pirbright and the Climbing evening at Craggy Island in Guildford.

Thanks go to Dickie Dale and Bruce Coate-Bond for their work during the year as well as to Graham Skeggs, Russell Roberts and Paul Prescott for organising events. We will carry on running these as long as you carry on to attend them. If we promise to give you better notice of what we are planning well in advance, will you do your best to turn up for them? There is nothing more disheartening then putting lots of hard work into preparing for an event and then only having a few members turn up. Please check the notice board that will be put up at most club nights for details.

Your Committee has taken the decision to make the Dinner and Dance a bi-annual event and to introduce a Summer Reunion type event on the years in between. If you have any ideas for other "themed" club nights then please let Dickie, Bruce or myself know. We are always receptive to new ideas.

The Steering Column carries on in the capable hands of Martyn Crowe. The production and printing has now all moved down to Andover to make things a whole lot easier for Martyn. During the changes we have also taken the opportunity to have the magazine printed on a better quality and lighter paper. This gives us the chance to re-produce photographs of you competing on events as well as the winning entry from the Swain Trophy.

Martyn is always crying out for more and varied articles so can I ask you to put pen to paper, or finger to keyboard, to help him out in filling the magazine. Things do not have to be perfect as that is what Martyn is there for. A collection of thoughts or ideas and a telephone call is often good enough for an article.

Those of you that view the website on a regular basis will be aware of the work that Richard Field puts in to keep it up to date, with some event reports and results even appearing within hours of the finish. Again this is something that is commented on by people from other clubs who seem to be envious of the look and set up of it.

We also launched the Forum during 2005, which has turned out to be a big success, both for people to discuss topics of interest and for us to post useful information on. Carl Streatfield is to be congratulated for the original idea and for setting up the Forum as well as carrying out the job of mediator. We intend to carry on using the website as a place for posting regulations for events in easy down loadable form on top of sending them out with the magazine where possible.

A vote of thanks is due to Tim Walton for his work for the Club over the last 25 + years. Having sold his business in Fleet last year he decided to sell up his house as well and move to the West Country in search of pastures new. If we were to list the things that he has done for the Club over the years we would need a magazine all on its own. We wish him well with the move, but I am sure we will keep seeing him turning up on FDMC events. He is a life member after all so he cannot escape!

Despite 2005 being a successful year we cannot rest on our laurels. We need to concentrate on promoting the Club and our events to all interested parties. There are already signs that money is starting to get a bit tight and entries are starting to slow down for events, with some of them being cancelled due to minimum figures not being reached before closing dates. If you wish to see FDMC carrying on being successful then please make sure you put your entries in early. We would rather not have to cancel events but if the likely hood is that they will loose money we may have no choice.

If I have missed anyone out then please accept my apologies for this omission and I will try to do better in future.

May I wish you all a happy, safe and competitive 2006.

Steve Castle.

MEMBERSHIPS



April renewals:

Rene **Glasscock** (49), Keith **Hazell** (1337), Colin **Short** (1339), Andrew **Lydon** (1930), Brian **Stevens*** (2427), Jeremy **Straker*** (2449), Martin **Warren*** (2450), Martin **Pilcher*** (2451), Adrian **Frissen*** (2515), Oliver **Moore*** (2517), Rob **Choules*** (2518), Glynn **Bawden*** (2520).

As ever, all names marked with * pay by cash or cheque. So I must point out that those of you, who are not currently paying by Standing Order, must send your remittance to my address and not to the treasurer or any other committee member. I will do my best to get a new card out to you by return.

Unfortunately, I cannot send new cards out to those who pay by Standing Order, or whatever it's called now, until I have seen the payment on the monthly bank statement. If this causes anyone any particular difficulty, please give me a call so that we can sort something out.

NEW MEMBERS

WELCOME to:

Andrew Thompson from Ash Vale, who we saw out at the Solo in a Caterham. He is now returning to Sprinting too, having indulged in Karting, Racing and Sprinting in the past.

David Fuggle from Bracknell; another Solo entry in a Caterham.
Trish and Dave McQuillan from Yateley.
Steve Woods from Bordon.
Bill and son, David Mexson from Yateley. Bill has been out on several of our out of county tests and trials, sometimes in David's Mini. They have a history in Road Rallies, and I hope they will be encouraging more of us to have a go too.
Andrew Smith from Lightwater, who recently moved to the South, and plans to continue sprinting his Elan at some of our local venues.
Chris Dear and Julie Jenner from Farnborough. They have some Grass Autotest experience, but Chris has also raced a Metro in the past.
Terry Dear from Farnborough; Chris' dad.
Andrew and Laura Dudley from Milton Keynes, regulars at our Autumn Antics Slalom in their Mk2 Escort.

We hope to see you all at the club room or an event in the near future.

Paul Prescott

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Comp. Sec's Report, April 2006

Welcome to this month's report. I'll start off by saying a big thank you to Richard for organising a successful Solo, at the Martinique parade ground in Bordon. We were blessed with brilliant sunshine as the day wore on and everybody seemed to enjoy themselves, judging from the post on the Forum the following day.

Congratulations to Andrew Thompson who achieved FTD in his Caterham 7, which however much he tried, he just couldn't get it to skid or drift. Definitely glued to the road! Thanks also to all those who helped out with stopwatches and pens. As for myself, well the Shogun didn't do the Solo (that honour fell to my wife's car!), but I did use it in a 12 car Rally, organised by Hart Motor Club & our own Graham Skeggs.

Going into this I knew nothing about 12 car rallies, but I would certainly encourage you to try them out. All you need is someone who has a reasonable amount of map reading ability as navigator, a car, and you're away. Speed is not the name of the game, but rather accurate navigation. The rallies are run on normal roads, mainly country lanes, and in the evenings. The one we did was about 55-60 miles in total and scheduled for approx 2 hours. If you want details of the next 12 Car Rally, give me a call for details.

Our next big event is the Dimanche Sprint, at Rushmoor Arena Aldershot, on the 9th April. So far the entry is very healthy. It's nice to see so many entries from the Westfield Sports Car Club, who are invited for the first time. We are looking for volunteers for marshalling on the Sunday, but equally if anyone can help on the Saturday (8th April), we need help setting up. Give either myself, or Steve Castle a call.

Future events:-

Dimanche Sprint	9 th April
Judgement Day Autotest	21 st May
Abingdon CAR-nival	10/11 th June
Summer Solo	9 th July
Sprint Royale	1 st October

F1ghting Talk

So the season's started and toys are already being thrown out of the pram. Ferrari are being accused of cheating. Their rear wing flexes apparently! To be honest, if I was hanging off the back of a car doing 200mph, I think I would flex as well!

The 'new' for 2006 qualifying is in my opinion better, but there's already talk of changing it again. Tyre changing is back in, which is just plain wrong. With the new V8 engines producing approx 200bhp less than the V10's, there was an opportunity to carry on using the single set of tyres throughout the race.

The lesser engine power would not have worn out the tyres so quickly. They would last longer, be safer, teams would not need 7 sets (which are more costly) and speeds would be significantly slower than they are now, which are almost as fast as last year! The tyre manufacturers have had too much influence. They have no excuses for not making a safe tyre that would last a Grand Prix.

On the whole though, this season looks likely, on paper, to be close. Should McLaren overcome their reliability issues, and Honda sort out race-pace, then we'll see a good season.

On a slightly different discipline of international motorsport, how many of you were aware that possibly history had been made this weekend, in Florida. I'm referring to the Sebring 12 hour endurance race, a precursor to the classic Le Mans 24 hours. Having dominated sports car racing for a number of years with the R8, Audi have hit the ground running with the R10.

This car has been developed quite quickly and won the event first time out on Saturday by good margin. It also broke the lap record and put both cars on the front row of the grid. So why is this a record breaker? It is powered by an aluminium 5.5lt V12 turbo-diesel, pushing out 650bhp, close on 900ft/lb of torque & a power band of just 3000 to 5000rpm! To my knowledge, the first diesel powered prototype to win an endurance race. Is this the future of motorsport? You decide!

Have Fun

Ian Gaskell



Solo & Autotest Corner, APRIL 2006



This year's Spring Solo, held again at the Martinique site near Bordon, used largely the same format as our 2005 event. Among the entry of 42 drivers, about half were from FDMC; including eight new or recently joined members, of whom more later.

The form book, from previous Solos, suggested that front runners could include Steve Watson (Mini) and Warren Till (Westfield) of Dolphin MC; Simon Harris (Golf GTi) and Andrew Grubb (Clio Sport 182) from the CSMA; and from FDMC, the Prescott family with their Minis, and rotary engine enthusiast Martin Yates, with his imported 'Efini' model Mazda RX7 turbo.

Newer faces from FDMC, in cars with obvious potential, included Carl Streatfield and Peter and David Manning in Lotus Elises, and Andrew Thompson and David Fuggle, both with Caterhams.

Late entrants included the Molyneauxs, father and son, from Bognor Regis MC, with their Citroen AX GT, here to discover what Solos are about; and Dolphin's Ian Harrison, Solo organiser and competitor, who had 'borrowed' a Ford Ka for the day from his absent son, Stuart ("we won't say a word, Ian").

For 2006, we're trying out a Historic class in Solos, for pre 1975 cars and this was rewarded by eight entries. FDMC had two members, Stuart Pettit and Darren Osborn, who have been 'finishing' the build of their Mk1 Escorts for several years.... but here they were, and ready to rumble, among the Historics.

Rounding off the FDMC newcomers, we had Ollie Moore in his smart Mk 4 Golf GT TDi; Tom Hastings, sharing a Sierra Sapphire Cosworth with Kevin Lower; Les Badham, with a 1.4 litre Peugeot 205; and Martin Hassett, another Mazda RX7 turbo owner, encouraged to sample Soloing by the persuasive Mr Yates.

Having walked the first course and sent the radio-equipped marshalling teams to their far-flung posts, the first group of drivers got going. In dry conditions, the sports cars were soon setting the pace and lunchtime positions also showed the close competition which is normal in Solos.

The Historic class had a great mix of cars in close contention, with Martin Prescott's 998 Mini leading, followed by Stuart Pettit, making good use of the Escort's LSD, Richard Withers in an MGB GT V8 and two Midgets heading the rest of the pack.

The up to 1400 saloons, in Class C, included 12 entries and as per the form book, Steve Watson and Paul Prescott were contesting the lead, followed by Nigel Hogg's Micra, 'devious dad' Harrison with the Ka, and the Molyneauxs, who were clearly fast learners as well as fast drivers.

In Class D, 1400 to 1800 cc, Simon Harris was the expected leader and in a strong second place, FDMC's Richard Aldcroft, whose struggles with a mysterious cooling problem on his Honda CRX had gripped our Forum audience throughout March, but were now happily cured.

In the larger engined, Class E saloons, Michael Grubb's Clio Sport 182 was leading, but close behind were CSMA's Michael Duncan, in the much less nimble Opel Manta GT/E, and FDMC member Ollie Moore, in his first event with his Golf GT TDi.

Meanwhile, among the sports cars - we had some new names at the front. Warren Till's Westfield, in second overall, was sandwiched by FDMC's Andrew Thompson who was leading the event, with David Fuggle lying third overall.

The afternoon runs saw a few places change hands, but the leading and class award positions stayed much the same and the Club Team award was taken by the FDMC trio of Andrew, David, and Carl Streatfield (Lotus Elise). For full details, pull the Excel file from our website, where we also have some pictures.

Solo snippets:

- Andrew Thompson bought his 1600 K series Caterham some years back, to contest the Caterham Academy series of events, and we're likely to see him at some more events this year. David Fuggle started using his similar car last year, for track days, and this was their first ever competitive event!
- Dropping in to watch was new member Andrew Smith, with his sprint prepared Lotus Elan (the proper, 1960's kind). One of the rare fixed head coupes, with tasty period tweaks like knockoff hubbed Minilites, plus some more recent developments, I was tempted to steal it on the spot, but will pop round to Lightwater after dark sometime - just kidding, Andrew.
- If your Honda CRX overheats.... first, change everything else, then try checking if the heater matrix is blocked.
- Man of the Meeting? We didn't have this award, but I suggest Michael Duncan, who pushed the big Manta to a heroic 12th overall, and second in his class.

Organising thank - you's:

Signing on and results were managed by Jan Gaskell, Roger Castle and George Wall, though Jan was heard to mention that it was colder in the HQ than outside! Scrutineering was by courtesy of Jim Morris and Rod Styles, with stewarding by Graham Skeggs.

Running things in the start / finish area, including timekeeping and radio duties, were Graham Widdows, Dennis Fatcher, Dave and Peter Pencyate, Ian Stevens, Colin Charlton, Steve Whittington, Michael Weeks and Mike Williams. Thanks also to Ian Gaskell for storing the club trailer, Dave Dockree for towing the HQ and anyone else who I've forgotten!

Richard Field

Spring Solo 2006: FDMC members' results

		Total Time	Class Position	Overall Position	Award
Andrew Thompson	Caterham 7 1600	223.4		1	Best Individual
David Fuggle	Caterham 7 1600	234.6	1	3	1st in class
Carl Streatfield	Lotus Elise 1.8	242.5	2	5	2nd in class
David Manning	Lotus Elise 1.8	244.4	3	7	
Martin Yates	Mazda RX-7 turbo	246.1	4	8	
Paul Prescott	Mini 1300	246.2	2	9	2nd in class
Martin Prescott	Mini 998	250.6	1	11	1st in class
Ian Rogers	Toyota MR2 2.0	251.3	5	13	
Oliver Moore	VW Golf GT TDi 2.0	254.4	3	14	
Stuart Pettit	Ford Escort 2.0	256.1	2	16	2nd in class
Richard Aldcroft	Honda CRX 1.6	258.1	2	18	2nd in class
Tom Hastings	Sierra Cosworth 2.0	259.8	4	22	
James Kay	Alfa 155 2.5	262.2	5	26	
Peter Manning	Lotus Elise 1.8	268.6	6	29	
Martin Hassett	Mazda RX-7 turbo	294.2	7	34	
Ian Gaskell	Citroen Saxo 1.1	296.9	10	35	
Les Badham	Peugeot 205GR 1.4	301.0	11	36	
Brian Caine	Vauxhall Chevette	302.1	12	37	
Darren Osgood	Ford Escort 2.0	304.7	7	38	
Kevin Lower	Sierra Cosworth 2.0	323.4	7	41	
Club Team Award: First, FDMC: Andrew Thompson, David Fuggle, and Carl Streatfield					

KIWI CAPERS

What a hectic last 12 months. We got hold of our Rx7 some time early last year. This was a good deal really as it was a straight swap for my old race engine from the 1st Rx7 that we had. The new one came with loads of spares. some of which were sold off and some of the old car was sold off as well. The end result was a car that handled, stopped, was faster and also had no rust or dents that owed me the princely sum of £1200 once the dealings were done.

The first outing was a sprint at Longcross. Having never driven there I was a little nervous about the Snake. But as my wife pointed out, my overalls are a little on the baggy side, therefore any accidents, will hardly be noticed. Cheers love! The day went very well and the overalls came home with no skid marks. The only problem had been a massive backfire, but this was cured, much to neighbours' delight, by replacing the exhaust manifold gasket.

The second outing was our own sprint at Eelmoor. I think this is a great venue. The car was about 4 secs. faster than the old one here and I managed to keep it out of the trees. I then put the car on a diet before going to Lydden Hill in November. What a fantastic circuit. 1st in class, thanks very much. On the 5th December the Stevens tribe went home to New Zealand for Xmas and New year. A pint of beer is \$5 (£2), a litre of petrol \$1.29 (55p).

While we were there I managed to track down some more bits for the whiz-bang. A 51mm carb, adjustable bottom arms and top mounts etc. These were, however, in cheshire and were waiting for me when we got back. More kilos have come out of the car since we got back and hopefully by the time we get to Rushmoor weight flywheel and paddle clutch will be in.

Add to all that as some of you know we also have a racing dog. He is cheaper to run than a car and usually comes last. He now has a spring in his step and has picked up some good 1st and 2nd placings already this year. The national champs are looking good. I wonder if we could have a 150yard sprint - car vs Dog? His top speed is 35mph. It's just how quickly he gets there, that is the trick.

The only problem is how do I attach the timing strut to him. Any takers???

Brian Stevens (don't they have muzzles fitted – strap it to that? – Ed)

SOCIAL SCENE

April

Tuesday 11th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

Tuesday 25th David's Quiz - nothing to do with motorcars !

May

Tuesday 9th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

Tuesday 23rd Your video night on the wide screen - bring your own videos !

Friday 26th Skittles Evening.
Venue, Churt Village Club, Churt, Surrey.

All club members welcome, but if those that would like to come along could let us know please, as snacks will be available.

There is a bar serving cask ales, and all other drinks, including tea & coffee. More info including time in the next mag, but we would aim for a 2000 start, and possibly a 2400 finish.

It is a very friendly little club, and they are looking forward to meeting us, with a possibility of us playing them at a later date.

Info from, and names to Dave & Carla 01428 648711 or avalarf1@aol.com
Avalarf Motor Sport Team, Doing it for **fun**.

June

Tuesday 13th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

Tuesday 27th Barbecue at Frimley Lodge Park.

July

Tuesday 11th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

Tuesday 25th A repeat of last year's very popular night - rock climbing, more details later.

August

Tuesday 8th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

Tuesday 22nd Visit to a country pub - we are open to suggestions for this night.

September

Tuesday 12th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse.

SATURDAY 16th Another one of Russell's evening's out. A ride on the RAT (Real Ale Train)

If you ask him nicely he'll tell you how to get free pint !

Tuesday 26th Natter and Noggin at the Courthouse

Bruce and Dickie

THE STREATFIELD REPORT

The price of keeping up with the Jones'...

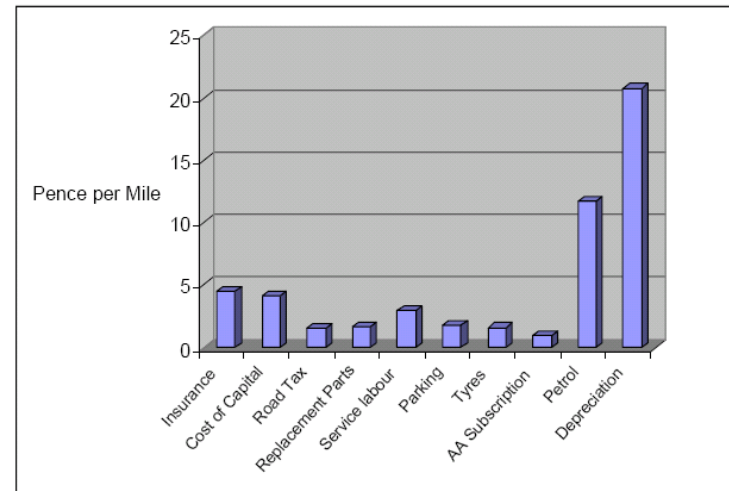
The average £12k new car loses a depressing £80 a week in depreciation just sitting on your drive. That's £320 a month or £4160 in it's first year. A sobering thought, and one that dawned on me some other mug could be carrying the can for.

There is an alternative though, rather than blindly accepting this you could join the ever increasing band of "older" car drivers and spend your £4160 on something else. Now if it was up to my good lady wife I suspect she'd blow it all on holidays, but as I'm a bloke and I like my toys here's my list;

1. NEC 50" Plasma TV £2519
2. Widescreen iMac G5 £1150
3. Psp (playstation portable) £200
4. ipod video 30gb £200
5. Thornton's biggest selection box £ 49

Apologies if you're not 100% familiar with all the items on the list above, but I can assure you that all bar (5) have many buttons and lights and are therefore most excellent. More importantly owning any one of the above items is a darn sight better than watching the £10 notes falling off your new car and washing down the drain at the end of your drive every day.

The following graph is from the AA and shows an interesting insight into how much depreciation plays a part in the running costs of an average new car (source: AA Motoring Trust 2003)



In fact overall depreciation contributes to around 40% of the cost of running the average car, yet staggeringly when the AA asked drivers about their running costs, only 2% of drivers realised it was anywhere near this.

So how do we combat the dreaded depreciation? Well when the AA asked drivers most indicated that they expected cars to have a life of about 50,000 miles before becoming unreliable. Whereas in reality most modern cars are good for two or three times this mileage provided service schedules are kept to.

So here's the plan, when all the Jones' are busy selling off their cars at 50k miles, you can afford to be choosy in which ones you snap up. (even if you have to make a few non-Jones' like sacrifices)

So which cars are still fresh at 50 or 80k plus? Well if you do your research looking at the last few years JD Power & Which consumer reports you'll see the Japanese and Korean Manufacturers by and large dominate the top of the tables (with one notable exception of Skoda) The traditional German car makers surprisingly don't fare as well as you may think. A medium/high mileage Audi A4 for example will cost you almost twice as much as the equivalent Skoda Octavia, the same applies when comparing the A3 to the Fabia.

To add insult to injury the Audi costs significantly more to maintain & service (Ironically the Jones' seem to have completely missed the fact that these VAG cars are made from identical components under the skin). Hondas and Toyotas are also good bets, when for example was the last time you saw a Toyota on the hard shoulder?

Last year showed an interesting increase in the reliability of Fords, Now given their impressive ability to depreciate like a freefalling skydiver an early new shape Mondeo may be a car worth looking at even if it's not quite as reliable as it's Japanese counterparts, it'll be significantly cheaper on parts when it does go wrong ;-)

Ok so it's not all good news, your running costs will obviously be higher with a 4 or 5 year old car than with a new one as brakes, tyres, clutch etc. wear with age, but safety need not be sacrificed, for example Volvo have been making 4star Ncap rated cars since 1997 (www.euroncap.com).

Of course by not having the latest 06 plate on your drive some say you've already lost the battle with the Jones' so why not go the whole hog and consider something like the Skoda, you could do a lot worse and you'll almost certainly end up with more toys...

Carl Streatfield

FOR SALE

May's Motorsport have put their class winning Vauxhall Nova 1.4 up for sale.

Loads of mods including coil over adjustable platform front struts, Q rack, bias pedal box, poly bushed, Vectra GSI front brakes (you don't get bigger under a 15" wheel), Peugeot 106 GTI rear discs and callipers, lots of spares including a 1.6 GTE engine complete.

£1,750 o.n.o.

Ready to sprint as is or to convert to tarmac rally car

Ideal First Competition Car

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