

June/July/August 2024 SPOTLIGHT



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Introduction

Trying to introduce a new layout to the magazine this issue. Hopefully it will allow the readers the opportunity to find sections that may be of interest to them.

Events

Upcoming events.

28th September - Sevenoaks Goodwood Sprint

29th September - Debden Sprint (Marshals required via jc.davie@btinternet.com)

6th October - Autosolo/Autotest/PCA at Wattisham

20th October - WSMCWattisfield Car Trial <https://wsmc.co.uk/>

27th October - AMSC/Green Belt Debden Autosolo

14/15th December – Chelmsford Motor Club 'The Preston Rally'

29th December – The Rixy Stages at Stanta

National Motorsport Week.

In July it was National Motorsport Week, an initiative from Motorsport UK to engage with members and the community. Not much was able to be done locally as most people were already engaged in various activities around the country. However, next year the dates have been confirmed as 10-20 July. The following link will provide you with up to date information on events happening in our area.

<https://motorsportweek.org/about/>

Disability Scholarship Day

The phrase early bird catches the worm is used a great deal when you've got a 5.30am wake up call. However, following the day out at MSUK's HQ, the phrase can now be adjusted to early bird catches two scholarship winners.

Several weeks ago, the club received an invitation to join and support Loughborough Car Club with a national event being hosted in Bicester. This was an Autotest, involving selected nominations and entrants with disabilities who were in the running for receiving a great prize – a year's worth of sponsorship from MSUK to cover costs for club membership, an adapted car and being able to compete in events. It sounded like a great opportunity to get involved in a day that we could learn about as a club, and of course to see people getting involved in an Autotest for the first time. Once May had arrived, it was Howard and I that



attended the day. We had a smooth journey over to Bicester and had the pleasure of around 20



entrants and a host of marshals and volunteers from Loughborough Car Club. It was a great advertisement for our club to be part of this along with a member of Maidstone Car Club joining us too. Between us, we supported as passengers with the drivers, looking after the paddock and general volunteering duties. It gave us a great chance to socialise and talk to the entrants, hear their stories (a huge amount came through Military Motorsport) and to see the all-round excitement we see in ourselves at every event.

As we spent some time through the day, we managed to find out that two fellow East Anglian based entrants had made the journey across to Bicester – Dean and Dom. At first, our reaction was how great it was to see entrants from our part of the world, especially with both the guys living in and around Norfolk. What happened as we got to the end of the day was simply inspiring. The day was drawing to an end, and we recalled from the briefing that there would be just one winner of this fabulous prize.



What we quickly noticed when speaking with the MSUK representatives throughout the day (Hugh Chambers, CEO of MSUK was in attendance), was that there couldn't be just one winner. We should give our full respect and appreciation to the judges of this prize as it was incredibly hard to decide who you'd award the prize too. Everyone there had such compelling stories and journeys they'd been on, as well as getting fully involved in the day, the smiles grew bigger and bigger, and the social aspect kept growing between the entrants. It was an inspiring day that won't be forgotten. We knew that someone was going to win, how many though was up for discussion and it turned out that four winners had been chosen. As you've no doubt gathered and can likely see where this is going, we're pleased to welcome two of the MSUK Disability Scholarship winners to SCCoN – both Dean and Dom were victors on the day and it's safe to say that we cannot give them both a warm enough welcome to the club!

We've now received the Yaris into the fleet with the Micras, enabling Dean and Dom to join us at the upcoming events across East Anglia. We never saw the full winners' criteria, what both me and Howard can say is these guys are not slow and are very much looking forward to seeing them behind the wheel with the smiles for miles showing through as a part of our club.

Craig Bennett

SCCoN at Wheels Festival, Great Yarmouth – June 2024

It's always great turning up to an Autotest, 12-car or stage rally, sometimes it's good for a change on a Sunday to do something different, albeit still involving our club.

The 30th June arrived and it was the Great Yarmouth Wheels Festival. For someone not originally from Norfolk (born in Hampshire in case you were curious) this was the first time heading to the event. There was a lot of work that had gone into getting ready for this, with a handful of our members getting stuck in and arranging health & safety, vehicles, trailers and snacks to name a few, it's easy to take for granted that just turning up and everything is in place.



Due to everyone's super commitment as always, arriving at our stand outside the leisure centre on the seafront was as ever great to see. There was a great range of cars on the stand as the pictures will show you (please ignore the black Mercedes, again another story for another day if you're interested). The day started with great promise, a fresh breeze and some sunshine (and coffee) whilst the final bits and pieces were put together.

Sadly, we didn't see the sun again all-day and for that matter, the volume of footfall from the general public just wasn't quite what it could and should've been. A neighbour of mine attempted to head to the festival the day before and mentioned he couldn't get parked. Certainly, the sun was out by all accounts, but between the expletives of likely receiving a speeding fine on the way home there wasn't anywhere for visitors to park up and walk around. It felt a little like some factors simply weren't going our way this time around.

Nevertheless, we persevered, carried on and made a good day of it. Walking around some of the other areas told us what we already knew, people just weren't around. We each saw some of our favourites in and around the festival, one of mine pictured in the article – yes, the white one and not the yellow one! In case you were wondering, the standout SCCoN stand favourite from the public was of course the Hillman, a stunning car to show off what SCCoN is about.



From me, it was great day spending time and having a social catch-up with everyone who attended. There's always well done's and thank you's that get shared around, so to everyone who played their part in making the stand happen – thank you from a fellow member. It's always great to see the club out there and present at events like this with the aim of showcasing what we're all about.

Ladies Autosolo Taster Day 24th August

Amongst some members, there's an ongoing feeling that when an event laid on to encourage new members takes place, the event tends to encourage rain. The 24th August was no exception to the 'rain rule', however the day also created a whole host of 'all-new'.

Writing this, I cast my mind back to the pit straight at Snetterton on the 10th February, the stage rally. I decided to marshal this for the first time and between myself and Jane Blake we had a fab day! It was, if we're honest, our first full day together and gave us an opportunity to talk about all sorts! Crucially we worked out quite quickly that we had very similar thoughts around encouraging more people into local car clubs. Why – well why not?! We all love what we do and with an array of external things going on in the world it's becoming that little bit harder to spare some pennies (and pounds) for events – we can all see this in entrant numbers at events through this year alone.

There was an opportunity to create a buzz around something new. Something that perhaps hadn't been done before that could attract, but most importantly, showcase how great car club membership can be. The avenues it opens for anyone who thought motorsport was 'out of reach', 'potentially uncomfortable' or 'too expensive'. We saw an opportunity to show what local club membership can be about as well – inclusive and equitable whilst having fun with like-minded people. The idea appeared and something had to be done.



Both Jane and I will be the first to admit we're novices when it comes to car club membership. With a combined total membership period of just over half a decade, we're hardly seasoned pros! I tend to say, 99.9% of people didn't sign on the dotted line to membership at a car club and said to themselves 'I can't wait to get stuck in and organise Portaloo's and Permits'. We knew organising an all-new event wasn't going to be easy. We recognised quite quickly there's so much involved that we (as novices) didn't see straight away; rest assured we do now more than ever before. We're not afraid to admit that newness brings challenge, it also brings opportunities and once we'd started to hedge our bets and started talking about the idea of a taster day that opens membership to a whole new audience who've never even thought about it, we knew that deep down we were onto something.

The months flew by, and spring (yes, a very wet one) came and went. By this point, several conversations had been held and progress was being made on arranging the event. A small and very experienced organising committee was forming and now things were starting to move along. I always say you win, or you learn, you never fail. There were lots of learns very early on, however it's very important to call out the wins. We knew an event of this kind had never been done / for at least three decades. We knew that spreading word of mouth interest, people were starting to talk and wanted to know more. We knew that committees across AMSC and AEMC were in support of an event like this. The traction (no pun intended) started to grow, and more and more people came on board – more of that to come.

LOTUS® ♀ WOMEN'S COMMUNITY



MOTOR CLUB

One large support came from Lotus, and we'll take a moment to celebrate and thank the team at Lotus. Not only did we see around 15-20% of entrants work at Lotus, but they also provided some truly stunning support for the event. To anyone who works at and/or knows people at Lotus reading this – thank you. Your contribution has been invaluable and has set things in motion that have never been done before.

Let's cut to the chase. After months of talk, we had weeks to plan. Summer was here and August arrived. We had no rain in August of note, so naturally the one day we didn't need rain was the 24th. You know the rest of that story...



By the time we knew the weather was turning, entries were closed. We should take a moment to let the below sink in on what was achieved when entries went live:

Event entries went live on the 21st July. By the 25th, we had 13 entries. After 16-days, 30 entries had been received.

Entries closed a week before the event and including reserves, hit 51 total entries

There was zero cost to any advertising – everything was done via the SCCoN website, social media and word of mouth

A small advertising article was placed in Revolution and Streetcar and internal communications were shared at all Lotus sites

Of the entries, 90% of people requested to use a club Micra and pay a contribution to the maintenance/upkeep costs

Sorry to drop another phrase – everyone's opinion is right; it is also wrong at the same time. We all see the world through our own mental map – how we think it should be. If we take the facts as they are, the interest

and enthusiasm surrounding the event shows us newness brings a whole new approach to opportunities and the reach we can achieve as local car clubs.

No event, how small or how big can function without volunteers. We'll pause to commend, cheer and celebrate all volunteers that made the event happen. The weather was quite frankly awful, yet that didn't stop volunteers from far and wide supporting the day – we thank you all so, so much for being part of the day. This message of thanks also extends out to all the organising committee (including those at Lotus). Without your input, guidance, honesty and commitment to seeing the event get off the ground, it simply wouldn't have happened the way that it did.



I know what you might be thinking. You might be thinking 'well it's great having all these volunteers but what if no one turns up?!'. You'd be right in thinking that – we as the organising committee somewhere inside us all thought that, even just a little bit. Remember, the weather was awful and on an open track we all know shelter is at a premium! Let's not forget this was a free of charge event. No monetary commitment. No official you must turn up or lose out ties from any entrants.

So, what happened?

48 entries were planned. We had 31 show up who initially registered. Over half that didn't show communicated they couldn't attend and apologise prior to the 24th

With the flexibility built in with family and friends able to attend, we had a total on the day signed up to take part of 45

Two sessions ran in the day, a morning and afternoon – a first for demonstration eventing

Group test walks and demonstrations were held

A mixture of passenger drives, experienced drives and giving it a go took place over 3 tests

We even had one of the Lotus executive management legal team turn up and jump in a club Micra – she invited some of her family and friends too

I'll let the pictures do some of the talking now...



And there we have it. From February to the August Bank Holiday in a few pages and pictures. To everyone who's reading this, we say a huge thank you to you too. The continued commitment and dedication to local car clubs you all show enables ideas and newness to take place. We're all committed to enjoy our time we spend in and around the clubs and long may this continue with the added benefit of some new members who're equally as passionate as we are.

There's one more thank you that needs delivering to wrap all of this up. And that thank you goes to Jane. The grit, determination and desire to choose to take on something so new, run with it and make it happen the way it has is phenomenal. The success, memories and awareness that come from this event have been created because of Jane. Simply superb – be proud of what's been achieved here and what the future of events can be.

Woodbridge Summer Autosolo

A big shout out to Dave Saint and the organising team for their involvement in this event. They were up before dawn to get on site and set the tests up. It's easy to overlook how big a job that is and to pull it off. Despite this event setup restriction, the organisers took on board quite a bit of feedback from last year and adjusted the tests to be well proportioned and great fun!

Entries were slightly down at 34 total, however the very best competitors in the region were in attendance leading to very tight results.

Full results: <https://ecmc.co.uk/woodbridge-summer-autosolo/>

FTD Jonathan Stimpson, BMW 318ti

Class A1 (<1.4L)

1st Laura Christmas 716.3s

2nd Duncan Christmas 717.1s

3rd Robin Lines 720.7s

Class A2 (>1.4L)

FTD Jonathan Stimpson 687.3s

"1st" Barnaby Jones 700.2s

"2nd" Sam Carter 707.1s

Class B (2seat sportscars)

1st Kevin Lockwood 692.6s

2nd Richard Cash 708.2s

3rd Martin Styles 723.1s

Class D (Autotest)

1st Steven Groom 676.7s

2nd John Peterson 691.0s

3rd Richard Nel 699.6s

Class E (PCA, passenger class)

1st Ashley Hudson 708.2s

2nd Vini Cruz 709.1s

3rd Jane Blake 769.3



Woodbridge AutoSOLO, Autotest and PCA

Sunday 18th August 2024

Protyre Circuit Rally Championship

A new sponsor for this championship in the form of Protyre, who've recently been sponsoring the 2024 MSUK Asphalt Rally Championship. The dates and locations are below.

Circuit Rally Championship Calendar 2024/25



Event	Date	Venue
Salford Van Hire Neil Howard Stages	Saturday 2 nd November 2024	Oulton Park
NHMC Cadwell Stages	Sunday 17 th November 2024	Cadwell Park
Donington Rally	Sunday 1 st December 2024	Donington Park
MGJ Engineering Brands Hatch Winter Stages	Saturday 18 th January 2025	Brands Hatch
Snetterton Stage Rally	Saturday 8 th February 2025	Snetterton
Lee Holland Stages	Sunday 2 nd March 2025	Anglesey
Dukeries Rally	Sunday 16 th March 2025	Donington Park
Alan Healy Memorial Rally	Sunday 6 th April 2025	Cadwell Park
Altratech SMC Stages	Sunday 13 th April 2025	Anglesey

EXCITING NEWS - THE SECOND RUNNING OF

THE RIXY STAGES



- ✱ Multiple stage layouts within a single venue
- ✱ 100% tarmac stages
- ✱ Fast flowing sections
- ✱ Technical roads through on-site villages
- ✱ Maximum entertainment for competitors

**29th
December
2024**

**REGS, MARSHALS REGISTRATION
MID OCTOBER**



**At the Stanford
Training Area (STANTA),
near Thetford, Norfolk**

British Road Rallying

LANES IN THE VEINS!

British Road Rallying is a new newspaper, product of the fevered ego of a 'Top Nav' and inspired by the sterling work of Daniel Pidgeon, long time stalwart of the British Road Rallying blog and Facebook group.

We aim to become your favoured source of information on road rallying, targa road rallies and historic road rallies. In addition to rally reports, we bring you previews of upcoming rallies, championship updates (all in one place) and articles on the controversial and important matters in road rallying.

In the future, we have big plans to bring you interviews with leading current competitors, mine the wisdom (or otherwise) of notable figures in the sport, and bring you a wealth of car setup and competition vehicle knowledge from the best in the business.

British Road Rallying also publishes a calendar that details every road rally in the UK, where the events start, where you can find entries, when entries open and where you can find results.

The newspaper will be published irregularly, timed to appear at or before each Welsh Association of Motor Clubs championship round, in addition to various other notable English and Welsh road rallies.

We offer all this exclusively as a printed product. There will be no online version. Why? Well, many of us spend all day staring at computer screens or at phones. The last thing that the team here at British Road Rallying want to do in our spare time is fire up another computer. Many people feel the same way.

A second reason is that the photography being produced in the sport at present is simply exceptional. You cannot do that photography justice online. Finally, if it isn't online, it's harder for the anti-rallying brigade to twist our sport into their agenda, so we are free to write exactly what we want to write ... and what you really want to read!

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Subscribe here:
<https://mtc1.uk/Entry/BritishRoadRallying/EntryForm.php>

SCCON's Midsummer Classic Car Run 2024



The course opening car under the starting gantry at Lotus Cars' factory

Quite a few things were new for this year's classic run. Scott Pezzotta was the new organiser and Lotus Cars provided a new start venue, where the bacon rolls were provided by Delia's Canary Catering. (That's Delia Smith of Norwich City football club who are part-sponsored by Lotus Cars). And SCCON's brand new starting gantry was put to use for the first time; it will doubtless get used on many more SCCON events.



I took particular interest in a couple of cars at the start, both of them grey: Bryan Swaddling's 1952 HRG 1500 sports, a marque not previously seen on a SCCON Classic run, and Alan Garrod's 1960 Jaguar Mark IX. When I was in my teens growing up on the Wirral, a local chimney sweep ran an HRG with a trailer for all his brushes and equipment. Alan has entered every SCCON Classic Run since 2006 and he holds the record for participating in the highest number of different cars - eight in total. We tend to think that cars have been getting progressively bigger over the years and many have, but this stately Jaguar is a reminder that the very biggest cars haven't got much bigger. The Mark IX was the first Jaguar saloon to be fitted with four-wheel disc brakes as standard. More about disc brakes later.....

Tara and I entered in my 1961 Austin Healey that I've now owned for more than half its life and our twin grand-daughters, Amber and Faith, rode in the 2+2 rear seats helping with the navigation. Soon after the start they recognised the road we were driving on because it's where they ride ponies that belong to one of their former school teachers.



The first refreshment stop was at Whitwell and Reepham railway station, where we saw a fully restored Esso tanker wagon. Most heritage railways focus on passenger trains yet the railways used to be the major carriers of freight around Britain, so all credit to the enthusiasts at Whitwell for preserving this aspect of railway history. I had a chat here with Martin Jones who had entered his blue 1928 Ford Model A Phaeton. While working for Ford in the 1980s I was able to drive the Model A kept in Ford's historic vehicle collection. It was a robust and surprisingly brisk car, with a top speed of 55-65 mph depending on the variant, much better than its predecessor the Model T. There was a five month gap between the end of Model T production in May 1927 (when the 15 millionth example was built) and the manufacture of the first Model A. Then it was back on the road, heading for the next stopping point at Oxburgh Hall. One of the quirks of English spelling is that Oxburgh Hall is in Oxborough, not Oxburgh. The roads were mostly wide and free-flowing and even the A-roads we used had very little traffic, so Scott's choice of route for his first SCCON classic had been very good.



Faith and Amber with the Healey at Oxborough



Jake Webster's Mini Minus, also at Oxborough

We had our picnic outside Oxburgh Hall and I had a chat with Jake who had a blue Mini that he told me was a Mini Minus. It has an all-fibreglass body mounted on standard Mini sub-frames. The dimensions of the glass-house are unchanged, but the body below the waist-line has had three inches taken out of its height so the car is much lower than a standard Mini.

The Mini Minus was developed by Brian Luff and Keith Lain, two former Lotus employees; Keith then built them in New Buckenham. And there's a SCCON connection here too! Before making the Mini Minus, Brian and Keith had made another Mini-based car: the Status 365. And long-time SCCON member Peter Banham rallied a Status in 1976!



Status 365 kit car (not on SCCON's Classic Run) SCCON's Peter Banham rallying his Status

The final leg of the car run took participants from Oxburgh Hall to the green at Old Buckenham, outside the Ox and Plough public house. So we ended the run not far from where the Status and Mini Minus had been made.



Martin Jones Model A completes the run Alan Coombs 1934 Lanchester 18 at the finish

At the finish I chatted with Alan Coombs who had driven the run in his superb Lanchester 18. I really like seeing pre-war cars on the SCCON run, though their numbers have been steadily reducing over the years. Frederick Lanchester is an unsung hero of the British car industry; a very capable engineer, he built the first British 4-wheeled car in 1896, and he took out no less than 265 engineering patents. He invented a self-starter for gas engines, the wick carburettor for petrol engines, balancer shafts for 4-cylinder engines and the crankshaft torsional vibration damper as used on the front pulleys and flywheels of many modern engines. In 1902 Frederick was awarded patent no. 26,407 for the disc brake.

It is often claimed that Jaguar was the first car company to deploy disc brakes (on their C-type) but the American Crosley Motors company was fitting 4-wheel disc brakes to their economy cars and lightweight sports cars in 1949, though they reverted to drum brakes in 1950. I couldn't discover why they did that.

Nevertheless, due credit must go to Frederick Lanchester for fitting transmission brakes, of disc brake design, to some of his cars from around 1900.

By 1934 when Alan's 2504cc Lanchester was made, the Lanchester Motor Company was owned by the BSA Group, but Frederick's brother George had a major role in its design and development. Initially known as the 15/18 model, Autocar magazine tested one in 1932, reporting on its "quiet running" and achieving a top speed of 71mph. A fast car in its day, Col. Arthur Loughborough's Lanchester 15/18 won the very first RAC Rally in 1932, though he did have 'his man' with him who drove the speed tests on Torquay's sea-front at the end of the rally! One test was a 'slow driving test' where the Lanchester's fluid-flywheel gave a big advantage over cars with a conventional clutch.

SCCON's 2024 Classic Car Run was another super day out in the company of many friends. Well done to Scott and all the organising team.

Peter Riddle July 2024



5 years ago this was painted on the road in Attleborough
Of course the road markings should have said "A11"

Feedback from a participant on the 2024 SCCON Midsummer Classic Car Run

Hi, The SCCON run was a very enjoyable day. I can shed some light on the spelling of Oxburgh. The village was called Oxburgh until the Victorians changed it when the Post Office was set up, deciding that the postal address for the village would be spelt Oxborough, obviously never having been there! But the Hall never changed its name.



Sad to say, two weeks after the run my Fiat 850 Coupe suffered from a terminal case of overheating (a leak from the fuel filler, which is in the engine compartment, onto the hot exhaust). I now have an Alfa Romeo GTV 2000 for next year. Regards, Martin Hull

From The Other Side of the World - and Virtually Unknown Here

I was driving past Duxford recently when I saw a car following me that I didn't recognise. It looked like a Jaguar Mark II but the windscreen was too tall and I had no idea what it was. As it got nearer I could see it was smaller than a Jaguar and I noted the number plate so I could look it up when I got home. It was a Mitsuoka, a Japanese make I'd never heard of. In 2023 there were only 40 Mitsuokas registered with the DVLA. The model I'd seen was the Viewt, sometimes registered as a View T and there are just 16 of them in the UK.

Mitsuoka Motor has an extraordinary history. Susumu Mitsuoka started building micro-cars in 1982, progressed to making replica Porsche 356 Speedsters and then, between 1990 and 1993, he built 500 examples of his Mitsuoka Le-Seyde. It was styled to resemble the American Zimmer Golden Spirit, of which approximately 1500 had been made between 1980 and 1988. The Zimmer was built on a Ford Mustang platform extended by 38 inches (96 cm) and was fitted with a 435bhp 4.2 litre Ford V8. The car has spare wheel carriers on both front wings and on the tail of the car, but they're all too small to carry a spare wheel! Later Golden Spirits made between 1997 and 2020 were based on the platform of the Lincoln Town Car with its wheelbase extended by around 12 inches (30 cm). The Zimmer has been described as "tacky", "gauche" and "the epitome of bad taste".



1980 Zimmer Golden Spirit



1991 Mitsuoka Le-Seyde

The Mitsuoka Le-Seyde was based on a Nissan Silvia S13 Coupe with its wheelbase extended by 35½ inches (90 cm). It's fitted with the Nissan's 1.8 litre engine producing 131bhp and all 500 sold out very quickly in Japan. The Silvia is a good car for drifting and some wags on the internet are suggesting that this is how a Le-Seyde should be driven too! I found a Grand Tour video featuring the Le-Seyde at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hhjHcHlmdA4>

Mitsuoka launched their next car, the Viewt, in 1993 and Mitsuoka was formally registered as the 10th Japanese automobile manufacturer in 1994. Mitsuoka cars are based on the platforms of other Japanese cars fitted with bodywork modifications to mimic the features of various classic cars. They retain the central body section of the donor car including the doors and whereas the Le-Seyde's new body parts were fibre-glass, the Viewt is all-steel. The dashboard, driving controls and much of the interior are also carried over from the base cars. Mitsuoka sales are mainly in their home market with just a few exported around the world.

About a thousand Viewts are made each year. There have been four versions: the K11 from 1993 to 2003, K12 (2005 to 2012), K13 (2012 to 2023), and the XP210 from 2023 to date. All of them have the same frontal styling based on the Jaguar Mark II and, as you might guess from the model names, the first three were based on the Nissan Micra K11, K12 and K13 platforms. The XP210, still has the Jaguar front but with simpler chrome bumpers that no longer mimic those of the Jaguar Mark II. It is built on the Toyota Yaris XP210 platform.



The Jaguar front of the Mitsuoka Viewt



Mitsuoka Viewt K11 1993-2002



Mitsuoka Viewt K12 2005-2010



Mitsuoka Viewt K13 2012-2023

Mitsuoka also produced two convertible versions of the Viewt based on the short-lived Nissan March Cabriolet of 1997/1998. The Micra is sold as the Nissan March in Japan, but who knew they made a convertible version with an electric hood?



Mitsuoka Viewt XP210 with hatchback



Nissan March Cabriolet



1998 Mitsuoka Viewt convertible - 'Jaguar' rear



1998 Viewt convertible - with Nissan boot-lid

As well as the cars described above, during the last 35 years, Mitsuoka have produced an amazing 30 different models plus the concept car for their new M55 Dodge Charger replica that will have a Honda Civic chassis. If that wasn't enough, since 1999 they have been the Japanese importer for the Malaysian-built TD2000, a replica of the MG TD.



Mitsuoka TD2000 - British registered!

Over the years Mitsuoka have built lookalikes as diverse as:

- the Bubu Classic SSK: a very crude copy of the 1930s Mercedes SSK sports car it used the floor-pan of a VW Beetle complete with its engine at the rear!
- the Bubu 356 Speedstar that closely mimics the Porsche 356 Speedster
- the Zero One based on the Lotus Seven but with Mazda MX5 powertrain
- the Galue: a Bentley T-series look-alike based on the Nissan Crew saloon
- the Microcar K-2 that looks like the 1950s Messerschmitt KR200 bubble car
- the Yuga: a close replica of LTI's London Taxi based on a Nissan Cube platform
- the Rock Star that resembles the Corvette C2 and uses Mazda MX5 underpinnings

There's another Mitsuoka that's been available in the UK since 2014. In Japan it's known as the Himiko but over here it's called the Roadster. It uses Mazda MX5 underpinnings and costs around £54,000 which is a bit pricey for an MX5 in a frock.



2014 Mitsuoka Roadster

I had a couple of surprises while writing this article. I told Howard Joynt about the Viewt I'd seen at Duxford and he knew exactly what it was! And then I remembered a car I'd seen when I bought Tara's new (well new to us) Vauxhall Corsa. I rang the dealer this morning and sure enough, it's a Mitsuoka Le-Seyde in white and, surprise, surprise, it's still for sale.

Spadeadam Blue Streak Targa Rally

Sunday 11th August saw us at the Downagate Community centre in Warwick Bridge, just outside Carlisle for the 2024 edition of the Blue Streak organised by Spadeadam Motor Club. We have done every Blue Streak since 2016 as they always have been an enjoyable and well organised event and a good day out, even when they have been a bit testing.

This year's weather forecast looked promising and Saturday had been a bit of a scorcher following the first fortnight of decent weather we'd had all year so we were hoping the tests would be in better condition than 2023 when some had to be cancelled due to the wet. On arrival the sky was clear and the sun was well up and all was looking good for the day. We got unloaded and lined the car up for scrutineering which we passed without an issue only to find that the car would not start afterwards! Several attempts failed and it looked like our day could be over before it began. First thoughts were that it would be either the fuel pump, which would have been game over, or, the fuel pump relay which has failed before. Some years ago, I had made up a 2-wire harness to replace the relay which I always kept in the door pocket, or at least had done. A thorough search failed to produce it and I eventually remembered that I had used it to replace the same relay in the 944 some time ago. No problem, or so I thought, I always carry a rally tool kit in the car with wire, crimps etc. so I got the tools out but couldn't find the crimps! Anyway, I cut and stripped a couple of bits of wire and managed to poke the ends in to the relay socket after a number of attempts and the engine burst in to life at the next attempt and I was able to get back to our trailer. Still unable to find my crimps, Gavin Murray came to the rescue with a comprehensive electrical box and I was able to make a good temporary fix which would allow us to start. Maggy meanwhile, unaware of what was going on outside was busy marking up the test diagrams so that by the time I got back to see her she was well on with the job and so coffees and bacon rolls were purchased and we could look forward to the day ahead. John Ross gave a driver's briefing at 8-30 with the first car due to leave at 9-00 which meant we had plenty of time as we were seeded 30 and with 2 minute intervals we had until 10-00 to get ourselves sorted out.

This would be the first event since I got the engine sorted out and running properly since re-shelling the car last year so it was going to be interesting to see how it performed now that it was no longer "bogging down" at low revs. I'd done a test day at Teesside Autodrome a couple of weeks before and made a couple of minor adjustments and it all seemed to be going well (once started!!) so we were looking forward to seeing how it would perform.

With start time reached we set off to the first test, Eden Park, just by the entrance to Carlisle airport, which has been used regularly on this event and joined a short queue waiting to start. Always a bit of a challenge, this is around the old dispersals but is complicated by long grass and weeds obscuring the sighting of some of the cones until you get to them and on the day there was also a problem with having to drive back through your own dust, a problem not encountered so far this year. The temperature was rising but with the dust we had to keep the windows closed in the car and it got quite warm in there quite quickly but we managed to get round with no penalties and were even told that our 108 seconds was a "quick time" on exit so with the first test out of the way and cleaned we were both a bit more settled and set off for the 7.7 mile run to test 2, Kirkhouse, out to the East of Brampton and a place which on our last visit, several years ago, we nearly had a close encounter with a rather solid looking metal fence.

With a mix of surfaces, sealed, grass and gravel, some interesting grip was encountered and with collections of heavy metal quarry machinery parts lying around there were a couple of "near misses" and with the dust being a bit of a problem on the return runs down the three "legs" of the test it certainly provided some challenges but we got round clean and set off for test 3, Warren House, which we had never been to before and which we had been told involved going in a building which we knew would cause Maggy a problem as her eyesight is not very good in reduced light, but the layout looked simple enough on paper so I wasn't too concerned about it.

On arrival at test 3 we had a brief look at the diagram which had a bit of a fiddly start to it with what looked like a figure of 8 between 2 cones but with a third cone in the middle to cause confusion. I decided to take it slowly which was about the only option as it was quite tight and involved a lot of handbrake use before a confusing exit of the first area down to a straightforward run to enter the building. The entry end was quite open and there was enough light at the back to see the cones, however, the dead tree at the end of the barn was not that visible until we got a bit closer but I managed to just miss it and once more got to the finish of the test without penalty. So, happy bunnies in the car with 3 tests down and a long road run of 14 miles up to test 4 to give us a chance to get the windows open and get a bit of air through the car as the outside temperature was now well up in to the 20's and was rising.

Test 4, Park House, is one we have done before and has always been a bit of a bogey for us as the first part in the farm yard is tight and usually very slippery because of the cows and usually causes us problems so we always approach it with a degree of trepidation and are always glad when we've done it. This year we arrived in glorious sunshine to see a queue of cars waiting to get in and Chris Hunter working on his MX5 removing a part of his sump guard which had come down in the test and acted like a very efficient shovel, catching the ground and filling the engine bay with agricultural detritus. The delay was welcome and gave us a chance to get out and stretch our legs and allow a bit of breeze around the parts the breeze can't reach when you're sat in the car and have a bit of a crack with some of the other crews. We eventually got to the start line to be confronted by the first challenge, a tight ACW 360 around a cone which, on past events we've usually had to reverse for, however, this time I managed to get round it in one before heading through a tight 3 cone slalom to the next CW 270 around a cone which led to a run to a downhill track with a "stop astride" which, at other times we have slid through, but, this time with it being dry we managed to stop, bonus! A run down a track covered with Astro turf followed which had been very slippery last year when wet but this year was OK being dry. The 90 left at the end of the track was straightforward leading to the 3 "gates" up to the free turn which, although fairly tight, has usually been OK in past years, when wet, but this time with it being dry I couldn't get the car to come round quickly enough and had to stop and reverse a little to avoid hitting the fence. The return run was uneventful, fortunately, and I even managed to do the final 180L in to the finish without hitting either the cone or the barn (which we have done on a previous event) and we got to the finish with another clean run, probably our first ever on this test, and looked forward to another longish road run back to Carlisle airport for a re-run of Eden Park for test 5.

There was a short regroup before test 5 but with things having been a bit delayed at 4 we were straight in and out and down to test 5 which we managed to clean once more with a slightly improved time and had so far managed to do 5 tests without a penalty or incident. The road section to test 6 Kirkhouse 2, was a repeat of the earlier run to test 2 and we arrived with a clear test but just had to wait for a few minutes as a local van needed access to the site. Short delays are always welcome to us as it gives us a bit of time to have a look at the diagram again before starting. The test went pretty much as the first run through had, managing to get a bit closer to the quarry machinery hardware than before, and ending up 4 seconds faster and still no penalties so with only test 7, a repeat of 3 Warren House to go before lunch we were feeling quite settled and looking forward to the break back at the Downagate Centre.

The potentially confusing first part of test 7 was quite a bit quicker this time round as was the run down to the barn where I "knew" the layout and probably carried a little bit too much speed in to the barn. The car didn't come round as well on the handbrake as on the previous run with the result that I hit one of the branches on the dead tree which went through the offside indicator modifying the front wing, indicator, headlight and bumper and bringing us to a halt. A quick reverse and we were out of there and still go to the finish 9 seconds quicker than the first attempt but now, unfortunately, with a decidedly second hand looking front offside.

The car was driving all right so we made the 7 mile run back to the HQ with a short stop for petrol before arriving at MTC2 where with nearly an hour before restart I was able to grab a lunch pack and get back to the car to make some temporary repairs using the usual duct tape and cable ties and a bit of hammering so that we weren't looking too bad for the restart. By now it was really hot outside and the temperature must have

been high 20's, possibly higher, and so it looked like it was going to be a hot, dry and dusty afternoon in store.

The restart saw us taking a decent run of nearly 12 miles with all the windows open to get to test 8, Haggistone 1. We've been here before but it's usually been a fairly short test as the farmer has been reluctant to allow the club to go across the old airfield in the past but this year it was going to be a much longer test across the airfield and would be run twice before some minor changes and running twice more. We measured the test at about 2.3 miles and it comprised some fast-flowing sections with several slaloms, "lay bys" and 3 "stop astrides" on the way through. Early on a ACW 180 around cone E saw us going wide over a concealed kerb which caused a bit of concern but the car seemed OK so we kept going, making a mental note to approach wider to the right next time through. Cone "V" cunningly hidden behind a gate nearly caught us out but we just managed to get round it and the penultimate 4 cone slalom was rather tight but we got to the finish clean in 360 seconds. Maggy had done a great job calling everything out and took a well-deserved drink of water for her dry throat.

A short run round took us back to the start for an immediate repeat as test 9 which saw a 1 second improvement despite sliding past "V" requiring a reverse and a tight slow turn. It was a bit annoying as I'd got it the first time through but, as quite often happens, the second run was going a teeny bit quicker. Anyway 2 runs through the longest (2 pages and 3 diagrams) test of the day were complete and we could have a bit of a breather on the run up to test 10, a regular on this rally, at the Plumpe Farm.

On arrival at The Plumpe we saw a ploughing match in progress in the field opposite and would have stopped for a look if we hadn't been on an event. There was only one car waiting to start so a quick look at the diagram, which was virtually the same as 2023 and we were ready to start. The initial part of this test is on grass/gravel with a bit of a tricky uphill run and a tight turn at the top followed by a downhill "stop astride" which can be a bit tricky before entering the farmyard for some tightish manoeuvres between the buildings. Despite getting a bit closer to some of the walls than I would have liked we managed to get round clean in what we felt was a respectable time for us. Straight out of 10 and 100 yards or so got us to test 11 "Watersplash". This is another well used test and is pretty much linear down a track with 3 slaloms, 3 cattle grids with 3 gates on the way down which are repeated on the return before the finale which is the water splash at the finish where one always tries to make a decent splash. We made good progress on the run out but returned a little bit too quickly and nicked one of the cones. Our first penalty of the day which spoilt an otherwise tidy run only 1 second over bogey!

Kicking myself a bit for what was a stupid error we set off for the regroup at Mill Hill where drinks and Christine Ross's magnificent homemade shortcake was available in large supply which was most gratefully received and enjoyed whilst allowing us a short while to stand in the shade of the bungalow for a brief respite from the sun. After a nice break and a quick tyre kick and a crack with some of the crews we set off again for Haggistone for tests 13 and 14 which were slightly changed from earlier in the afternoon. The long run through Haggistone 2 for the first time saw us miss the kerb at "E", remember where cone "V" was and complete the run through clean and 13 seconds faster despite the changes having added time, in our opinion, to the test. The short run round back to the start of the second run allowed a bit of a cool off and a comfort break for the driver before heading back in to test. Having cleaned it 3 times the final run was always going to be a bit of a choice between trying to go a bit quicker and possibly cocking up or just take it steady and keep it clean. The second option seemed the more sensible and, surprisingly, that was what we did but somewhere along the line we ran a bit wide and it cost us a couple of seconds. With the long tests finished and the last 2 tests to do we were looking forward to getting them done and returning for pie and chips as it was getting well past 4pm.

The Plumpe was reached and we were straight in and managed to get round a couple of seconds faster before going on to the final test at "Watersplash 2". Remembering the error on the first run through I was a bit more cautious this time, probably over cautious as our time was 11 seconds slower than the first run and 1 second slower even taking the cone in to account! Would've been quicker to hit the cone. That was it,

game over and nothing to do now but open up the windows and enjoy the run back down the M6 before heading back to Warwick Bridge and MTC4.

It was nice to get out of the car and have a little drink before loading up the trailer. The computer in the Galaxy said the air temperature was 27 degrees and it was past 5pm and still felt too hot to be stood out in the sun. We got the car loaded fairly quickly and once more thanked Gavin for his assistance, without which we would have missed the day, and headed in to the centre to first of all rinse the dust from our faces and hands and out of our eyes before heading upstairs for a most welcome pie, chips and peas served up by what seemed to be most of the Lindsay family. We sat down and really enjoyed the food but even more welcome was the can of cold drink that came with it before we eventually started thinking about checking the results. We'd hoped to be somewhere in the top 15 of the 45-car field as the previous year we'd not done very well and ended up 28th. Walking up to look at the results a couple of people commented that we'd had a good result but I was still unaware of it until Phil Savage stopped me and said we'd been going well and he thought we'd ended up about 5th or 6th! Well, my gash was well and truly flabbered and I thought he was just having a laugh but, in the meantime, Maggy had managed to have a look at the screen and, sure enough, there we were, second historic beaten only by the overall winner Steve Head and 5th overall including the Targa cars! It took a while to sink in as it was probably our best overall result for a long time and was totally unexpected as we had not been checking at all during the day as we never do. The car had run faultlessly all day although we seemed to have picked up some rattles throughout the day but the car would be going back into the garage for its regular post rally servicing (and a new wing fitting) before it's next event so any issues would be addressed then. Most importantly the engine was now running well and this was having a very positive effect on the handling and pick up through the tests so all in all, despite the early problem with the fuel pump relay (soon to be replaced with a manual switched set up) the day went really well for us.

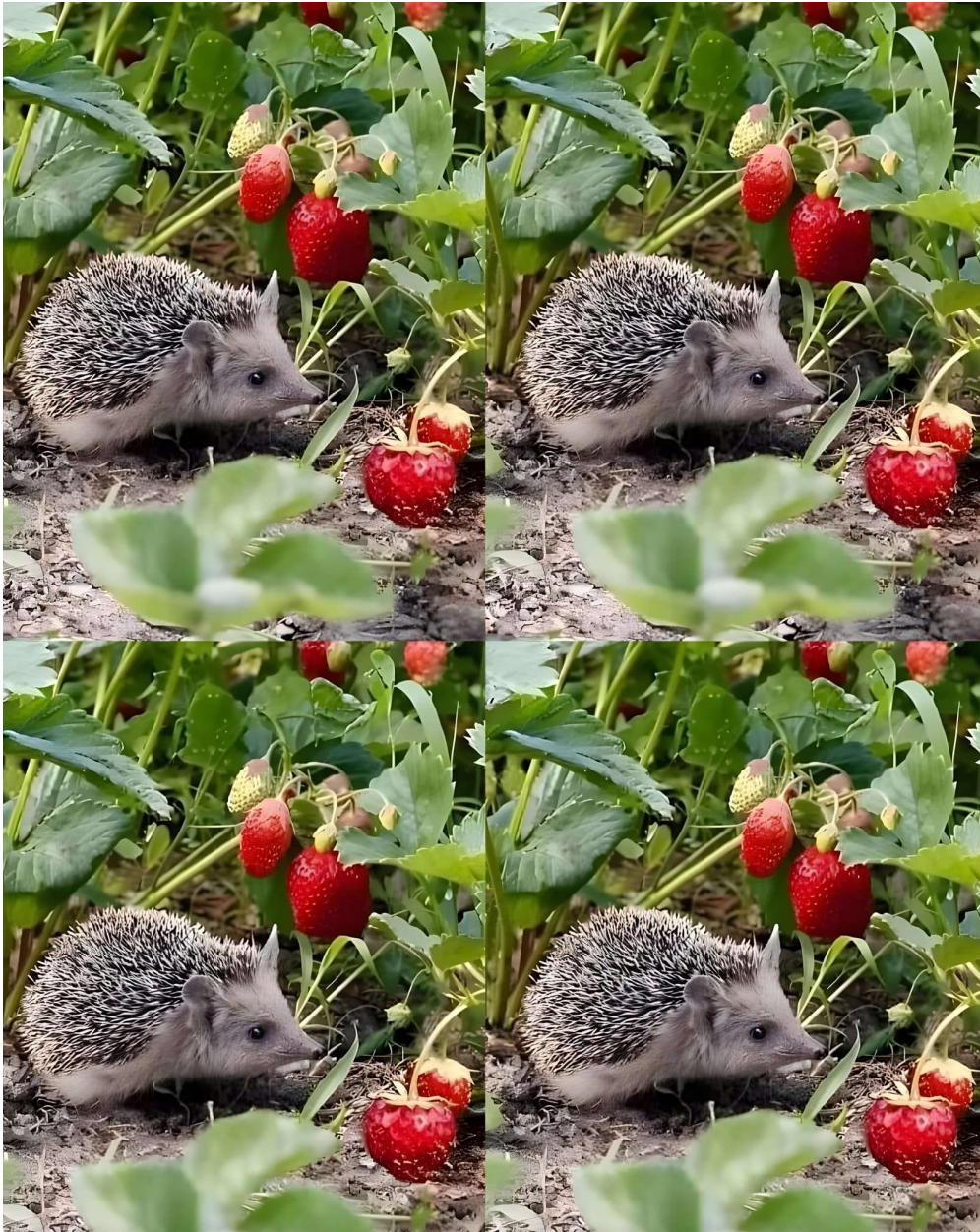
We stayed for the presentation as it was a beautiful early evening and after a couple of cold drinks there was no rush to leave and were very pleased to get our 2nd in class awards from John Ross before having some final chats with folk before heading down to the trailer park and being one of the last to leave.

As usual grateful thanks must go to John Ross and the organising team from the Spadeadam who, despite being a small club, always manage to put on a well organised and friendly event which we've always enjoyed whether it's been a good or a not so good result. Big thanks as always to all the marshals who this year were reaching for the factor 50 and using the umbrellas as sunshades for a change because without them there would be no events for us to do and it was really pleasing, as usual, to see the event assisted by many members from other clubs who were out marshalling on the day. Well done and thank you everybody. See you next year.

Geoff and Maggy Bateman, West Cumbria MC – car 30 Peugeot 205 Gti

And finally!

As drivers, we've all seen them in unfortunate circumstances on the road, but spare a thought for our prickly friends. Instructions on how to look out for them are detailed below.



"If you see me in your garden, please help me out! I'm just a little hedgehog, trying to survive. Here's how you can help:

🍖 Please give me some raw, unsalted meat, ground meat, or even some cat food (just not fish). Water is great, but please don't give me milk—while it may seem kind, it causes stomach problems and can dehydrate me.

🚫 No milk! I'll drink it if I see it, but it can really harm me.

Also, please avoid using insecticides or traps. I'm harmless, and I help your garden by eating those pesky insects that attack your veggies. My species is endangered, and we need your help to stay alive and healthy. Together, we can create a better world for all creatures, big and small. 🌱🐾 Thank you for your kindness!

[#SaveTheHedgehogs#GardenGuardians#ProtectWildlife"](#)