

Magazine of **Bristol Motor Club**

Driving Mirror



March - April 2024



British Sprint Championship

Inside: How to be a vSprinT Champion - **Mallory Park**

BSC - **MX5s** - Clio Sport preparation - **Drive-By**

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Cover shot: Steve Miles pre-season testing at Llandow

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The next Driving Mirror deadline is
Friday 7th June 2024.

Chairman's Chat



Can you believe that at the time of writing in early April the British Sprint Championship (BSC) has already completed eight rounds no less. What a way to start your year.

Steve Miles of Mole Racing fame and ex-champion himself is back in the thick of it, currently leading in fact. That after a busy winter off-season that involved a fresh 307bhp Duratec, comprehensive suspension set up and new wrap. Steve admitting he has no idea how he found the time whilst still working. Steve is out next at Blyton Park on the 18th and 19th May if you'd like to see him pedal very quickly indeed.

Which does start a theme that is echoed throughout this copy of the magazine. Peter O'Connor has fitted a new engine and gearbox to his Clio Sport and also gone for a new wrap to show off his sponsors. Typically this is all a bit last minute.com but Peter is out at the Combe Carnival on 27th May if you fancy seeing him in action (750MC Clio Sport Championship).

All of which makes our MX5's look like a

gift. Buy one and fit well publicised modifications and off you go. Rounds 1 and 2 have also passed with Rounds 3 and 4 at Wiscombe Park at the end of April (27th and 28th) up next. There are already some strong performances of both new and old competitors (a measure of experience as opposed to age, they all look young to me). Good luck all.

And with all this competition going on sometimes focus on how to behave towards each other can get forgotten. It is easy isn't it in the heat of a moment to perhaps forget that the people who run our events are all volunteers, choosing to give up their time for free to enable the rest of us to drive round in circles for not very long at all.


Motorsport UK has created 'Race with Respect' to help create a positive environment both on and off track. I encourage everyone to have a read and make sure you're operating in an appropriate manner at all times.

Enjoy this copy of the magazine and please remember to play nicely at all times.

Matt Nichols

Revolution

April 2024

The official magazine of  motorsport uk

THE ART OF CO-DRIVING

What it takes to be the best



INCLUSIVE ACTION

DRIVING
DIVERSITY
IN MOTORSPORT

INSIDE HQ

BEHIND THE SCENES
AT THE COMPETITION
AUTHORISATION OFFICE

MY TOP FIVE...

LESSONS LEARNED
WITH GEMMA
RAYMOND

PLUS: NATIONAL COURT + WHAT'S ON + CHAMPIONSHIP RESULTS

<https://www.motorsportuk.org/revolution-magazine/>

Race with Respect

Encouraging a positive environment, on and off the track

The National Governing Body's Respect Code champions a high standard of behaviour from everyone within the motorsport community underpinned by our commitment to make motorsport an inclusive and safe sport for everyone, across all levels of motorsport.

The Respect Code will help to grow and strengthen the sport by making it accessible and welcoming for everyone and we cannot stress enough how important it is that it is embraced by all participants. By participating in a Motorsport UK event, in any capacity, you are agreeing to follow the values of the governing body's Respect Code:

- * Respect
- * Integrity
- * Fair Play
- * Self-control
- * Good Manners

We therefore ask all members to pledge to #RaceWithRespect and:

- * Contribute to a welcoming and friendly environment that ensures

the safety and welfare of all participants

- * Always behave with integrity and uphold fairness in the sport; play your part in keeping the sport safe through your actions
- * Treat everyone with respect, regardless of their gender, ethnicity or socio-economic background, language, religious or other beliefs, disability, sexual identity or other status
- * Recognise that we all represent the sport and therefore have a duty to be polite and respectful to all staff, officials, competitors, volunteers, as well as fans and supporters
- * Respect the rules, regulations and authority of the officials and Motorsport UK
- * Whether you are a Competitor, Parent, Official, Marshal, Team Manager, Mechanic, Spectator or any other participant in the Event it is incumbent on us all to Respect our fellow participant and to 'call out' poor standards of behaviour. Breaching the above obligations may result in disciplinary action.

<https://www.motorsportuk.org/racewithrespect/>



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WITH
RESPECT**

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- **INTEGRITY**
- **FAIR PLAY**
- **SELF-CONTROL**
- **GOOD MANNERS**

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MEMBER OF



Well that didn't go to plan...!

After ending the 2023 season with a modicum of success, third overall in Class A of the Castle Combe Saloons Championship, the winter was spent wondering what to do for 2024. The Grant Motorsport prepped Audi TT was clearly very fast but we didn't quite get all our ducks in a row to get the results we thought we could.

After 14 years of racing in various guises, Dave & Alice getting married in October and the Bank of Mum & Dad looking to take early (well deserved) retirement at the end of the year, the back of the sofa was raided for one last time. An extremely 'tight' budget was found and set aside for entries fuel and tyres for one last year of Motorsport, a swansong so to speak.

Monday 16th March

With minimal changes to the car, apart from the usual maintenance and new tyres, we arrived at the Castle Combe Racing Club Media day on 16th March, Dave was extremely chipper and boy did he deliver! To save the car he was only allowed 2 sessions which resulted in a time 8/10s faster than he had ever been.

Monday 1st April

On Easter Monday we excitedly rocked up to Castle Combe for the first race of the season and with the 10 mins warm up completed it was time for qualifying. With a partially damp track Dave was immediately the fastest looking ridiculously quick setting the pole time of 1.11.287 on lap 5 with average speed of 93.42mph.

Team standard procedure after a fast lap is come in for a quick debrief before going back out to set another lap for race 2. All was good, Dave left the pit lane quickly accelerating to circa 130 to stay ahead of others coming round then it all went T*Ts up.

At the top of Avon Rise Dave braked and the pedal went to the floor, he tried all sorts including the handbrake but went sideways into the barriers at Quarry before launching into the air and rolling over coming to rest on the driver's door.

It is at this point I unashamedly thank Grantley Woodhatch of Grant Motorsport for not only building a ballistic missile but an incredibly strong missile. Terry the TT wrapped his arms around Dave to protect him and once Terry was back on 4 wheels Dave walked out, heavily bruised but uninjured.





I also can not thank the Marshalls and medical teams for their skill and professionalism in this situation. I also am amazed at the rectocell in front of the barriers that must have improved the outcome, that said the track was shut for 45mins while they replaced 5 posts and 10m of armco.

So that is it with the car extensively damaged the season is over before it started.

Tuesday 2nd April

Having analysed the car and data the front master cylinder collapsed and the IMPACT was just over 100mph, due to the damp track and wet grass Dave didn't scrub off much speed.

Friday 5th April

Grantley has taken a leap of faith that somehow I can find the money to fix this and started work on repairing Terry (he deserves it), clearly this will take our entire seasons budget and more leaving us in the situation of possibly getting the car fixed but no money to race it.

Whilst we all partake in this indulgent hobby it is at times like this where friends do help and you learn who they are. Craig Cook of commentating and CC Sim Racing fame has created a

GoFundme page to attempt to assist us so if you have a spare 20p we would never say no (search Spiller Audi TT). As a thankyou everyone who donates regardless of amount will be entered into a draw to win a passenger ride with Dave at the end of the season, if you are brave or stupid enough.

At this point we are unsure when we will be back out but Grantley is aiming for Mayday race which would be nothing short of a miracle given the state of the car, watch this space.....

Pete Spiller



Season Review

It recently dawned on me that although we always publish our events calendar on the back of the magazine, we don't always talk about how we got there or explain any changes.

We did unfortunately get caught out with a change to Motorsport UK insurance with our NavScatter right at the start of the year. Best run end of January, or latest February, before lighter evenings and daylight saving the lead-time to get insurance had increased which when layered on top of event organiser availability meant opportunity lost. The good news is we have a route in the bag ready to go for next time.

Despite efforts to the contrary, we don't currently have an AutoSOLO venue and so with regret had to admit our event in May was not going ahead. Thanks to the efforts of Andy Thompson, Phil Oliver and others a deal was done to divert our Spring round to the EMCOS event on 7th April thus maintaining 4 rounds of each discipline in the MX5's. Needs must.

Autumn AutoSOLO aside, the remainder of the calendar looks pretty firm with now two rounds at Llandow, the second part of the British Sprint Championship and likely to be very busy indeed.

We're at Castle Combe again for two

Sprints and a Parade. Regulations will soon be out for the Dick Mayo in July with the Classic and Performance Parade already in receipt of a 100+ entries.

I shall continue to publicise the latter to the classic car community as I think a safe half speed track event suits that genre. It is also enjoyed by those with more modern machinery who simply don't like the idea of competition or a full on track day. We also only charge £20.00 which I think will need to rise to £25.00 next year.

Wiscombe Park has a wonderful history and still enjoys full entries in just a matter of a few days every time an event is run there. An enviable position to be in, although not always helpful if you're late to enter whilst trying to compete in ours or a regional championship. We visit twice for two double header weekends, once in April with our MX5's then later for our 5 Clubs event in September.

As the year draws to a close we venture out once again with thick coats and wellie boots to enjoy our two trials. The Allen in particular bucking the trend of some other Classic Trials with its own quick to fill entry.

Arguably with more volunteer organisers we could do more, but for now I think that's plenty.

Matt Nichols

Date	Event	MX5s	Bristol Speed
TBC	Winter NavScatter (BMC)		
Sunday 19 March	Clay Pigeon Sprint (BDCC)	Yes	
Sunday 7 April	Aston Down AutoSOLO (EMCOS)	Yes	
Sunday 14 April	Kemble AutoSOLO (Bath MC)	Yes	
Saturday 27 April	Wiscombe Park (Woolbridge MC)	Yes	
Sunday 28 April	Wiscombe Park (Woolbridge MC)	Yes	
Tuesday 7 May	AGM & Hot Buffet (BMC)		
Sunday 8 June	Llandow Sprint (BMC/ BPMC)		Yes
Sunday 9 June	Prescott (Bugatti Owners Club)	Yes	
Sunday 7 July	Gurston Hillclimb	Yes	
Saturday 13 July	Dick Mayo Sprint (BMC)	Yes	Yes
Sunday 14 July	Classic&Performance Parade(BMC)		
Sunday 4 August	Kemble AutoSOLO (Bath MC)	Yes	
Saturday 17 August	Llandow Sprint (BMC/ BPMC)	Yes	Yes
Saturday 7 September	Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (5-Clubs)		Yes
Sunday 8 September	Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (5-Clubs)		Yes
Sunday 15 September	Bristol Autumn AutoSOLO (BMC)	Yes	
Saturday 12 October	Great Western Sprint (BMC)	Yes	Yes
Friday 25 October	Autumn NavScatter (BMC)		
Sunday 10 November	Fedden Sporting Car Trial (BMC)		
Sunday 26 November	Allen Classic Trial (BMC)		
Tuesday 3 December	General Meeting & Buffet (BMC)		

Mallory Park 24th March

After much work on the brakes my season started on March 24th at Mallory Park.

I had not been to Mallory for 13 years and basically forgot how good it is. Very fast with some big stops. Perhaps my memories were clouded by the weather on my last visit. I recall the event was stopped temporarily because the timing gear was being triggered by the snowflakes.

No weather of that nature on this visit. Simon and Elen had been in touch and we had organized food and other essentials. Mallory is about 100 miles from Calne and is reached by a pleasant run across the Cotswold's in what Google maps claimed would be 2hours 30minutes. Simon and I liaised mid journey and we arrived within ten minutes of each other.

The bike track day had not finished and we had to wait to access the paddock. Knocking on the door of their van I was very surprised to have it opened by Bob Bellerby who had declined going show jumping with wife Helen and decided to join us. Great decision Bob as I now had a minder/mechanic for all of the issues one forgets over the winter.

A pleasant evening was had with excellent food and drink in Bobs palace of a motorhome and fully rested we

started the event at 7am the following morning.

I had the luxury of my new to me Brian James Sprint Shuttle trailer with advantages like being able to walk down the side of the Striker to load. The big worry was had I the correct tools and equipment to service the needs of the Striker when I had effectively had replaced the whole braking system.

Other than a few runs along the A4 over the prep time of the car little testing had been possible.

Confidence in the work was high because the pedal felt much better and the balance bar seemed to work as intended but in truth there is no substitute for the heat of competition.

Elen and I had walked the course and have established which chicanes were to be used it was clear big stops were to be the order of the day followed by big



acceleration back up to speed. Whilst the work on the clutch over the winter made control at slow speed and starts a whole lot better the brakes had to be tested.

Mallory is predominantly a motor bike track and not as spacious as Combe. It is built in the grounds of a country home



and has two lakes in the middle of the course. There is a very tight hairpin with a wall which is about eye height. The course used was one and a half laps using an under-steering bend called Gerrards used twice.

Straight from the start up to 4th gear at 70 to 80 mph this a balancing act of throttle against steering throughout its 180-degree turn.

Second time around with warm tyres and higher speed the balancing act is repeated but I was able to change up to 5th about 2/3 round and let the unsteer take me out to the edge of the track as you join a

short straight. Big stop for Edwina's chicane, big acceleration up to the hairpin with a big stop and eventually getting the right line after exploring other possibilities.

Felt fairly pleased about the work on the brakes but if anything, they need a little more bias to the front. Other work over the winter proven very successful with clutch and handling both working well. I came second in class beating a Caterham R500 in class and the time of 620R in the class above. It really is amazing the confidence of knowing you have brakes which work can give a driver

Altogether a very enjoyable event which has convinced me not to leave it 13 years before I go back. The "new" trailer worked well, it is heavier and, overall the outfit a little slower. The habit of cutting the corners much more than the old trailer will require the driver to adapt. I seemed to have all of the required tools but in truth I did not test this function fully.

The event was run by Sheffield and Hallamshire MC with Peter Howgate of British Sprint as secretary of the meeting and C of C duties being Paul Parker. The whole affair will be repeated in June so do look out for entries as I hope I have tempted you.

Mike Smith

Harry Thompson vSprint Double Champion

Harry Thompson, another of our Junior members is our Bristol Motor Club two time vSprint Champion and he's shared with Driving Mirror the secrets to his success.

and Dirt Rally 2.0, my personal favourite.

I also play Gran Turismo 7, where I often compete in ranked Sport Mode races, where you are placed with other drivers with similar driver and sportsmanship



Porsche 930 Turbo is Harry's favourite and a joy to four wheel drift

How long have you been playing Gran Turismo Sport?

It's definitely been a while! I've been playing on and off since late 2018, however I played Gran Turismo 4 on the PS2 for a year or two before that.

What other racing games do you play?

There's a good mix between arcade and simulation titles, anywhere from Need for Speed, all the way to Assetto Corsa

ratings.

Steering wheel or Controller?

Depends on the game really, arcade titles like Need for Speed are more fun on controller, whilst more simulation orient-ed games are better on wheel. GT Sport is played on controller, purely due to the fact that our pedal potentiometers had to be changed, and for some reason they didn't work properly in this specific game.

If controller which buttons give you the best control?

For me, I use the left stick for steering, and the right for throttle control, with R2 and L2 for gears. This stems back to playing the old PS2 games like GT4, as the analogue sticks were the default option. However, most vSprint competitors use motion steering, and I see this as one of the best options, just not suited to me personally.

What is your favourite track?

This is a tricky one. Each track has things I like and dislike about them, however my personal favourite (in GT Sport) has to be either Spa or Goodwood.

What is your favourite car?

Again, a tricky one! Not sure if it's the setup I have on it, but I find the Porsche 930 Turbo is an absolute joy to four-

wheel drift through corners.

How do you find the best set up for a car?

I've got a standard setup that I put on all my cars, then can fine tune from there, depending on the track, and how the car is to drive.

Do fast lap times come quickly or does it take many laps to get used to the track/ car?

For me, it takes some time to familiarise myself with the car and track, as well as fine tuning setups. One thing that really helps me is testing the track limits, as it gives an idea of how hard you can push through a corner without incurring a penalty.

Andy Thompson



It takes Harry a little while to dial into both car and track before setting a fast time

750 Motor Club Clio Sport Championship

So the 750 motor club season finished in September and after what can be described as an eventful season where I had 1 car destroyed in round 1, bought a new car and transferred the parts over.

Only for the conrod to go at Snetterton in Qualifying and then I lost another engine at Silverstone – all just one of those things rather than poor prep or anyone's fault.

I set about getting ready for this year. It's kept me busy as I have had:

- * New engine rebuilt

- * Gearbox rebuilt with the last remaining synchro's from Renault Sport Dieppe – Sad times – as I love a Renaultsport as many of the club know
- * Car resprayed in white by the team
- * Car is currently being wrapped in the new sponsors courtesy of JG Racing & DUS Lighting

As with all best laid plans – I am now a few weeks away and yet to sit or drive the car for about 6 months due to parts delays – which meant a 4am start last week to do a 330 mile round trip to Essex to get my car wrapped.



Parts delays forced an early start and 330mile round trip to get the car wrapped

But all good fun and part of the entertainment. Just hoping I have a clean first round and the engine and gearbox stay in the car for the full season this time.

I am racing at Castle Combe on the May Bank holiday so would be great to see anyone who is free that weekend

A big shout out to the people and teams helping me to race this season and supporting me along the way. They



New engine and gearbox all part of the 2024 season preparations

include JC Automotive, DUS Lighting, JG Racing and Charlie Brisker & Renault whiz Paul Clarke.

Peter O'connor

2024 BMC MX5 Challenge is Go

The 2024 Bristol Motor Club MX5 Challenge is Go! Go! Go! after Round 1 on the 17th March at the Catch the Pigeon Sprint at Clay Pigeon Raceway in Dorset and Round 2 on the 7th April at the EMCOS Spring Autosolo at Aston Down in Gloucestershire.

in front of our previous double champion, Pekka Tulokas in fifth.

It's marvellous to see so many familiar faces return for the Challenge for another dose of fun as well as welcoming new faces in both Class A and Class B.



Another strong showing at Round 1 of our MX5 Challenge

Round 1

After a damp start Aaron Sharp powered his way to a half second win over Ben Marshall to claim the first bragging rights of the year. Only nine hundredths of a second separated Ben and Phil Oliver, in third place, who continues to demonstrate Class A cars can mix it up at the top of the table.

Nick Angrave introduced himself to the MX5 Challenge in style by finishing fourth

Round 2

Aaron Sharp secured a hard fought overall win at a very blustery Aston Down EMCOS Autosolo which was Round 2 of the 2024 Bristol Motor Club MX5 Challenge. Aaron was pushed all the way throughout the day by Ben Marshall who were both only separated by tenths all day. Aaron struggled to win an Autosolo last year so banking this so early in the year, if the title has to yet again down to tie breakers, could prove decisive.

James Hurford drove brilliantly to bag third place to take the final overall podium position and to win Class A. Second in Class A was another newcomer Mark Watkins who improved immensely over the day as he adapted his driving style to his Mk2 MX5.

Unfortunately we lost Phil Oliver, our Class A winner from Clay Pigeon, as he had to retire due to a non-motorsport related elbow injury. Get well soon Phil.

With Aaron and Ben taking 1st and second in Class B too, third place was secured by Paul Sunshine in his Mk3 Red Rocket which attracts a decent haul of championship points. Another newcomer to improve immensely over the day was Rob Fisher who was putting in times at

the end of the day that'd be pushing the top 3 which is impressive indeed, nicely done Rob.

The next round is only a week away on the 14th April and is being held at Kemble for our second Autosolo of the year before we head to the hills of Wiscombe at the end of April.

If you're interested in learning more about our amazing MX5 Challenge please visit our website at www.bristolmc.org.uk/mx5challenge, you could find us on Facebook on the Bristol MX5 Challenge page or simply get in touch with me direct (my details are listed in this magazine as the Membership Secretary).

Andy Thompson



Ben Marshall (left) kept Aaron Sharp honest (middle) with James Hurford third (right)

Mole Racing 2024 - Rounds 1 to 8 of the BSC

Despite all the time offered in retired life, this winter off season seemed the busiest ever, with a major engine refit program and several upgrades. Holidays in Dorset, Budapest, Hampshire, Paris, the Lake District and local activities took time out of the garage, so I made a full Gantt chart with all the jobs/nice things down the left and the time available between October and March to fit it in. With planning it all came together nicely, but no idea how I managed to fit a job in over these years as well.

Firstly, the old engine came out as it had had 50 hours of life and was split, the bottom end sold and the reused head, intake and sump delivered to SBD, now in the capable hands of Steve Broughton's original employee Craig Sampson and now based in Somerset. Same fantastic support, fully developed products, advice and service. I went for the maximum spec 1998cc Duratec engine, 307BHP, 200 lb-ft, revving to 9200rpm.

The chassis had a full strip, with repaint of most parts and welded repairs as required. The steering rack was refurbished at Universal Racing and TTV provided

new clutch fingers and bearings. New wet tyres purchased and local gearbox guru Tony Wilson sorted my diff preload out – don't retire yet Tony, you have lots of skills to share despite being in your 80's.

All the carbon fibre body work was meticulously rubbed down, polished and filled ready for the new look vinyl wrap as the final job after the rebuild. After getting a quote for £3k to wrap it, I thought I'd buy twice as much material as I need and have a go myself.

Flat panels such as the wings were relatively easy to wrap in a carbon fibre 'looky likey' and came up very well, but the main body was a 3dimensional challenge much more than a normal car. Not a single person job and without Martin's help it would have been impossible. I think 20man-days was the final tally – so I can see where the £3k quote came from.

All was completed with graphics from Sign It in Beeston providing their usual excellent service. Telsonic manufactured some superb set up jigs to replace my old bars, and then the car had its best ever set up – again taking about 3 days. Shake-

down, engine bedding in and testing here we come....

Llandow

The South Wales circuit was my exclusive venue for the day and SBD's Steve Broughton provided on site support to ensure everything went well and the engine was progressively bedded in, mapped, remapped and the launch and

traction control settings fine tuned to suit the car characteristics. I confess to being slightly nervous for the initial laps after a long break and all this investment, but everything went well, and during the day I managed around 40 laps – with the help of car sickness medication and 4 laps stints with a 30 minute break. How useless am I as a racing driver.

Bedding in oil was removed, race oil in-



Exclusive use of Llandow for one day to progressively bed the engine in

stalled and then we were given access to full revs, Wow, what a beast the “Van Diemen RF96mm 2024” is. Now only 4 days to wait until the first round of the season!

Cadwell Park

Rounds 1 & 2 of the British Sprint Championship at this Lincolnshire venue were held in blustery, cold, showery conditions. Car was strangely reluctant to start after such a good test, but on track it was OK. Coming off and driving slowly back in however was almost impossible. De-

spite a dodgy internet hotspot through the phone, Steve from SBD was able to change some fuelling parameter to help the idle, I really didn't know if I was going to get the run is and it was a testing day that resulted in two 5th place finishes and current champion Pete Goulding (1.6 Ecoboost) taking two wins.

After the event, I had a brand new spare throttle pot that I installed and Steve helped late into the evening as this was mapped and previous mods in the day removed and all was well as I set off for the 2.5 hour drive to Mallory. The rest of



Telsonic manufactured some new jigs and the car had its best ever set up taking 3 days



L-R John Loudon, Grahame Harden, Graham Blackwell, Steve Miles, Robert Tonge, Simon Wallis, Graham Porrett, Carole Torkington, Ant Brown, Pete Goulding, Lloyd Bettinson, Chris Jones and Nick Scott.

the BSC group were already there.

Mallory Park

We hadn't driven at this Leics circuit for over 10 years and was nice to be back. The car was running for practice OK, but again after the run it was tricky to drive slowly. Again, Steve dialled in and made some changes. This happened several times during the day, and the car made it to the line each time, but the results were better with two 3rd places from the day. Pete and Graham Blackwell (1.6 EcoBoost) were sharing the wins and benefiting from an extra 100bhp on this power circuit. Pete leaving the weekend in the championship lead.

It turned out my mechanical fitting of the new throttle pot the previous night was out as the butterfly in the intake wasn't 100% datumed when I adjusted the voltage reading. This mismatch was the source or the trouble. The following day I drove a 9 hour round trip with the car to Surrey where Steve of SBD got everything set up 100% and balanced all the intake. Car now runs like a dream!
Thanks SBD.

Anglesey

Two weeks later, it was time for the next 4 rounds. Anglesey is a great venue whatever the weather, but this time we had

Storm Kathleen hit it all weekend with constant 30-40mph winds and a peak gust of 54mph. Sleep was interesting despite shutting the roof, all windows and jacking the camper van solid on both sides with two jacks.

The national circuit run on Saturday is a short intense run, and we had mostly dry but some damp conditions. I chose to run on slicks all day, a choice I was happy with, but in the first run off we had a short sharp shower that favoured the latter runners as the track dried so quick and the first three cars, Pete, Graham and me were all placed mid field in the

results, with a great win from Chris Jones in the 1000cc force. Pete took the second win and I placed 2nd just 0.6s behind. Getting better time for a beer or two.

Unfortunately Steve Brown's awesomely powerful new engine had terminal issues at lunchtime and had to withdraw. The Sunday running on the fast international layout should have played into the hands of the powerful EcoBoost cars but the weather and grip of my car in the corners came into play. I stayed on slicks for the practice, qualifying and set fastest time of the meeting so far, but for the run off it was on wets.



Maximum spec Duratec has 307bhp and 200 lbs/ft torque



Original engine had 50hrs on it so it was split with the bottom end being sold off

The new wet tyres were really grippy, but I needed to change the front ride height requiring the nose to come off, the push rods adjusted and then load a new ECU map in as well as remove and fit 4 wheels – so not a 5-minute job. Traction control was working great and I was pleased to take my first run off win of the season.

Still damp for the final run off but track was dry in places, so I went to the line on slicks while everyone else was on wets. Pete spun and caused a 'red flag', causing me to slow and acknowledge the potential danger and so I was given a rerun. So, a jog back to the pits for fuel and back, to turn the car round and go again. The tyres had cooled so no advantage to be had, but at least I knew how dry and grippy the track was now and posted the fastest time of the day and won the sec-

ond run off.

'Party playlist happy time' as we packed up and all headed home after the awards and although it's a small quirk as Pete spun getting a low score, with 8 rounds complete I somehow moved into the lead of the championship. Still best 33 scores to count from 44 rounds, of which I am only able to attend 40 due to being invited to perform at Carfest this year again. At least I'm in the mix against the bigger cars again and it's a marathon, not a sprint – well it is, but you see what I mean.

Its now a 5 week wait until we are out again at Blyton Park, near Gainsborough in Lincolnshire on the 18th and 19th May – why not come along and see the action, free entry.

Steve Miles

Drive-By

“Farewell my friend, parting is such sweet sorrow...”

And in shocking news yep, the deed is done, and my old (t)rusty Vauxhall Vectra is now, hopefully, giving a new owner the same level of reliable service that I got from it for the nearly three and a half years of my custodianship and the more than eighty thousand miles we travelled together.

I know, it was only in my Drive By article in the previous issue of Driving Mirror at the start of this year that I mentioned I had just treated the old workhorse to a minor service and four new tyres and would probably run it for another year, so what changed my mind?

Well, as you may remember from one or two of my articles around the time of my purchase of the Vectra in 2020 (and Lord help you if you do and best advice would be to seek professional help...), the car more than met a number of the buying criteria I usually set myself for purchasing second hand cars (never ‘pre-loved’, pleeeese...) regarding price, condition, service history etc and, in fairness, this proved to be valid as the Vectra never once let me down, was as cheap as chips to run and only cost me the usual outlays for tyres, services etc plus a new battery and a few replacement lightbulbs. Even

now I wouldn’t hesitate to undertake any length of journey in it at a moment’s notice, it really was that reliable.

However, the Vectra was also the SRI version which is pretty much only a trim level, with the same 1.9 diesel thumper and autogearbag to be found in any of the other models in the range, but with the main difference being that Vauxhall had also fitted lowered suspension, firmed up the dampers and springs and bolted on a set of larger alloy wheels shod with lower profile tyres in order to provide the SRI with some sort of perceived sporting pretension.

Consequently, the Vectra did tend to be a bit of a brittle ride on anything less than perfect tarmac i.e. most of the UK’s roads, and with more than 108,000 miles on the clock and rising steadily each month, the old stager was really starting to feel its wear and tear and was becoming increasingly tiring to be driving on the three hours and 150 miles of my daily commute.

Add to the mix the fact that seventeen year old rubber seals had become very much less than optimal in keeping out the inclement weather and the car practically needed baling out after every reasonable downpour, and I reasoned that it was probably time for a change as remedial

work to the suspension, seals etc would be a waste of money and I would likely soon be reaching a situation of diminishing returns, with the car increasingly costing more and more investment just to keep it running reasonably, so it was time to pension it off and look for a suitable replacement.

So, the big question on practically nobody's lips, what could possibly replace a Vauxhall Vectra? Uhm, yes, I suppose walking, hitch-hiking, a bus pass or a do-it-yourself lobotomy are all probably valid suggestions and infinitely better than driving a Vauxhall Vectra, thank you... but what did Mr Dymock finally decide to spend his hard-earned readies on?

Given my way-above-average annual mileage, the various new car monthly lease deals become prohibitively expensive so it was always going to be another second hand motor, and I must put up my hand and admit that, for the briefest of moments, I did actually consider another Vectra, purely on the grounds of cost, and found another 2007 example with an astonishing 5,000 miles on the clock from new and advertised for just £1.25 for each of those miles.

Fortunately, I rapidly recovered my senses, dumped the idea of yet more self-inflicted automotive masochism and after

a long number of hours perusing Autotrader and exploring a veritable raft of cars available for barely adequate budgets, I finally splashed the cash on?

So, my new car - time for a little quiz and see if you can guess, here's your starter for ten, bonus for fifteen check list:

- * Full and comprehensive service history? Check
- * Practically impeccable bodywork and interior? Check
- * More cylinders than doors? Check.
- * More forward gears than cylinders? Check.
- * Steering wheel mounted flappy-paddle gearshift? Check
- * Drive to the rear wheels? Check.
- * A whopping 400lb/ft of torque to bother said rear wheels? Check
- * Limited by the manufacturer to 155mph? Check (hmm, got your attention now)

Not quite there yet? Okay, how about a bonnet mounted gunsight...

Of course, it's another Mercedes, and this time I've opted for a full-fat E Class, an E350.

Yes, it's a diesel again, but given the sheer number of miles I drive, it's a bit of a no brainer to help keep my costs reasonable. And for those of you unfamiliar with the E350, it's fitted with a 230bhp, 400lb/ft of torque, 3 litre V6 turbo diesel driving through a seven-speed automatic gearbox with flappy-paddles if you want to have a pop at shifting the gears yourself.

Following more homework than I ever put into my schooldays, I eventually found a couple of examples of Mercedes E350 Avantgarde that offered the best purchasing criteria for my budget and the two finalists were a 50,000 mile, silver example located in Thornbury where I work and replete with a black leather and piano black trimmed interior, or a slightly lower mileage example located in

Bournemouth (not too far from where I live) for a chunk less budget but finished in a dark metallic brown with a mid-tan interior.

I can't tell you how many times I looked at the advert for the brown example but try as I might I really couldn't reconcile living with that colour combination regardless of the decent cost saving, so I'm now the proud (third) owner of a beautiful silver 2010 Mercedes E350. The car is near faultless externally and internally and has an impeccable service history; main dealer for the early years and Mercedes specialists thereafter and was supplied with a new MOT which handily indicated that the previous owner drove it less than 6,000 miles in the previous three years.

Everything works perfectly, and with a quality that was never present in any Vectra, although it required a rather



Chris's new daily is ticking all the boxes and a real step up from the Vectra

steep learning curve on the day of purchase, and I consequently spent the drive home trying to figure out the various controls as they're all a bit different from what I was used to.

So, apologies if you were travelling south on the M5 that day and you came across an older Mercedes with an even older driver who insisted on using the indicators every rain shower and who apparently engaged the windscreen wipers to indicate every lane change, oops, sorry about that... And the less said about my inadvertently engaging the cruise control as I left the motorway and was rapidly heading toward the rear of the queuing traffic on the slip road, the better...

Another major departure from what I was used to in the Vectra is that my new steed is fitted with Mercedes 'Drive Select' which puts the gear selector on yet another steering column mounted wand. Which meant that, for the first week or so, I was constantly fishing around the central console every time I was wishing to set out or park although, now I've gained familiarity, I have to say that I prefer Mercedes take on gear selection as it's become just so intuitive to use.

Okay, the main question; has it been a good purchase and what's it like to drive? As if anyone needed to ask, compared with the Vectra the E350 is night and day better than the old Vauxhall in every respect. A bit of a no-brainer, I accept,

but it really is leagues better and has, quite literally, made my commuting remarkably less fatiguing.

The Mercedes really is incredibly quiet and comfortable, which was the main criteria for my ultimate decision to move on from the Vectra, and proof, if it were required, that I now value peace and comfort above nearly all other automotive considerations – important when you've reached an age where you've got your Gaviscon supplier on speed dial and you've stopped trusting your own farts...

Now that I've had a chance to run the numbers through my trusty abacus, the running costs have been equally astonishing as the Mercedes is the identical weekly fuel consumption as the Vauxhall – quite something given the performance difference and weigh of the E350 (a chunky-monkey at around 1850kg).

That's it for now, more unputdownable Mercedes E350 reading in my next Drive By article where I'll share my nickname for my new chariot (normally derived from the registration plate on my previous motors) and now that I've discovered a little button located on the central consol marked 'C/S' is a driving mode swap between 'Comfort' and 'Sport', I'll hopefully share my experience of charging around in sport mode. Purely in the interest of journalistic integrity, you understand.

Chris Dymock

Join Bristol Motor Club

The screenshot shows the Bristol Motor Club website's login interface. At the top, there are navigation links for 'Information', 'Subscriptions', and 'Events', along with social media icons for Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and YouTube. The club's logo and name 'Bristol Motor Club' are prominently displayed, with the tagline 'Promoting club motorsport since 1911'. The main heading is 'Sign in to Bristol Motor Club'. Below this, there are two input fields: 'Username' and 'Password'. The 'Username' field has a red border and a warning icon, with the text 'You must enter a username' and a link 'Forgotten your username/password?'. The 'Password' field also has a red border and a warning icon, with the text 'You must enter a password' and a link 'Have a password reset token?'. A blue 'Sign In' button is positioned below the password field, with a link 'Problems logging on?' next to it. To the right of the login fields, there is a section titled 'Not a member yet?' with the text 'Use this website to join the club and access a whole host of benefits including the ability to browse and sign-up for events, contact other members and renew your subscription.' and a green 'Register here' button. At the bottom of the page, there is a small copyright notice: 'Copyright © 2019 Simmetics Ltd. All rights reserved. Terms & Conditions. Open Source Attribution. NOTICE: We collect personal information on this site. To learn more about how we use your information, see our Privacy Policy. Powered by myClubhouse® - Online Club Membership Administration Software For Clubs - Management Version 5.12.15.1477-201 PAGE'.

Joining Bristol Motor Club couldn't be simpler, just visit our dedicated membership and event entry website: <https://my.bristolmc.org.uk/> and follow these steps:

To Join BMC*:

- 1) Visit <https://my.bristolmc.org.uk/>
- 2) Choose the Sign-In Option
- 3) Select Register Here
- 4) Complete the Registration Process
- 5) Go To Subscriptions
- 6) Accept Our Offer of Membership
- 7) Pay using a Debit/ Credit Card

NOTE:

*The Committee reserves the right to refuse membership to any person without reason (See 4.2 of Bristol Motor Club's Articles of Association).

BRISTOL MOTOR CLUB



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION / RENEWAL

To the Membership Secretary,

Bristol Motor Cycle and Light Car Club Limited ("the Company")

In order to fulfil Bristol Motor Club's contractual obligations with me/us, I/we hereby authorise you to enter my/our name(s) and other information entered in this form in the Register of Members. I accept that as well as being a requirement of Company Law the information will be used solely to produce mailing lists for club publications and event notices and will not be passed to any third parties unless required to do so to meet a legal requirement. The BMC Privacy Notice and Data Management Procedure are both available for me to read on the Club's website - www.bristolmc.org.uk/reference. If you agree please tick box

Full Member	First name	Surname	
	Email		
Associate member	First name	Surname	
	Email		
Address			
			Postcode
Main phone		Alternative	
Have you previously been a member of Bristol Motor Club?	YES / NO	Membership No(s)	
Do you wish to receive the club magazine, <i>Driving Mirror</i> , by post?	<i>(Delete as appropriate)</i>		YES / NO
Full membership	<i>tick boxes that apply y)</i>		£ 20.00
Associate membership (see www.bristolmc.org.uk/join-us for membership categories)			£ 10.00
Additional windscreen sticker (first one is complimentary)			£ 1.50
DEDUCT REWARD POINTS £1 each	(NOT applicable to NEW club members)		
TOTAL	cash / cheque payable to BRISTOL MOTOR CYCLE & LIGHT CAR CLUB LTD		£

DECLARATION

I / We, the above-named applicant(s), hereby:

- apply to become a member/members of the Company and agree to guarantee the sum of £0.13 (thirteen pence) in accordance with the Articles of Association of the Company;
- agree to be bound by and comply with the provisions of the Articles of Association and the Bye-laws of the Company which can be found on the Club website www.bristolmc.org.uk/reference;
- agree that notices and other general information may be sent by the Company to me/us, either at the email address given here, or by being published on the Company's website.

Signed (Full Member; and Associate if applicable)	Date
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For further information email membership@bristolmc.org.uk

Please post the completed form with your payment to: Andy Thompson, 46 Arden Close, Bradley Stoke, BRISTOL BS32 8AX.

FOR CLUB USE	Date received	Membership No(s).
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Privacy Notice

Bristol Motor Club respects your privacy and we will only use your information in the way we describe in this notice. When using your information, we aim to be fair and transparent, and to follow our obligations under UK data protection laws. Your information is used for administering club membership, activities, and competitions.

Bristol Motor Club is the data controller for the purpose of GDPR and the Data Protection Act 2018. Our club contact for privacy and data is our Chairman and their contact details can be found at <http://bristolmc.org.uk/committee-officers/>

Collecting your information

We collect your information when you fill in a membership application form, such as the one opposite. You can give us your information using paper forms or online forms. The information you give us may include your contact details (name, address, telephone number, email address). When you give us information about another person, such as an associate you should let that person know that you have given us the information.

If you are under 18 years old, we will also ask for information from your parent or guardian.

Using your information

We use your information when you first apply to become a member of Bristol Motor Club and then to administer and renew your club membership and provide you with member benefits.

Sharing your information

We may share your information with Motorsport UK as required by its General Regulations for governing motor sport, or if we have to comply with a legal obligation.

Security for your information

Your information is held securely by us. We have taken all reasonable steps, and have in place appropriate security measures, to protect your information.

Your rights

You are entitled to a copy of the information we hold about you, and to ask us to correct any inaccuracies. You may ask us to stop using your information, and to delete it, although by law we must maintain a permanent record of members. If you ask us to do this, we will not be able to continue our contract with you.

You may make a complaint to the Information Commissioner.



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Mechanic*

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Adrian@ClassicCarMaintenance.co.uk

Date	Event	MX5s	Bristol Speed
TBC	Winter NavScatter (BMC)		
Sunday 19 March	Clay Pigeon Sprint (BDCC)	Yes	
Sunday 7 April	Aston Down AutoSOLO (EMCOS)	Yes	
Sunday 14 April	Kemble AutoSOLO (Bath MC)	Yes	
Saturday 27 April	Wiscombe Park (Woolbridge MC)	Yes	
Sunday 28 April	Wiscombe Park (Woolbridge MC)	Yes	
Tuesday 7 May	AGM & Hot Buffet (BMC)		
Sunday 8 June	Llandow Sprint (BMC/ BPMC)		Yes
Sunday 9 June	Prescott (Bugatti Owners Club)	Yes	
Sunday 7 July	Gurston Hillclimb	Yes	
Saturday 13 July	Dick Mayo Sprint (BMC)	Yes	Yes
Sunday 14 July	Classic&Performance Parade(BMC)		
Sunday 4 August	Kemble AutoSOLO (Bath MC)	Yes	
Saturday 17 August	Llandow Sprint (BMC/ BPMC)	Yes	Yes
Saturday 7 September	Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (5-Clubs)		Yes
Sunday 8 September	Wiscombe Park Hillclimb (5-Clubs)		Yes
Sunday 15 September	Bristol Autumn AutoSOLO (BMC)	Yes	
Saturday 12 October	Great Western Sprint (BMC)	Yes	Yes
Friday 25 October	Autumn NavScatter (BMC)		
Sunday 10 November	Fedden Sporting Car Trial (BMC)		
Sunday 26 November	Allen Classic Trial (BMC)		
Tuesday 3 December	General Meeting & Buffet (BMC)		