



ECURIE ECOSSE

News From The Mews



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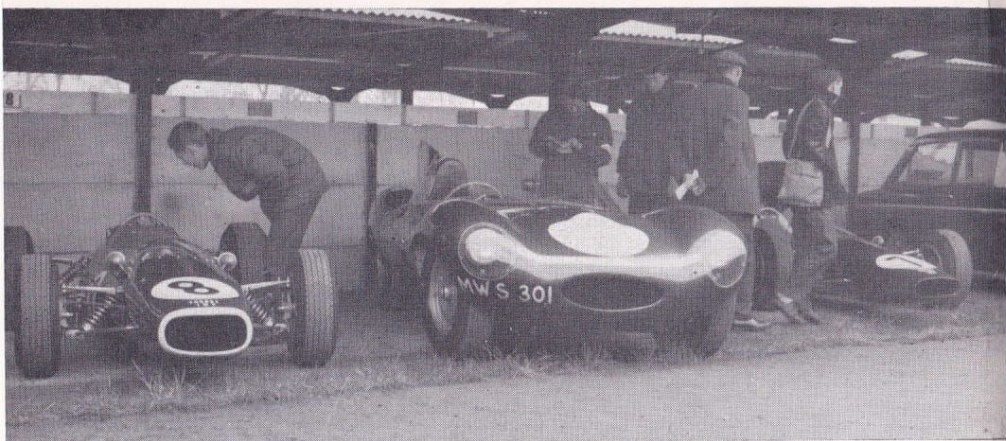


Photo: C. Strachan.

"Step we gaily . . ." mechanics Sandy Arthur and Stan Sproat stride it out at Ingliston.

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An historic picture for the album—The 1956 Le Mans winning “D” type Jaguar flanked by the 1967 diminutive Ecosse Imps at Ingliston.

Photo: C. Strachan.

—In the Wet

Alastair Balfour

Andrew Fletcher drove brilliantly to win the main event, the Edinburgh Students’ Charities Cup, on a track streaming with water at the meeting on 7th May. Driving a new Brabham BT18 propelled by a 1600 c.c. twin-cam Ford engine tweaked by Jimmy Veitch, he left the, by no means weak, opposition far behind and was never troubled.

That old Ingliston warrior, Jock Russell, surpassed himself by finishing second to Fletcher in the second half of the two 25-lap heat Charities Cup race and would have done the same in the first half had he not spun.

The Ecosse Imps, racing for the first time in the wet, were impressive. Graham Birrell finishing fourth overall and second in the 1000 c.c. class to John Millar’s F3 Brabham, a more powerful, albeit heavier car. Bill Dryden was never really at home in the newer fuel injection Imp after spinning in prac-

tice, but drove a steady race in the terrible conditions to finish fourth in his class.

Practice took place on a damp track; the rain began an hour before racing started, staying that way until just before the second last race. Despite this, the crowd was a good one (9000) and they saw many spills and thrills, with such experienced drivers as Bill Borrowman, Logan Morrison, Tom Christie and Andy Barton spinning gloriously.

The first race, for saloons up to 1200 c.c., was run in an absolute downpour with thunder rumbling above the raucous crackling of exhausts. It was won by G. Carr’s Mini-Cooper from J. Sime’s similar car after the early leader, Andy Barton in yet another Cooper, had twice aquaplaned off the flooded track.

In the second event, for Clubman’s cars, the favourite, Ian Cochrane and his 1500 c.c. Lotus 7 leapt

into the lead from a good start, only to spin at Merchants’, falling to the tail of the field in the process. Thereafter the feature of the race was Cochrane’s efforts to climb back on to the leader board. J. H. Applegarth’s Adder-Ford, which had inherited the lead when Cochrane revolved, won and Cochrane was a gallant fourth in a field of ten.

The terrible conditions were responsible for the very slow speed of the winner, 49 m.p.h. as compared to the more usual speed for these cars of around 63 m.p.h.

The first 25-lap heat of the Charities Cup was next and a disappointment here was the non-appearance of Irishman Tommy Reid with the 4.7 litre Croslé, which would have made a good match for Jock Russell’s car, powered by the same engine. At the start Andrew Fletcher went straight into the lead, never to be headed.

Behind Fletcher, Russell, sporting a new all-tartan crash helmet, and Willie Forbes scrapped for second place until Russell drew away. Graham Birrell in last year’s Ecosse-Imp was going really well in a group fighting for fourth place, a fight he was eventually to win. It was a joy to watch Graham sliding the Imp out of the tricky corner at Shepherds’ on opposite lock, looking very determined. Bill Dryden was not as well placed as Graham and spun at Gardners’ then at Shepherds’, losing four laps while he was push-started.

Just when it seemed as if Jock Russell was cutting down Fletcher’s ten second lead, he spun at Merchants’ and damaged the steering enough to force the luckless Jock to retire. So the race ran out with Fletcher a worthy winner from Willie Forbes’ Lotus 3-BMW by 16 secs., or nearly $\frac{1}{2}$ a lap. Third was John Millar in his Brabham, who won the under 1000 c.c. class, for which

the Edinburgh Students’ Tankard was the prize. Therefore Graham Birrell would have to beat Millar by at least 11 secs. in the second heat to win the class; a tall order.

There was a spectacular incident at the start of the big saloon’s race, when an incredibly tightly packed group of jostling cars hurtled into Bankers’ and somehow squeezed round, leaving behind the very battered Cooper S of Tom Christie. Apparently Sandy McCracken’s Jaynick Anglia had pushed Christie into several other cars and eventually the barrier, only for the Anglia to spin and retire at the next corner. Jim Dryden (no relation to Bill) drove very competently to win in his Cooper S from Blanckley’s scruffy 1800 c.c. Austin A40. A sad absentee from this race was the ex-Brian Redman Alfa-Romeo GTA of Richard Shardman, which did not appear.

The next race for Sports and Special G.T. cars saw the best scrap of the day, between Bill Dryden in Nick Cuthbert’s Lotus Elan and Rootes rally driver Andrew Cowan in our vice-chairman Harry Ballantine’s lovely Marcos 1800. John Nicholson’s Lotus 23B led initially at the start, but on the second lap he spun and hit the barriers in front of the grandstand, letting Dryden into a long lead from Andy Barton’s Mini-Marcos. Cowan



Sheltering from the rain, Graham Birrell (left) and Bill Dryden.

Photo: C. Strachan.

was driving beautifully in the terrible conditions and soon passed Barton for second place. Dryden's lead was being cut down lap by lap until with two laps to go the blue Marcos was right behind the Elan. Somehow Dryden managed to hold off in the scrabble round the last corner won by 0.4 sec.

Just after this, the attention of those watching the race was distracted by the appearance of the Charities Queen who was to present the prizes after the main event. With a great amount of self-control, however, we forced our eyes back to the track to watch the second race for up to 1200 c.c. saloons. The entry for this class was so large that the organisers split it into two races, one for the novices and the other for the "experts". Gerry Birrell "an expert", took the lead from the drop of the flag in his 1150 c.c. Shannon-Chamois and won without

much trouble from Bill Borrowman in the Sportstune Cooper S. Third was Haining in his beautifully turned-out Mini-Cooper. On the warming-up lap for this event two



Charlie's back! Charlie Strachan minus cameras—is caught at the Ingliston May meeting.



EXTRA MOTOR OIL

Ecurie Ecosse always use Esso Extra Motor Oil—the oil that stays on the job to protect your engine when it's idle as well as when it's running.

STAYS ON THE JOB

cars spun off at Bankers', quite a normal occurrence nowadays!

Event 7, for Marque cars was won by John Milne, who had forsaken his usual M.G. Midget for a Bill Shepherd-entered M.G.B. Milne's driving of this rather bulky car was, as ever, masterful. Second was Miles Hopperton in his lovely little M.G. Midget coupé. A disappointment in this race was the slowness of Stuart Robinson's hairy Austin-Healey 3000 which had gone really well in practice, getting wheelspin away from the corners! However common-sense prevailed and he drove steadily.

Next was the final of the Students Charities Cup. Fletcher made his customary brilliant start, and that was first place settled. Graham Birrell overtook Richard Scott's Elva-BMW for second place on the third lap but was soon caught by Jock Russell, driving very well again. Russell was past by lap 6, but he could not get away from the little blue Ecosse-Imp. At this stage of the race Bill Dryden was in 10th place. At the half-way mark Russell had pulled away a little from Graham, who was being caught by John Millar's Brabham. Millar obviously being mindful of the fact that he had an 11 second lead on Birrell from the first heat. Graham put a little distance between himself and Millar but could not win back the lost time, and so the race ran out with Fletcher winning the Charities Cup and Millar the Tankard for the under 1000 c.c. class from Graham Birrell's Imp. The Charities Queen, Miss Joan Lambert, presented the trophies and then followed the winners on their lap of honour round the circuit

in a gleaming Jensen Interceptor, driven by ex-racing driver Tom Sleigh.

The last race of the day, the Hartley Whyte Trophy Championship for Saloons, saw another win for Gerry Birrell in the Shannon-Chamois who picked his way through the many spinning cars to victory.

Conditions for spectators were miserable, but the spectacle of the cars sliding around the track must



Bryan Sangster (left) our Aberdeen Secretary working out the odds with Aberdeen Chairman, Alex Mackenzie.

Photo: C. Strachan.

have been some slight compensation, even if it was no fun for the drivers. Alan Rollinson, who has won the main championship at Ingliston for the past two years, was absent from this meeting as he was for the last one on 9th April. Rollinson is now definitely "on the way up", having competed in this year's Argentine Temporada F3 series and the F3 race at Monaco. It is a pity that he hasn't been able to come back to Ingliston, but such is the price to pay for success.