

Flares, smoke and wheel-waving

1968

Race of Champions meeting, Brands Hatch, March

A) The 1968 British International racing scene opened over the weekend of March 16/17 with the Race of Champions meeting at Brands Hatch. The Formula One race received a good entry, and was won by Bruce McLaren in his first Cosworth Grand Prix car, the M7A. Drive of the day was taken by Pedro Rodriguez in a BRM P126; he finished second, having started late from the grid after a plug change! The first round of the BTCC was one of the supporting races, and consisted of two 20 lap heats of the Grand Prix circuit with times aggregated to give an overall result. Stateside racing success for the Chevrolet Camaro Z28 had led to the first of these cars appearing in the UK, and here Malcolm Wayne is piloting his new acquisition around Druids hairpin. To give some idea of how quick it was first time out, it spent most of both heats down amongst the Minis. Fast rising saloon man Gordon Spice is looking for a way past in the very quick Equipe Arden 999cc Mini Cooper S. This car had an eight-port head, which was all the rage for Minis at the time, developed by Arden and utilising Tecalemit Jackson fuel injection. It even had works BMC backing. Tony Youlton follows in his 1293 Cooper S.





C) Into Paddock Hill Bend for the first heat. The front runners have gone, and the second car here is David Hobbs in Frank Gardner's Alan Mann series-winning Falcon from '67 (see photo page 7). It had been purchased by Malcolm Gartlan, typifying the days of the private-entrant who bought cars and then engaged drivers to pedal them. The Falcon in front, and about to be passed by Derek Hobbes, was owned by Eric Hauser, but as he was in the USA he had entrusted it to Alan Stubbs, who was more usually seen in Merlyn Formula Three cars. Alongside him is the Ford Anglia of Chris Craft. This was entered by private owner Len Ward as a 1-litre car, but it had been taken over by previous owner Broadspeed and fitted with one of its state-of-the-art 1300 Escort GT engines in an effort to obtain maximum points in the up-to-1300cc class, as the team had only been able to ready one of the brand new Escorts. The Mini on the inside is the second of the new Cooper factory, Ginger Devlin-prepared, 1293cc, eight-port headed, Lucas fuel-injected Mark II Cooper S cars, with Steve Neal at the wheel. Peter Lague is in Mini 132, "the fastest of the conventional Minis," according to *Motoring News*. The viewing angle makes the run-off area on the outside look generous – it wasn't!



C) Lawrie Hickman's immaculate Gerry Edmonds-entered Escort RS with an Alan Smith 1970cc BDA enjoyed a fraught practice, until Hickman had a huge spin at the fast Goodwood bend. The forces ripped the tread completely off one of the tyres and "gave Lawrie quite a fright, too."

Mid-race he was heading out of Cobb and getting the power down, approaching Segrave for the long flat-out run round the back and up to the Chicane. He was very nearly brakeless at the time and was forced to retire due to black-box failure. Here, he has just lapped Melvyn Adams' Imp, and Muir is carving his way through them all on his charge back up from eighth to second.

... but the fun continues



C) Before sensibly heading off to sunnier climes for the European Touring Car series, Wendy Markey graced the grid in her Mazda RX3, and here holds off a very hard-trying Jon Dooley in one of four Alfa Romeo Dealer Team Alfetta GTs.

Just turn up the wick

1987

Grand Prix meeting, Silverstone, July

A) The appearance of Frank Sytner and his BMW M3 was a major topic of conversation in the paddock. Waiting in the collecting area before the race, the car is clearly beautifully prepared – every inch a racer. Behind and to the right Win Percy stands with Pete Hall; Win stalled his new Sierra Cosworth on the line and still managed to win the race, but in the meantime, Sytner had actually grabbed the lead briefly during a tremendous early scrap with Dave Brodie and his Colt Starion. It was an odd year with thin grids, and to keep up appearances this race was also open to club production saloon cars. Behind the M3 is Rob Kirby's Dealer Team Group A 2.5 Alfa Romeo 75, and behind that is Kevin Eaton's 1.8 Nissan Bluebird Turbo.



B) Mike Newman graduated to this BMW 635CSi from a Capri, and was having problems with understeer during practice – a peculiarly BMW 635 Silverstone affliction. He promised faithfully that the problem would be resolved come race day, and is accelerating hard out of Woodcote past the pits on his way to a lonely tenth overall.

