



# Newsletter



Issue 03 May 2006



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## SPA RACES ARE GO!

### ISSUES RESOLVED - MSA RULES APPLY

After weeks of backroom discussions over eligibility issues, the M7RC can finally announce that the Spa races are on and the competitors do not have to make major changes to their cars to FIA specifications.

After weeks of negotiations the club received confirmation from Pierre Delettre, the organiser of the Spa event, that the Mini Se7en and Mini Miglia competitors can run to MSA regulations at Spa. Owen Hall will perform the duties of scrutineer on behalf of the MSA.

All cars and drivers that have already passed scrutineering, at Snetterton, Brands Hatch or Castle Combe, and conform to the 2006 MSA and M7RC regulations, will be allowed out to test, qualify and race at Spa.

However given the ultra fast nature of the Spa circuit and the likely forthcoming changes in safety regs, if drivers were already close to a safety upgrade on the car or your attire, it may be worth considering bringing it forward in time for the Spa meeting and be extra safe.

### So Near - So Spa

Return for the M7RC to the World's Greatest Race Circuit

For the first time since 2003, Mini Se7ens and Mini Miglias will return to the Ardennes and race on what is for many the greatest race circuit in the world – the 4.36-mile Spa Francorchamps circuit in Belgium.

What isn't so well known that for many people here in the UK it is easier to get to Spa by road than it is to get to some of the more remote circuits in this country. A quick hop across the Channel to Calais, and 200-miles by some of the best roads in Europe, puts you in the heart of the Ardennes.

The three day event features 15 races, with the combined Mini Se7en and Mini Miglia grid providing two 6-lap races on the 4.3 mile circuit – one on Saturday afternoon and the other on Sunday morning. There is also a good mix of saloon and single seater action on offer. Formula 3000, along with Formula Palmer Audi and Formula Renault Italia will be providing the open wheeled racing element, while the Mini's will be joined by Britcar (4 hour race on Saturday evening), TVR's, Renault Clio Cup Italia and Tourisme France to provide the tin-top action.

For further information on Spa-Francorchamps visit the circuit website <http://www.spa-francorchamps.be/> which has an English language version.

### SPA EURO RACES – 2/3/4 June 2006

#### PROVISIONAL TIMETABLE

Friday 2/6/2006

09.00 Practice Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 09.40 Practice Formula Renault 2.0  
 10.25 Practice 1 F 3000  
 11.05 Practice Tourisme France  
 12.05 Qualifying 1 TVR  
**12.50 Qualifying MINI UK – 30 minutes**  
 13.35 Qualifying 1 Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 14.20 Practice 2 F 3000  
 15.05 Qualifying Formula Renault 2.0 Italia  
 16.05 Untimed Practice Britcar  
 17.20 Qualifying 1 Tourisme France  
 18.00 Untimed Practice Clio

Saturday 3/6/2006

08.45 Qualifying 2 Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 09.30 Qualifying 2 TVR  
 10.15 Qualifying F3000  
 11.00 Qualifying Britcar  
 12.00 Qualifying Renault Clio Cup Italia  
 13.00 Qualifying 2 Tourisme France  
 13.55 Race 1 TVR  
 14.50 Race 1 Formula Renault 2.0 Italia  
 15.45 Race 1 Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 16.40 Race 1 F3000  
**17.35 Race 1 MINI UK 6 Laps**  
 18.00 Race Britcar 240'

Sunday 4/6/2006

**09.00 Race 2 MINI UK 6Laps**  
 09.45 Race 2 Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 10.40 Race Renault Clio Cup Italia  
 11.35 Race 1 Tourisme France  
 12.30 Race 2 Formula Renault 2.0 Italia  
 13.25 Race 3 Visma Formula Palmer Audi  
 14.20 Race 2 F 3000  
 15.15 Race 2 TVR  
 16.10 Race 2 Tourisme France

## MORE TRACK TIME AT SPA

Calling all drivers and teams who are competing at Spa.

Do you want more time to acclimatise to the Spa Francorchamps circuit?

Then you can book yourself on the test day on Thursday 1<sup>st</sup> June. The test consists of two 60 minutes test sessions, 11:30 and 15:30.

Cost: 150 euros.

To book contact - Emilie Max at Spa Email: emilie.max@race-rally.be



## Mini 7 Community Spirit is Alive and Well

Nothing reflects the sense of community spirit then when a friend is in need.

Graeme Davis recently reported on the members forum that his motorhome, which was loaded ready to travel to Spa with all of his race spares, race suit, race licence etc, was removed without permission from his driveway. He posted to ask if club members could keep an eye open in case they were offered any items for sale. Even though he still had his race car, Graeme's trip to Spa looked doubtful but the offers of help came back within hours. Here are two of the many offers -

From Lee Jones: *You can use our pits at Spa and I have a spare race suit and lid and gloves, dont worry about tools you can help your self to ours mate. If any other way we can help do call me or e-mail*

From Ralph Saunders: *You can use our spares as your own until you're back on your feet*

While his motorhome still remains 'Missing' on police files, Graeme has said he intends to be at Spa come-what-may.

ALSO

Steve Winnifrith posted on the forum to say thanks to everyone who stopped to help when they had problems with their van en route to Castle Combe.

*"Just a note to say thanks to all members who stopped to offer help on m25 last weekend, and thanks to all who helped-especially Stuart & Val hunt who took the race car(& Linda) to Castle Combe. We eventually got back home at 11.30pm on WEDNESDAY! See you all at Spa-if we have a van by then."*

What a great club this is!

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## Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge Round 2 – Brands Hatch – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006

### Thompson Kicks Off Marathon Weekend with Brands Win

Two races in two days at two of the best circuits in the UK brought out the best for rounds 2 & 3 of the 2006 Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge. At Brands Hatch, the Mini Se7en grid gave the crowds what they expected, frantic racing action.

#### Qualifying

The first leg of the weekend's bumper race weekend saw clear blue skies over Kent as the Minis head out for there qualifying session at Brands Hatch. Paul Thompson takes pole position during the 15-minute session with a 59.648 seconds, followed by Damon Astin with a 59.714s and Kane Astin with a 59.741. Paul Clark, Max Hunter, Andrew Deviny, Niven Burge, Geoff Letts, Dick Hunter and Andy Burge complete the op ten. Tristen Knight puts in an impressive time of 1m01.506 with his 'S' Class to put him 16<sup>th</sup> on the grid.

#### Race

Round Two of the 2006 Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge on the famous Brands Hatch Indy Circuit gets off to a flying start as 25 cars take to the grid with reigning champion Paul Thompson on pole position. At the green light Damon Astin gets a flying start from the front row and leads the pack into Paddock Hill Bend with Kane Astin also moving ahead of Thompson, with Thompson falling back into the clutches of the chasing pack.

Paul Thompson then gets the bit between his teeth and retakes second place and sets off after the leader before the end of the opening lap. On lap 2 Andrew Deviny and Paul Clark are side-by-side as both cars fly round the outside to take third and fourth respectively, Kane Astin dropping down the order to fifth. Niven Burge and Geoff Letts are battling for 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup>, with Max Hunter chasing in 8<sup>th</sup>.

As the cars start the third lap of the race the frantic pace continues as Thompson starts to reel in the leading car of Damon Astin. As the leaders head into Paddock Thompson dives down the inside to take the lead from Astin, with Deviny also taking advantage of the situation to move into second ahead of Astin. Astin then finds himself fighting off a pack of eight cars. Philip Gillibrand, struggling to get to grips with his new suspension, spins off into the gravel at the bottom of Paddock Hill.

At the half way point it's Thompson leading from Deviny and Kane Astin. A recovering Damon Astin is back up to 4<sup>th</sup> place, with Geoff Letts, Niven Burge in fifth and sixth respectively as they come back across the start finish line. Andrew Deviny then starts to put pressure on the leader, with the Astins side-by-side behind them. The next four cars are all battling for 5<sup>th</sup> place, giving the Brands Hatch a difficult choice of where to look first, there is so much racing action on the short 1.2-mile circuit.

As the cars begin the 7<sup>th</sup> lap Thompson is holding onto his lead but still under pressure from the chasing Deviny. Niven Burge has managed to put his car between the squabbling Astins with Clark and Hunter hanging onto the battling cars ahead. On the next lap Niven Burge makes a move down the inside going into Paddock Hill Bend and Kane Astin tries to shut the door. The two cars touch and Burge is off into the barriers, the back end of the car launches into the air. The Mini lands on its wheels and slides back across the track. Astin's Mini goes sideways into the gravel and digs in his car then rolls towards the barriers. Kane Astin gets out and seems to be fine. Niven Burge's car catches fire but quick reactions soon puts the fire out and the driver emerges from the smoke unhurt.

The red flags are brought out the stop the race and it finishes with a race win for Paul Thompson, with Andrew Deviny and Damon Astin taking the other podium positions. Geoff Letts, Max Hunter, Paul Clark, Dick Hunter, Alan Letts, Andy Burge and Mark Smith complete the top ten.

The crowd are applauding as they now they have just witnessed a superb race. Andrew Deviny took the fastest lap of the race with a 1m00.077.

#### Peter Gudgin

### Result – Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge Rd 2 - Brands Hatch – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006

1	1	Paul THOMPSON	8m12.246s	8 laps
2	2	Andrew DEVINY	+0.652	
3	8	Damon ASTIN	+4.837	
4	3	Geoff LETTS	+4.953	
5	5	Max HUNTER	+5.779	
6	21	Paul CLARK	+6.018	
7	71	Dick HUNTER	+6.325	
8	7	Alan LETTS	+7.890	
9	11	Andy BURGE	+8.325	
10	98	Mark SMITH	+11.933	
11	22	Graeme DAVIS	+12.102	
12	35	Paul SPARK	+12.288	
13	77	Tristen KNIGHT	+13.142	
14	34	Anthony TOWEY	+16.873	
15	26	Lee JONES	+19.622	
16	24	James BOWERS COULSON	+19.955	
17	27	Andy HILL	+23.216	
18	20	Darren THOMAS	+26.124	
19	60	Malcolm James KEAT	+28.586	
20	23	Ricky HORNE	+30.425	
21	16	James WINNIFRITH	+1 lap	
Fastest Lap			Andrew DEVINY	1m00.077s 73.47mph 118.25kph



## Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge Round 3 – Castle Combe – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006

### Close at the Top

Day 2 of the marathon Mini weekend and it's a typical British Bank Holiday weather in Wiltshire, cloudy but dry as the Minis take to the track for the qualifying session.

Andrew Deviny, who finished in 2<sup>nd</sup> place at Brands Hatch the day before, was flying from the off and took pole with a 1m26.033 followed by Geoff Letts with a 1m26.450 and Kane Astin managing third with a 1m26.972, even though he had no third gear .

Alongside him on the grid Paul Clark with Max Hunter and Brands Hatch race winner Paul Thompson making up row three. Row 4 consisted of Alan Letts and Andy Burge, with Paul Sparks and Graeme Davis rounding out the top 10.

### RACE

The sun broke through as the minis take to the track. The crowd are focused awaiting the start they line up on the grid the lights go out and pole man Deviny leads the pack as they come up to Quarry for the first time. Hunter has made a demon start, jumping from 5<sup>th</sup> to 2<sup>nd</sup> and is followed by the rest of the pack all fighting for position, with Paul Clark taking the third spot as they come through at the end of lap1.

As they come back round to Quarry for the second time Clark gets it all sideways and loses momentum and Geoff Letts takes advantage to steal third. Kane Astin seems to be having problems with gears as his slowly disappears down the field. At the end of lap 2 it's Deviny up front with Hunter and Geoff Letts in hot pursuit and Thompson leading the fight with the rest of the pack.

Deviny starts to pull away as Hunter and Letts battle for second position. Lee Jones is attacking Winniffrith through Quarry as Coulson spins and ends up on the grass but rejoins at the back of the field.

Deviny still leads the race with Hunter and Letts still battling behind followed by Thompson, Burge and Clark. Keats pulls off with a problem and retires from the race.

As they come back through Quarry for the 7<sup>th</sup> time Deviny still leads, but Letts sees an opportunity and as they enter the right hander the two Minis are side-by-side, with Letts getting the edge and taking second spot on the run down to the Esses, but with Hunter hard on his heels.

At the end of the lap Deviny is pulling away at the front and looks unstoppable, with Letts in second and Hunter looking to regain second spot.

At the end of lap 8 Hunter gets a run on Letts and regains the second spot, while all their squabbling has allowed Deviny to extend his lead to over four seconds. Behind Hunter and Letts, reigning champion Paul Thompson is holding off Andy Burge while Paul Clarke is being caught by Dick Hunter for 6<sup>th</sup> place.

On the penultimate lap Letts gets his revenge on Hunter and retakes the second position and this is how it remained until the chequered flag, with Hunter chasing Letts all the way to line. At the flag it is victory for Andrew Deviny 3.6 seconds ahead of Geoff Letts and Max Hunter, who are separated by a tenth of a second at the line. Paul Thompson holds off a late challenge from Andy Burge to take 4<sup>th</sup> and Paul Clark comes home 6<sup>th</sup> just ahead of Dick Hunter. Alan Letts, Mark Smith and Graeme Davis round out the top 10.

The crowd at quarry clap and cheer as the cars come through on there slowing down lap knowing this is the closest racing they have seen all day.

**Peter Gudgin**

### **Result – Dunlop Mini Se7en Challenge Rd 3 - Castle Combe – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006**

1	2	Andrew DEVINY	14:28.500	10 laps
2	3	Geoff LETTS	+3.633s	
3	46	Max HUNTER	+3.742s	
4	1	Paul THOMPSON	+12.538s	
5	11	Andy BURGE	+12.947s	
6	21	Paul CLARK	+22.810s	
7	71	Dick HUNTER	+23.020s	
8	7	Alan LETTS	+23.545s	
9	98	Mark SMITH	+26.234s	
10	22	Graeme DAVIS	+40.963s	
11	16	James WINNIFRITH	+41.093s	
12	50	Ian DEVINY	+41.389s	
13	26	Lee JONES	+49.228s	
14	5	Kane ASTIN	+49.980s	
15	23	Ricky HORNE	+52.357s	
16	34	Anthony TOWEY	+52.693s	
17	20	Darren THOMAS	+54.100s	
18	57	Philip GILLIBRAND	+1m03.252s	
19	24	James BOWERS COULSON	+1m13.013s	
20	27	Andy HILL	+1m18.840s	
21	35	Paul SPARK	+1 Lap	
		Fastest Lap	Andrew Deviny 1m25.288s	78.08mph 125.67kph

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## Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge Round 2 – Brands Hatch – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006

### Hack Takes Victory at Brands

It's round two of the Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge, at the Fast circuit of Brands Hatch in Kent. The weather is almost perfect and with the race taking place on the 1.2-mile Indy circuit, the spectators are afforded an almost uninterrupted view of the entire track.

The 16 Mini Miglias are lined up on the grid, with Kelly Rogers putting his car on Pole, with James Hall alongside him. Behind them on the second row is round 1 race winner Tim Sims and Andrew Hack. Row 3 consists of Bill Sollis and Colin Peacock and in row 4 is an all Pitstop Racing affair with Ralph Saunders Mark Sims. Rounding out the top ten is Gordon Pocock and Phil Rudge.

#### RACE

RED lights are ON and. GREEN lights are GO! A great start by Kelly Rogers keeps James Hall behind as all the Minis make it safely make it through Paddock Hill Bend into Druids. Ralph Saunders has also made an excellent start and chasing Colin Peacock as they enter Druids. Peacock keeps it tight and defends his position. They are extremely close as the two cars go through Druids they make contact and the Pitstop car spins onto the grass at the top of Druids. Peacock goes straight off into the barriers and ending his race before it really began.

Andrew Hack makes his way past Tim Sims and is looking up the inside of James Hall, trying to find a way to take 2<sup>nd</sup> place, with Sollis gaining on the three leading cars.

As the cars begin the third lap race leader Kelly Rogers enters Paddock Hill with Hall glued to his rear bumper. Ralph Saunders retires onto the grass at Paddock but the race is red flagged to allow for Colin Peacock's battered car at the exit of Druids to be removed. Ralph Saunders and Philip Lees car were also recovered before the re-start.

It's take two for the Mini Miglias with Rogers making another excellent start, with James Hall close behind him but under immediate pressure himself from Andrew Hack and Bill Sollis.

Hack passes Hall on the exit of Druids but Hall tries to come back at him. Hack uses every trick in the book to defend his second place, even finding the time to have a look on the inside of the leading Mini on the exit of Druids the next time round. So intent on the battle for the lead Hack and Rogers fail to spot an oil spill at Graham Hill Bend and both cars take a detour onto the grass down Cooper Straight. Hall notices the oil in time and manages to stay on track. Hack rejoins the circuit in the lead, with Rogers back on the course in 3<sup>rd</sup> behind Hall, with Sollis hot on his tail.

James Hall tackles Hack at Druids and passes him but with a superb piece of driving by Andrew Hack he retakes the lead down Cooper Straight. Rogers is all over the boot lid of James Hall and Tim Sims is firmly attached to the rear bumper of the Sollis Miglia. Lap 6 and the three leading cars of Hack, Hall and Rogers are like a snake going up through Druids, with nothing separating them, it is anybody's race at this stage.

The race settles down for lap 7 then Kelly Rogers attacks James Hall for second but Hall defends his second place. While Hall is keeping Rogers at bay, Sollis sees his opportunity and makes his move on Rogers to take 3<sup>rd</sup>. James Hall now tries his hardest to pass Andrew Hack for the lead but Hack defends at every corner.

The last lap and the tension in the crowd is building. Tim Sims is filling Rogers mirrors in 4<sup>th</sup> place, it really is nose-to-tail racing as they chase for the Chequered Flag. Out of Clearways for the last time with Andrew Hack taking a deserved win by just 0.14 seconds from James Hall. Bill Sollis takes the final podium position, three tenths ahead of Kelly Rogers in 4<sup>th</sup>, who in turn is just 8/100<sup>th</sup> of a second ahead of Tim Sims 5<sup>th</sup>.

An appreciative crowd knew they had been treated to a classic race, Mini Miglia style.

**Sam Barringer**

#### Result – Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge Rd 2 - Brands Hatch – 30<sup>th</sup> April 2006

1	23	Andrew HACK	9m28.286s	10 laps
2	21	James HALL	+0.140s	
3	3	Bill SOLLIS	+0.720s	
4	2	Kelly ROGERS	+1.011s	
5	8	Tim SIMS	+1.090s	
6	6	Mark SIMS	+12.381s	
7	15	Gordon POCOCK	+14.241s	
8	29	Gerald DALE	+14.745s	
9	39	Paul WOODBRIDGE	+15.863s	
10	69	Tony LE-MAY	+22.859s	
11	9	Sarah MUNNS	+24.056s	
12	33	Paul BAIRD	+32.163s	
13	34	Keith ALLINGTON	+42.418s	
14	13	Phil HARVEY	+48.907s	
		Fastest Lap	James HALL 55.089s	80.13mph 128.95kph

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## Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge Round 3 – Castle Combe – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006

### Rogers Revenge at Castle Combe

It's up the M25 and M4 to Wiltshire for Round 3 of the 2006 Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge at the sunny circuit of Castle Combe. After fantastic race the day before at Brands Hatch the question was could the Miglias provide a carbon copy of an action packed race seen in Kent. The answer was an emphatic 'YES'.

Bill Sollis took control in qualifying to put his red 'Bill Built' Mini Miglia on pole position, with Brands Hatch pole man Kelly Rodgers alongside him and looking to make amends for failing to convert the position in a race win the day before.

Behind the lead pair is James Hall with round 2 winner Andrew Hack alongside. Row 3 consists of Martin Wager in his Dad's car (A few people not sure if dad knows he's borrowed it!), round 1 winner Tim Sims in 6<sup>th</sup> place. On row four it is a case of Pitstop Deja-vu with Mark Sims and Ralph Saunders, his car all repaired and back in the running after his "close shave" at Brands Hatch. Completing the top ten is Sarah Munns and Tony Le-May.

The lights flash to green and the grid of A Series engined cars head off with Sollis leading Hall, followed by Rodgers and Wager. Andrew Hack gets a terrible start and is passed by Wager, Sims and Saunders.

At the end of the opening lap Bill Sollis leads, with Hall right behind him by just 0.1 seconds. Rogers chasing Hall and Martin Wager getting an impressive start behind Rogers, with less than a second separating the top four cars.

Hall and Sollis are side-by-side going into Quarry clambering all over each other. It's very close between all top seven cars going into Quarry corner. Kelly Rogers manages to pass James Hall to move into 2nd Position and it's the two red Mini's battling for the top spot,

Tim Sims is also looking up the inside of James Hall to make a move but Hall defends well. Rogers passes Sollis to move into the lead at Quarry. All seven cars are bunched right up. Wager is pressuring James Hall at Bobby's. It's side-by-side action as Tim Sims, Wager and Andrew Hack, once again the Miglias are causing the crowd a few problems of not knowing which way to look first as they provide full on racing action.

Lap 4 and Sollis has managed to reclaim the lead but Rogers is HOT on his tail. Wager is chasing Rogers, with Hall snapping at his boot lid and Hack after him. Ralph Saunders, not to be outdone, is closing on Hack.

James Hall and Hack are tripping all over each other at Quarry allowing Wager to catch up, Hack then comes under pressure from Tim Sims but outbreaks him at Tower Corner; Hack is really trying to throw everything he can at Hall.

Lap 7 and it's all change again at the front as Rogers has managed to pass Sollis to slip back in the top spot, Wager is all over the back of Sollis and with Sollis having to defend, Kelly Rogers opens up a small gap, but for only a short period before he is again under pressure. Hack manages to pass Hall and is now hot on the tail of Wager. Sollis catches up with Rogers and now it becomes a four way battle for the lead. Ralph Saunders who is a man on a mission after failing to finish the day before, passes Sims for 6<sup>th</sup> on the penultimate lap.

Onto the last lap and Sollis is looking for a way through at Quarry. There's nothing to separate them as they chase for the chequered flag. Rogers holds on to become the third different race winner in three races, 0.198 seconds ahead of Bill Sollis. A fine drive from Andrew Hack after a poor start netted him the final podium position, finishing just 0.291 seconds behind the eventual winner. Martin Wager was 4<sup>th</sup>, James Hall 5<sup>th</sup> and the Saunders/Sims battle ending Saunders 6<sup>th</sup> and Tim Sims 7<sup>th</sup>. Martin Wager claimed the fastest lap of the race with a 1m19.009s lap on lap 4.

For the second day running the Mini Miglia grid provided some of the best racing action seen on any circuit in the UK. Long may it continue as the Mini 7 Racing Club celebrates 40 years at the top of club motorsport.

**Samantha Barringer**

### Result – Dunlop Mini Miglia Challenge Rd 3 - Castle Combe – 1<sup>st</sup> May 2006

1	2	Kelly ROGERS	13m26.139s	10 laps
2	3	Bill SOLLIS	+0.198s	
3	23	Andrew HACK	+0.291s	
4	49	Martin WAGER	+1.864s	
5	21	James HALL	+1.880s	
6	7	Ralph SAUNDERS	+2.118s	
7	8	Tim SIMS	+2.156s	
8	69	Tony LEMAY	+19.761s	
9	15	Gordon POCOCK	+29.230s	
10	29	Gerald DALE	+29.522s	
11	34	Keith ALLINGTON	+32.797s	
12	39	Paul WOODBRIDGE	+32.936s	
13	28	Philip LEE	+34.918s	
14	33	Paul BAIRD	+37.315s	
15	13	Phil HARVEY	+1m10.081s	
16	35	Ian FEATHERSTONE	+1 lap	

Fastest Lap Martin WAGER 1m19.009s 84.29mph 135.65kph

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## Chairman's Chat.....

We're already into May and it doesn't seem 'five minutes' since the AGM at Daventry. I don't know if it's a sign of 'maturing years', but these days, time does seem to pass more quickly. Einstein would probably say.... "It's all relative". What would he know?

Moving onto something that most of us understand, Rounds 2 and 3 of the Championship have taken place and in both instances we can safely say that the M7RC provided another good show. Starting with Round 2 at Brands, the Mini 7 race was a real hum dinger, with everyone trying to negotiate Paddock Hill Bend at the same time! It certainly looked exciting from the commentary box. Thanks go to David Addison who puts so much enthusiasm into his commentary and always gives us a 'good plug'. It was a pity that it was eventually red flagged at the start of lap eight, as it was building up to be a classic finish. I must say it was great to see both Kane and Niven coming out of a nasty accident with no apparent injuries and still talking to each other. Also it was fantastic to see Kane on the grid at Castle Combe, albeit the roof not looking totally 'Concours d'elegance'. Lets hope Niven is back with us fairly soon. Congratulations to Paul Thompson on his victory. As for the Miglias, yet again a race full of incidents. This again was red flagged allowing Colin's car to be removed from a dangerous position at Druids. On the restart, the oil flag at Graham Hill bend gave little warning to drivers in my opinion, thus catching some drivers out, resulting in a certain amount of Rallycross alongside the Cooper Straight. It was nice to see a new face on the top step of the podium. Congratulations Andy on your first Miglia Victory; a good clean race with plenty of exchanges of position. It was hard to see who was going to win..... Kelly, Bill, James, Tim, Andy. The way that racing should be. Some of the other races were verging on the processional, or am I being somewhat biased?

Just a few points from the meeting need to be mentioned. The problem of adequate Sponsorship decals has now been overcome, but ticket availability is still not easy to Club Members, especially to the Club helpers! My idea of a 'ticket pool' obviously didn't appeal, so the only other option is to approach the race organisers. The success I will have, in this 'financially aware' world that we live in, is doubtful; but as they say, if you don't ask, you don't get.

There appeared to be problems about tyre availability at Brands, with some competitors getting quite irate. I had a word with Michael Butler of Dunlop on the day and he apologised about the amount of tyres that he brought to the meeting. He explained that Dunlop were somewhat taken unawares, as they have sold more tyres at the first two meetings of this year, than they did in the whole of 2005! This represents savings of over £5,000 for the competitors! Yet again, my thanks go to Dunlop for supporting our Championship

After Brands, the M7RC road-show travelled 136 miles to the Castle Combe racetrack in Wiltshire. If you have never visited the village of Castle Combe, I strongly recommend it. England in all its beauty, with some lovely traditional pubs. Back to the racing..... It seems that most competitors who raced at Brands made it to Combe. There must have been a lot of midnight oil being burnt on Sunday. Congratulations to all those who got through the weekend. It would be interesting for the Committee to hear about your views on such a hectic weekend. I know one of the problems was to find adequate space in the paddock when the road-show arrived at the circuit.

As for the races, yet again two 'crackers'. I haven't seen such a lead in the Se7ens like that for a long time. The days of Michael Jackson leaving the Mini Se7en field behind came to mind. Congratulations to Andrew in the Se7ens and Kelly in the Miglias for providing some good entertainment. I would also like to thank both Sam Barringer and Peter Gudgin for providing the excellent reports at Brands Hatch and Castle Combe.

It is fair to say that the hot news at Combe was the announcement relating to the FIA requirements to race at SPA. I know how this must be aggravating to those who have already entered, but rest assured, since the Castle Combe announcement, there have been daily discussions with the MSA, SPA and the Belgium race authorities. We now have an agreement to run under MSA regulations and the Spa races are now on. My thanks go to everyone who worked extremely hard behind the scenes to make this happen and now I ask all racing members to support this event, get their entry into Sharon promptly and make Rounds 4 & 5 a highlight of the season.

Nick Cooke

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## IS HIS CAR COMPLIANT WITH FIA REGULATIONS?

With all of the questions surrounding the eligibility of the cars for Spa, a little humour was injected into the heated discussions when Graeme Davis posted that he thought that Gordon Pocock's car might be FIA compliant –



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### Dunlop Do a Roaring Trade

Dunlop has been a great supporter of the Mini 7 Racing Club for many years and that backing is continuing in the 2006 season.

As part of their commitment Dunlop offered a special discount for Snetterton and Brands Hatch and members of the M7RC took full advantage of the offer, so much so that Dunlop are happy to report that they sold more tyres at the first two meetings than it did in the whole of 2005.

The savings for the competitors taking advantage of the offer is now over £5,000.

Dunlop have also committed resources to support the clubs trip to Spa next month and are also including the M7RC in a 30 minute TV programme that will appear on Motors TV, gaining the club some greatly appreciated exposure.

Dunlop's continued support in the clubs 40<sup>th</sup> year is greatly welcomed by all the members of the UK's longest running single make championship.

Long may it continue.

[www.mini7.co.uk](http://www.mini7.co.uk)

### 40th Birthday Bash

40 Years of Fun is the headline for the new leaflet that will be handed out over the next couple of months.

16<sup>th</sup> July is the date and the place is Brands Hatch when the M7RC will be celebrating its 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary.

An invitation will be going out from the committee to all past champions for them to join us for a special gathering to help us celebrate the occasion. A champions photocall and a parade will also be held on the grid during the day.

The club have also negotiated a ticket discount with MSV for all Mini owners and the intention is to get as many clubs involved as possible.

Another incentive to get involved the offer of a prize draw to win a hot lap in the passenger seat of a race Mini.

With 4 races and the first ever O Plate championship, Brands is going to impossible to miss.

Other special events are being planned and there will be more details in the next newsletter.



## And Finally.....

### Andrew Hack dedicates win to Gerry Marshall

Andrew Hack said he was "really pleased" to win at Brands. The race was on the anniversary of Andrew's friend Gerry Marshall's funeral and before the meeting Andrew had promised Gerry's son Gregor that he would win for his Dad.

Well he had to deliver the goods after promising that didn't he!

### London to Brighton – 21<sup>st</sup> May 2006

The M7RC will at the 21<sup>st</sup> London to Brighton Mini Run next weekend. The club has a stand where we can tell the public about the club's 40<sup>th</sup> birthday and entice them to part with their cash for club goodies and membership. It is also a good opportunity to make them all aware of the event at Brands Hatch on 16<sup>th</sup> July.

Further details on the London to Brighton visit – [www.london-to-brighton.co.uk](http://www.london-to-brighton.co.uk)

### Entries for Spa Francorchamps – June 2<sup>nd</sup>/4<sup>th</sup>

The entry list For Rounds 4 & 5 at Spa continues to grow and currently stands at 32 across the two classes. If you are intending to enter contact Sharon Smith asap or visit the Mini 7 forum on the website where there are links to the correct entry forms.

### WE NEED YOUR NEWS

We still need your news and gossip. Contact Jeff Carter if you want a news story placed in the newsletter.

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## 2006 Racing Calendar

Round 1	April 1 <sup>st</sup> & 2 <sup>nd</sup>	Snetterton	Dunlop Great & British Festival
Rounds 2 & 3	April 29 <sup>th</sup> , 30 <sup>th</sup> May 1 <sup>st</sup>	Brands Hatch Castle Combe	Bank Holiday Bumper weekend
Rounds 4 & 5	June 2 <sup>nd</sup> – 4 <sup>th</sup>	Spa, Belgium	Spa Euro Race
Round 6	June 23 <sup>rd</sup> – 25 <sup>th</sup>	Silverstone International	MGCC Festival
Round 7 & 8	July 16 <sup>th</sup>	Brands Hatch	40 <sup>th</sup> Anniversary & 'O' Plate
Round 9	Sept 9 <sup>th</sup> & 10 <sup>th</sup>	Croft	Dunlop Great & British Festival
Rounds 10 & 11	Oct 7 <sup>th</sup> & 8 <sup>th</sup>	Rockingham	Thunder Sunday
Round 12	Oct 21 <sup>st</sup> & 22 <sup>nd</sup>	Donington Park	Dunlop Great & British Festival