



# The Oulton Park Gazette

June 2026: Vol 2 Issue 3



## RAPID ROB

Rob Collard on his career in BTCC & British GT

2 Young Gun Interviews

Old Skool BTCC



Broadbent's Book Corner & Quiz

# WELCOME

Hello!

This month, Dan Chilvers has interviewed one of the iconic names of British motorsport – the vastly experienced Rob Collard.

At the other end of the scale, Dan has also written features on a couple of young, up and coming drivers in the shape of Leon Frost and Will Antrobus who are just starting out in their car racing careers.

I have reports on 3 exciting meetings that took place at Oulton Park during May. A great day of club racing was the centrepiece of “Mazda Mania” with plenty of dicing delivered by various MX5 categories and Formula Ford too.

Then there was the first ever Touring Car Rewind North event which brought many evocative saloons to Oulton Park. It was great to see so many spectators attending this event despite the inclement weather.

One of the stand-out vehicles taking part in the demonstration runs at Touring Car Rewind was the TWR-built ex-Jan Lammers Volvo 850 Estate which is now in the hands of Jamie Thwaites. Dan caught up with Jamie to find out how he acquired this rather unique piece of BTCC history.

May ended with one of the most eagerly anticipated meetings of the season when the British GT Championship visited Cheshire. The headline act didn't disappoint, particularly in the second race where both the GT3 and GT4 categories provided epic battles for the lead.

We will cover the BTCC meeting next month but, as a taster, Rearward Glance features Andy Rouse's Ford Sierra. It also has the much-missed David Leslie in a monster of a Thundersports car!

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*The United Formula Ford runners stream into Brittens. Photo: Danny Walton*



# Mazda Mania 9<sup>th</sup> May



There was some great racing on track and lots of Japanese sportscars on display at “Mazda Mania”. The BRSCC brought 8 sprint races to Cheshire with a 2 hour Enduro sandwiched in the middle. The heavy rain forecast for the second batch of sprints never really materialised to the disappointed of some drivers in the paddock who expected a deluge to spice things up and give them a chance of glory. Above, Adam Sparrow leads the AD Modular Mazda MX5 Championship pack.



**Clapham North MOT Mazda MX5 SuperCup Championship (above) – 2 x 20 Minute Races:** Once he hit the front in race 1, Thomas Langford (75) held off pole-sitter Ollie Hall (27) until the chequered flag came out. Impressive newcomer, Will Antrobus (57), completed the podium with Alistair Dendy (18) half a second behind the lead trio.

When the protagonists returned to the tarmac, Langford appeared to be on his way to repeating his victory but, in the closing stages, Antrobus executed a demon pass at Old Hall to take the spoils. Completing the podium was Ollie Hall.



**Geoff Page Engineering Super Classic Pre-99 Formula Ford Championship – 2 x 15 Minutes:**

How times have changed in club level motorsport. At the fourth meeting of the season, these were the first single-seater races. Both were won by a Van Diemen driven by Callum Grant although he really had to work hard for his successes – not least because his car was lacking speed down the straights. Leon Frost in a Van Diemen RF89 did his best to demote him in race 1 and finished 0.047 secs behind.

When the single-seaters returned to the tarmac, Oliver Roberts’ Van Diemen RF89 was the early leader but as soon as Grant attempted to pass, he let him go by as he didn’t want to be embroiled in a battle which delayed them and put half the field on their tails. So, Roberts bided his time. His plan worked to a degree as he and Grant pulled away from everyone except Frost. However, as the contest entered its closing stages, Roberts was unable to overtake Grant. The trio flashed past the chequered flag covered by a quarter of a second.

**PBS Brakes Supersport Endurance Cup – 90 Minutes:**

This 2 hour contest proved to be a race of attrition which left David May with enough of a lead in his Ginetta (top left) that he had time to make a pit stop to change a tyre and still finish 2 laps ahead of Stuart Humphrey’s heavily-modified Mazda MX5.

**Kumho Tyre Mazda MX5 Clubman Championship – 2 x 15 Minutes:**

Mazda MX5 racing is supposed to be some of the most competitive in the world... but Jordan Pimley (middle left) didn’t get the memo!!! When he did the double in the Clubman category, his winning margins were 3.3 secs and then 10.8 secs. Jack Warry was the runner-up on each occasion.

**AD Modular Mazda MX5 Championship – 2 x 20 Minutes:**

There was lots of action in these 2 races (bottom left) especially between the leading quartet – Adam Sparrow, Neil Chisnall, Steve Foden and Oli Walden. Such was the intensity of the dicing that, on the last lap of the opening encounter, Foden was pushed out wide on to the grass at the exit of Cascades. He re-joined to finish fourth, rueful of the fact that his goal of finishing on the podium in every round this season had been dashed.

Sparrow and Chisnall twice finished first and second. Walden came home third in the morning but in the afternoon, he was demoted from fourth on the road to sixth when a 10 second penalty for a false start was applied.



# DAWN OF FROST

By Dan Chilvers



*We interviewed Leon Frost at the dawn of a racing career which he hopes will take him all the way to Monaco*

Motorsport grips every generation. In historic racing, it is not uncommon for a 17-year-old rookie to compete wheel to wheel against some who are old enough to be their grandparents! One such young star is Leon Frost, who is climbing the single seater ladder with the goal of driving F1 cars at Monaco.

With the encouragement of his motorcycle racing father, Frost got behind the wheel of a go-kart aged 7. His memory of that day glows, “it was so much fun!” Leon’s dad is a massive influence on his career, leading by example with regards to work ethic and coaching him to maximise his technique.

Frost quickly progressed through the karting world, ultimately following in the footsteps of stars like Abbi Pulling and Jensen Button by winning the 2022 Formula Junior TKM British Karting Championship. Single seaters quickly beckoned as Frost was accepted into the Motorsport UK Academy, a move he is “forever grateful for, as so many talented drivers have been part of it.”

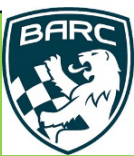
Frost made his car racing debut in the 2024 Formula Vee Championship. These VW powered single seaters provide a perfect entry route for new historic drivers as they pair close racing with a back to basics technological approach. Frost remembers that his first year “taught me so much”. He learned not only “how to do a proper standing start using a clutch” but also how to care for his Formula Vee by avoiding over-stressing the gearbox and engine. As he recalls “I could probably have found another tenth or so, but I wouldn’t have been looking after the car as well.” His first season showed promising

pace as he earned the top rookie award while winning a couple of rounds. He built on this success by coming second overall in 2025.

With two strong years in Formula Vee behind him, for 2026 Frost stepped up to the Super Classic Formula Ford championship because of the “incredibly tough” racing. He got his first taste at Silverstone in the 2025 Walter Hayes Trophy where he finished 6th in the historic final. When asked what prompted the change to Formula Ford, he explained “it can be a stepping stone or a championship you want to compete in for the long term.” It “offers a strong foundation for a career in historic racing thanks to the fierce competition with its close, but fair, dicing.”

Frost’s recent trip to Oulton Park proved popular as he loves the circuit saying, “it doesn’t give you a moment to relax.” Frost remains humble saying “the team (Speedsport Promotion) supplied me with an incredible car.” The car in question was a 1989 Van Diemen which Frost said had “immense levels of grip, which really suited Oulton Park.” It gave him confidence to “throw the car into the corners, like it had an aero package.” In both races he was in the thick of the lead battle, twice finishing runner-up.

Frost’s sights for the season remain set on Formula Ford success. He also has hopes to expand into classic touring car racing to add another talent to his repertoire. With his expanding skill set and obvious dedication, Frost has the foundations for what could be a genuine path to the Historic Grand Prix circuit. Monaco isn’t just a dream, it’s becoming a destination.



# Touring Car Rewind 16<sup>th</sup> May

## BACK TO THE '90'S



A new event for Oulton Park this season is Touring Car Rewind North. The Southern version has run previously at Brands Hatch and will do so again in August. It certainly seemed popular with plenty of spectators in attendance even though the rain, which increased in intensity during the afternoon, put a damper on things.

The day included a couple of on-track demonstrations of Touring Cars – mostly from the 1990's – including Joachim Winklehock's BMW, Jason Plato's Renault Laguna and Jan Lammer's Volvo 850 Estate. With further ex-BTCC cars on display in the paddock there was plenty to see in addition to the classic saloons which were racing on the circuit.



**Everard Pre-66 Touring Cars – 2 x 15 Minutes:** Race 1 was a classic David and Goliath battle between Piers Grange's Ford Falcon and the little Hillman Imp of James Ibbotson (above). It was resolved late in the contest when Grange went straight on at Lodge into the barriers. The incident brought out the red flags. As Grange was the cause of the stoppage, the win was awarded to Ibbotson who, with the Falcon absent, took victory again later in the day.



**Group 1 Pre-83 Touring Car Championship – 2 x 15 Minutes:** A slow start for race 1 pole-sitter, Nic Grindrod (Ford Escort Mk1, above), caught out Neil Philpotts who ripped the left front wing off his Mitsubishi Colt Lancer against Grindrod's right rear. They made contact again almost immediately when Philpotts had a sideways moment on the exit of Old Hall.

After such a frantic start, it didn't take long for Grindrod to get into his stride. He passed Philpotts the first time they approached Lodge before taking the lead from the Ford Escort Mk1 of Tom Harvey exiting Shell on the next lap. As Grindrod motored on to take a comfortable victory, Philpotts challenged Harvey before dropping back in the closing stages. Fortunately for him, he was classified third on count back after the red flags came out due to a car beached in the gravel at Shell.

Philpotts' didn't take part in the re-match. Grindrod's second restart was slightly better than his first. He rounded Old Hall in third but was leading by the time the field reached Shell before taking the laurels 8.5 seconds ahead of the Datsun 510 of Jonathan Corker.

During qualifying, Nick Williamson suffered gearbox failure on his Rover SD1. The repairs took so long that he missed the first thrash but took part in the second however he had to start from the back of the grid. In a contest shortened to 12 minutes to keep the meeting on schedule, he hustled the big car up to a third place finish.



**Super Tourer Series + CTCC Pre-2013 + CTCC Burty Haulage Pre-2003 + TrackHub.uk Pre-93 – 2 x 15 Minutes:** In the Super Tourers, the Vauxhall Vectra of Jason Hughes (left) comfortably won race 1 although Tony Absolom's Cavalier wasn't too far behind. It was good to see these historic machines being driven rapidly despite the wet conditions.

The best battle was in the Pre-93 Class between the BMW M3s of Ian Bower and William Davidson. The former came out on top.

Hughes and Bower took the spoils again later in the day.



**PRG Trailers Classic Thunder Saloons + Rikki Cann Aston Martin Specialist Historic Thunder Saloons + Burton Power Racing Fords Blue Oval Saloon Series – 2 x 15 Minutes:** There was drama at the start and end of the opening encounter. On quite a slippery track, cold tyres caused Piers Grange to crash at the exit of the first corner. This inflicted serious damage to the rear of his Ford Escort RSR. Then, as the penultimate lap ended, Dave Farrow pulled out of the lead with smoke coming from the right front of his BMW 1 Series. It appeared as though his suspension had collapsed. This meant victory went to Joe Collier who had been closely following Farrow. He was driving a BMW M3.

Due to his retirement, Farrow had to start race 2 from the back of the grid. In very wet conditions he worked his way up the order to third when the red flags came out due to a car in the gravel at Lodge. Frustratingly, he dropped to fifth when the results were declared from the previous lap. Collier again took the win.



**Adrian Flux Insurance MG Owners Club Championship – 2 x 20 Minutes:** These races were dominated by MG ZRs. In the first, Scott Bugner led the way but the pack closed in when he lost his clutch and had trouble selecting gears. James Cole repeatedly tried to out-brake him into Hislops until Cole out-braked himself! He took a trip across the grass and when he re-joined the tarmac, Jack Woodcock demoted him to third. At the finish, the first 7 competitors took the chequered flag covered by just over 3 seconds including 1992 British Touring Car Champion, Tim Harvey, who was thoroughly enjoying a guest appearance in Darren Leonard's MG.

It looked like Harvey was going to win the second MG encounter but Lee Pearce overtook him at the start of the last lap after performing a switch-back manoeuvre at Old Hall. Pearce was revelling in the wet conditions and came through from fourteenth on the grid.

# A LARGE COUNTRY ESTATE

By Dan Chilvers



The year is 1994 and Volvo are planning to join the British Touring Car Championship. The rumour mill was awash with potential car details and shapes. Then for pre-season testing, Tom Walkinshaw Racing unveiled an estate car for its newest Super Tourer. Rick Rydell and Jan Lammers were the drivers chosen to race the Volvo 850R across the country. This Swedish estate car has gone down in history as one of the most memorable race cars of the nineties. Little did a young Jamie Thwaites know that one day he was going to end up owning and driving one of these very legends.

Jamie's dad Richard brought young Jamie up in motorsport. Richard won two British Hillclimb championships before racing Chevron sports cars. Jamie didn't get behind a racing wheel until he was 40 as "it's an expensive sport and you need to earn some money first!" Thwaites' career has seen him drive everything from a Chevron B19, Lola T70 and even a modern LMP2 prototype! Jamie currently competes in the Alfa Romeo & Italian Intermarque Championship with an Alfa Romeo TCR car.

Volvo built three 850R estate chassis across the season with TWR. Equipped with a 2-litre inline-5 engine producing 290bhp, the car handled well for its size, light enough to fire around corners and jump over curbs. The car showed competitive pace in 1994 with some strong qualifying results. However, the 850R never reached the podium with both drivers peaking in 5th place. Halfway through the season, TWR began developing a saloon version for 1995 which proved vastly more successful. The

saloon version showed immediate improvement winning Race 2 of the season and taking Rick Rydell to 13 pole positions and third overall. The car continued into 1996 before being replaced by the smaller S40 Super Touring.

Thwaites always loved the 850R estate, so he decided to build a replica. While investigating costs he heard through a friend that Jason Minshaw owned the original chassis No.3. This chassis was modified by Volvo into the saloon for testing, but Minshaw acquired it and restored it back to its original estate form. Thwaites "asked him if it was for sale.... It was!". Thwaites bought the car and was immediately itching to drive it. Touring Car Rewind's Super Tourer demonstrations seemed like the perfect place to get to grips with the fiery super tourer. Thwaites said he was "looking forward to it probably more than any car I've ever driven!"

Despite rainy conditions, Thwaites drove his beloved Volvo flat out at Oulton Park. He told *The Gazette*, "It was amazing. Having seen onboard videos for 30 years, to actually experience a Touring Car from an era we will never get back was something else!"

Jamie is looking to race his Lola T70 and Ford RS500 Cosworth in Historic competitions and the Pre-95 CTCRC series respectively. However, I'm sure that the 850R will always hold a special place in Thwaites' heart, much like it does for an entire generation of Touring Car fans.



Whit Bank Holiday witnessed one of the highlights of the Oulton Park season in the shape of the annual visit of the British GT Championship which, along with its support races, provided 2 excellent days of racing in glorious sunshine.

### **British GT – 2 x 1 Hour:**

#### **Race 1**

At the start of the first GT race, Rob Collard in the Barwell Lamborghini Huracan swept round the outside of Alex Howard's Beechdean Aston Martin at the first corner (above). He then built a healthy lead before handing over to Hugo Cook at the pit stops. But then the contest was neutralised to allow an incident at Druids to be cleared. After the restart, Ross Gunn, who had taken over from Howard, had one back marker between him and Cook but it took him a while to get ahead of that car.

By the time Gunn was in the clear, Cook was being hampered by a brake issue and so exiting Knickerbrook on the last lap the two leaders were nose to tail... and with a backmarker just ahead.

In an intelligent piece of driving that proved decisive, Cook held back from lapping the car until he had got through Druids which backed up Gunn and prevented him from getting a run through the corner to line up a possible pass into Lodge.

In GT4, Jack Collins had run third in Class with the Century Motorsport BMW M4 behind the Innovation Racing Ginetta of Hadley Simpson/Thomas Holland and the MK Racing Aston Martin of Jessica Hawkins and Will Orton. When Collins handed over to Branden Templeton, there was no success penalty to be served unlike the 2 cars ahead of them so Templeton emerged in the lead and went on to take the victory.



## British GT

### Race 2

Next time out, Gunn was the early leader ahead of the Optimum Motorsport McLaren in the hands of Ben Barnicoat. They charged away from the rest of the field, running nose to tail until they made their pit stops.

This was another battle that was determined by success penalties (or compensation time as the championship calls them). This manifested itself in the shape of a 7 second delay when Howard took over from Gunn. Therefore, when the Optimum McLaren (above) returned to the track with Morgan Tillbrook at the wheel it was ahead.

Tillbrook had his mirrors filled not only with Howard's Aston Martin but also the 2 Seas Motorsport Mercedes-AMG that had been handed over to Kevin Tse by Ben Green and Simon Orange's McLaren which was started by Marcus Clutton.

With four of these fantastic GT3 car fighting for the lead, it was epic stuff!

As the laps unfolded, Tillbrook was to ease away to take the victory as Howard focused on fending off Tse and Orange. The latter dropped all the way down to ninth in the final classification after the stewards applied a 30 second penalty because he overtook a backmarker a yellow flag zone.

Jack Mitchell and Luke Shaw appeared to be on their way to winning GT4 in the Toro Verde Ginetta until steering failure caused them to go straight on into the gravel at Lodge. This handed the lead to the Grange Racing by FSR Aston Martin driven by Darren Turner and Daniel Lavery. However, the Orton/Hawkins Aston was closing rapidly on them. There was a grandstand finish when, on the last lap, Lavery ran wide exiting Knickerbrook which gave Hawkins the run on him up Clay Hill. Lavery just about managed to keep her at bay to take the laurels.



**Ginetta Junior – 3 x 20 Minutes:** Arguably the most action-packed series in the country, there was drama even before the 3 Ginetta Junior races (above) got under way when Championship leader, Lewis Goff, had all his laps in qualifying disallowed due to breaching track limits. He must have been gutted as this put him at the back of the grid for races 1 and 2.

In the first encounter Goff finished fourth as Riley Cranham, Harrison Mackie and Alex Murray battled for the lead until Murray spun off a Cascades. Josh Watts inherited third and closed in on the leaders as the contest drew to a close. He overtook Cranham who dropped back when his bonnet came loose and blocked his view of the track. Watts finished second on the road but was declared the winner when Mackie received a track limits penalty.

Things got worse for Mackie when he returned to the paddock as the stewards gave him a 6 place penalty for causing a collision.

Next time out, Cranham, Mackie and Murray renewed their battled until the Safety Car appeared. When racing resumed, Cranham was leading but repeatedly breached track limits. He ended up with a massive 15 minute penalty which, with the field still bunched up after the Safety Car period, dropped him from first to last in the final classification handing the win to Mackie.

Murray was passed by Ashworth and then Watts who had pace late in the race once again. Watts passed Ashworth to move into second once all the penalties had been applied but then spun off at the last corner.

As the grid for race 3 was decided by the finishing order of race 2, Goff started from fifth and was soon in the lead ahead of Malkie as Ashworth and Watts failed to finish. After a Safety Car period, Mackie was outbraked into Hislops by Melvin Kalousdian. While they were sorting themselves out, Devon Hagelen passed the pair of them. However, by the time the chequered flag came out, Kalousdian and Malkie had shuffled Hagelen back down to fourth.



**Ginetta GT & GT Academy – 3 x 20 Minutes:** With Will Antrobus (car 57, above) leading race 1, the battle for second between James Nicholas and Harry Gamble became so intense that they made contact multiple times through Cascades and down The Lakeside straight. Eventually, they both got on the grass approaching Island Bend and Nicholas spun across the track and into the gravel trap bringing out the Safety Car. Gamble's driving standards were deemed to have breached the regulations and he was disqualified.

Antrobus went on to win, just ahead of Cameron Pratt-Thompson.

Nicholas had a power steering pump failure just before the second thrash and didn't take part. Gamble took the lead at the start and kept Antrobus at bay until the finish

The third contest saw Gamble pull away to win once more. There was a 4-way dice for second but this didn't include Antrobus as he had gone into the first corner side-by-side with Pratt-Thompson. They made light contact and both briefly left the track. During an early Safety Car period, Antrobus made a quick pit stop to have the grass removed from his radiator inlet. He then passed all the Academy Class runners to finish eighth overall.

In the first 2 races, Luis Belilicke continued his domination of the Academy Class this season but Tom Walker beat him away from the grid in the third. Belilicke passed Walker on lap 8 around the outside on the entrance to Hislops but next time around the German pulled off with a mechanical failure on the approach to the same complex leaving Walker to hold off Joseph Ostholthoff and Ian Beaumont.



*Brendon McCaughan won the second Formula Ford race. Photo: Peter Hamilton*

**United Formula Ford – 2 x 20 Minutes:** The first of these closely fought Formula Ford encounters reached a dramatic conclusion when the Medina Sport JL18 of Rory Smith and the Van Diemen RF99 of Morgan Quinn – had a coming together cresting Clay Hill on the last lap with Smith coming to rest upside down but unscathed. This brought out the red flags and with neither of them running, the victory went to Alex Walker (Van Diemen JL12) who was in third at the conclusion of the previous circuit.

Walker then had a huge battle for third with Felix Fisher (Ray GR14) in the second race but a 10 second penalty for a false start dropped him to seventh. The laurels went to Brendon McCaughan in a Van Diemen LA09 with Anthony Amato (Ray GR22) finishing runner-up.



**GB4 – 3 x 15 Minutes:** Fred Green set the fastest time in GB4 qualifying just before the chequered flag came out. Alex O’Grady had been at the top of the time sheets up until that point and by setting the second fastest time, he was awarded pole for race 2.

Green (orange car 51) and O’Grady (leading, above) each converted their pole positions into race wins.

For race 3, the Top 12 was reversed on the grid however earlier in the day, on lap 1 of race 2, the drivers due to start on the front row – Dayton Coulthard and Joshua McLean – collided at Cascades.

Fortunately, there was time for the cars to be repaired for the final encounter. McLean made the best start... but then had to do it all again after the red flags came out following an incident on the exit of Brittens. McLean was able to repeat his earlier getaway and went on to take the win having kept Coulthard at bay.



**Liqui Moly Slicks & Verum Builders New Millennium – 40 minutes:**

This saw Nigel Mustill and Craig Dolby take a dominant victory as they lapped the entire field in their GT4 spec BMW M4.

# THE DADDY!

## Dan Chilvers meets Rob Collard



The racing community is often described as one big family - drivers, engineers, mechanics, marshals and officials united by a collective passion for speed, performance and competition. Some entire families are absorbed into motorsport; the Hills, the Schumachers and the Goodes (the Oulton Park marshalling dynasty!) to name but a few.

Yet it remains genuinely rare for a family to race together competitively, something the Collards achieved to great effect when father Rob and son Ricky won the 2024 British GT title. We sat down with Rob to talk about his career, his ambitions and that all-important title.

Rob Collard's love for motorsport stretches back to his childhood on a Hampshire farm when his dad raced ¼ mile dirt ovals in stock cars and hot rods. Rob learnt how to “knock out the dents, fix the car and change the wheels” while he travelled around the country watching his dad win British, European and even World championships.

He began racing himself in his teenage years before returning to a dirt track oval in his mid-twenties, not making the move into circuit racing until his late twenties - a transition he reflects on with a trace of

regret: “In hindsight, maybe I spent too many years on the dirt tracks.”

That delayed start only seemed to sharpen his focus. Rob made up for lost time, quickly stepping through Formula Ford before making his British Touring Car Championship (BTCC) debut in 2000. He spent the next two decades racing touring cars, claiming the 2003 Independents Championship in an ex-Barwell Motorsport Vauxhall Astra along the way. He recalls that he sometimes “jumped in the wrong cars just to get on the grid” and that “I wasted a lot of time and didn't probably get a great reputation early on because I was very quick and I got frustrated because everything around me couldn't do what I wanted it to do.”

Rob, never one to settle for mediocrity, decided after 2019 to move into GT cars, and Barwell Motorsport was the obvious choice. He and team principal Mark Lemmer had raced together in the BTCC and became firm friends. So, despite a global pandemic, Rob made his British GT debut at Oulton Park in a Barwell-run Lamborghini Huracán GT3. Success followed swiftly, with two overall wins alongside Sandy Mitchell on the way to the 2020

British GT title. Over the next three years Rob competed across Europe, even taking a class win at the prestigious Spa 24 hours with his son Ricky.

Rob is clear on the difference between his two worlds “In touring cars it's very impulsive, very direct racing - you're out the blocks and you're battling in the first corner like it's the last corner” whereas GT racing is “more strategy; it's not always the quickest person that wins the race.” He believes his experience serves him well in the longer stints: “I can manage the tyres and I've got a great understanding of the car from my days as a mechanic.” He put it simply: “They're massively different but still the same because you're racing a car and you're at the same circuits - the ingredients are the same.”

There is also a notable difference in approach between the two disciplines. BTCC demands a raw combative instinct: “When you had 30 cars around you, you had to be an absolute dog and if you weren't a dog, another dog would pass you.” GT racing's longer events, by contrast, reward patience and strategy. That said, Rob insists his hunger isn't changed: he remains “as hungry and competitive as ever to be a winner”

In 2024, Rob returned to British GT to join forces with his son Ricky for a full title challenge. It began perfectly, with victory at Oulton Park in wet conditions, and they never finished lower than fifth all season. Another win at Donington Park, along with podiums at Spa and Snetterton, was enough to clinch the title. “It was an absolutely amazing achievement,” Rob said, quick to praise Ricky as “an ultra-fast on his day and he's just great fun to be around.”

Ricky has since returned to BTCC while Rob stayed with Barwell to partner Lamborghini Junior Hugo Cook, the duo finishing as series runners-up in 2025. Rob is candid about the 36-year age gap between them: “I'm never going to be the fastest on the grid anymore.” Yet, there are still “elements on the track where I'm quicker than Hugo and he's scratching his head that I'm 57 years of age and going faster than him.” He praised Cook's ability to “put his whole lap together” giving them a potent combination of Cook's “real raw speed” and Rob's “experience of chassis setup, where we can push, where we have to be conservative.”

After mechanical failure and a minor fire ended their hopes at the season opener at Silverstone, Rob was arrived at Oulton Park hungry for points.

He described the Cheshire circuit as “one of the most unique circuits on the calendar,” loving “the beautiful countryside, wide green grass, beautiful cows in the field” and a layout that is “very undulating, very flowing, very tight in places and it rewards the brave.” After qualifying, Rob admitted he was unsure who would prevail, with the “form book upside down.” Early season favourites of 2 Seas Motorsport and the Barwell Lamborghinis were struggling while Beechdean Motorsport claimed pole positions. That unpredictability, Rob says, makes the season “much more interesting” for both drivers and fans.

As temperatures soared up to 32 degrees on race day, Rob delivered a masterclass. Starting second on the grid, he seized the lead into Old Hall on the opening lap and never relinquished it despite Andrew Howard's best attempts. After the pit stops, Cook built a comfortable gap to Ross Gunn's Aston Martin to seal the victory. In race two, the Barwell duo were required to serve the maximum success penalty but recovered well to finish fifth and bank valuable points.

Looking ahead, Rob is content at Barwell particularly with the team set to take delivery of the new Lamborghini Temerario GT3 next season. His longer-term ambition is to finish his career in Europe while competing in what he calls “blue ribbon events” – ideally the Le Mans 24 hours – alongside his two sons. It remains a dream with a little extra edge: Rob came close to a Le Mans drive in an LMP2, only to turn it down when it conflicted with his BTCC commitments, a decision he admits to regretting.

The next British GT round takes the championship to the world-famous Spa-Francorchamps circuit in Belgium for the series' international showpiece. It remains one of the few venues where Rob has yet to win in British GT, but with his vast experience at the circuit and the form he showed at Oulton, he will be a serious contender from the first lap till the chequered flag.

Thank you to Barwell Motorsport and Rob Collard for speaking to us.

# DOUBLE TOP

By Dan Chilvers



*During May, William Antrobus (57) stood on the top step of the podium at Oulton Park in two of the country's most prestigious one-make sportscar championships*

All race cars are unique and individual beasts. How each one responds to an input varies wildly. A driver may find their talents lie in extracting the full performance of just one car. However, the truly great drivers learn how to win races across different racing series. One young star trying to achieve this dynamic is William Antrobus. To do so he is running double duty this season across the MX-5 SuperCup and Ginetta GT Championship... and he tasted success in both at Oulton Park.

Antrobus' father raced motocross bikes therefore it was only natural that, once William was old enough, he was given the chance to race a go-kart. This makes his Dad the most influential person in the young driver's career as they "have both learnt together as they climbed up the lower reaches of the motorsport ladder through the years." He has always been by William's side as both a mentor and mechanic.

Antrobus started racing in local championships aged 7 at Hooton Park near Liverpool. He started winning in just his second season when he ended up 3rd overall in the track's Indikart Cadet Championship. This proved he had the talent to jump into national karting with the PMR Driver

Program. Run by Paul Munn, this takes talented young karters and prepares them for car racing.

Antrobus recalled feeling "scared" for his first few years as he had a "big fear of overtaking and general racing." Antrobus overcame this fear, climbing the karting ladder on his way to finishing 2nd in the British Rotax Karting Championship. After a brief hiatus in 2025, Antrobus was keen to diversify his skills by entering two completely different car championships simultaneously.

For 2026 Antrobus is competing in both a Mk3 Mazda MX-5 and a Ginetta G56 GTP8 across the country. Together they offer "a great starter package for my car career... and to get my name out into the world for the future." Despite their outwardly similar appearances, each series demands very different skills. The MX-5 requires drivers to have excellent wheel to wheel skills while managing mechanical grip and a manual gearbox. However, the Ginetta is a modern, powerful GT race car with wings and slicks. The biggest and most obvious difference is sheer speed. Antrobus was shocked at the Ginetta's acceleration, saying it was "something I had never experienced before, you can tell (the difference) from when you put your foot on the throttle."

The results prove he isn't stretching himself too thin by qualifying near the front and winning Race 2 of the MX-5 SuperCup at Oulton Park. This allowed him to take the championship lead for the first time. He was quick to point out his takeaways from the weekend such as a "few little errors during the first race" where overdefending cost him the victory. Antrobus is constantly learning "more and more about racing, which is preparing me even more for the career I have ahead of me."

Two weeks later during the Bank Holiday weekend, Antrobus won the first of 3 Ginetta GT races and finished runner-up to Harry Gamble in the second. Gamble is the reigning Ginetta GT Pro Am Champion.

In the third, contact at the first corner resulted in a trip across the grass and a radiator grille full of

vegetation. After a quick pit stop to clear this, Will drove impressively to work his way up the order to finish eighth.

Hailing from the Warrington area, no doubt these wins at Oulton Park were particularly sweet for Antrobus.

With aims to be in GT3 endurance racing in 5 years' time, Will has set his sights high. To achieve this, he hopes to attend some GT4 tests towards the end of the season. The Ginetta series acts as a perfect launch pad for a career in British GT and beyond. Antrobus is using his goals as a strong motivator. Combined with the "amazing opportunity that I have this year with Elite Motorsport and Hills Motorsport," it won't be long before he is using his ever-growing skill set on a global stage.





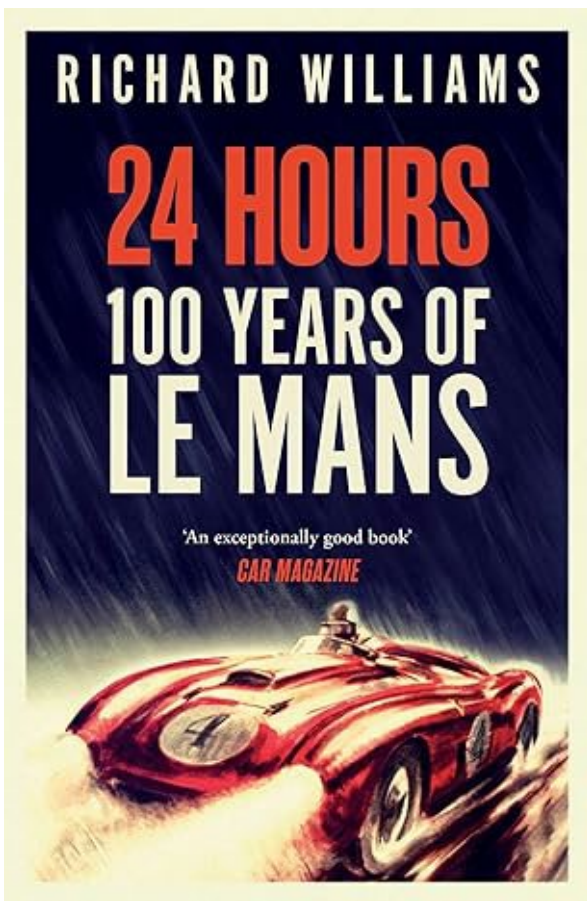
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### Answers to May's Quiz

1. Who is the only driver to have won LeMans, Indianapolis 500 and the F1 World Championship? **Graham Hill**
2. When was the first race meeting held at Oulton Park? **8<sup>th</sup> August 1952**
3. Who was the organising club for the first meeting? **Mid Cheshire Car Club**
4. What is the length of the Island circuit, favoured by BTCC? **2.26 miles**
5. Why does Lewis Hamilton use the #44 on his F1 cars? **During his karting days, his Dad's car registration began F44. Lewis has kept that number throughout his career**
6. Where and when was the first F1 race held post WW2? **Turin 1946**
7. Who was the winner? **Achille Varzi**
8. Who is credited with the most BTCC wins at Oulton Park? **Jason Plato (11)**
9. Jan and Kevin Magnussen both raced in F1 - and for the same team. Which one? **McLaren**
10. Which F1 driver had the nickname of Britney? **Nico Rosberg**
11. Who was the designer of the Brabham F1 car – the BT46B fan Car? **Gordon Murray**
12. Who is considered to have the most wins at Oulton Park? **Derek Walker**

# BBC – Broadbent's Book Corner

Michael Broadbent reviews his favourite books



## 24 Hours 100 Years of Le Mans

By Richard Williams

[Available Here](#)

With Le Mans dominating the race calendar in June, I thought it appropriate to look at one of the smaller publications that celebrated 100 years of the historic endurance race in Northern France.

There are many books about Le Mans focusing on single years, manufacturer involvement or the drivers while others take a look behind the scenes.

This book sticks to a traditional chronological style documenting each year in detail – with additional background information, anecdotes, and details

about some of the lesser-known competitors and their cars.

The author has explored, researched, and interviewed many drivers and entrants to plot the adventures that some people went through to get funding that enabled them to take part in the greatest sports car race.

Interestingly did you know that the city of Le Mans goes back to pre-Roman times and that they renamed it Vindinium & stayed there for 500 years. So, is the circuit the only one in the world that had its origins in Roman road building – Mulsanne Straight? A point that could be discussed over a pint at the pub!

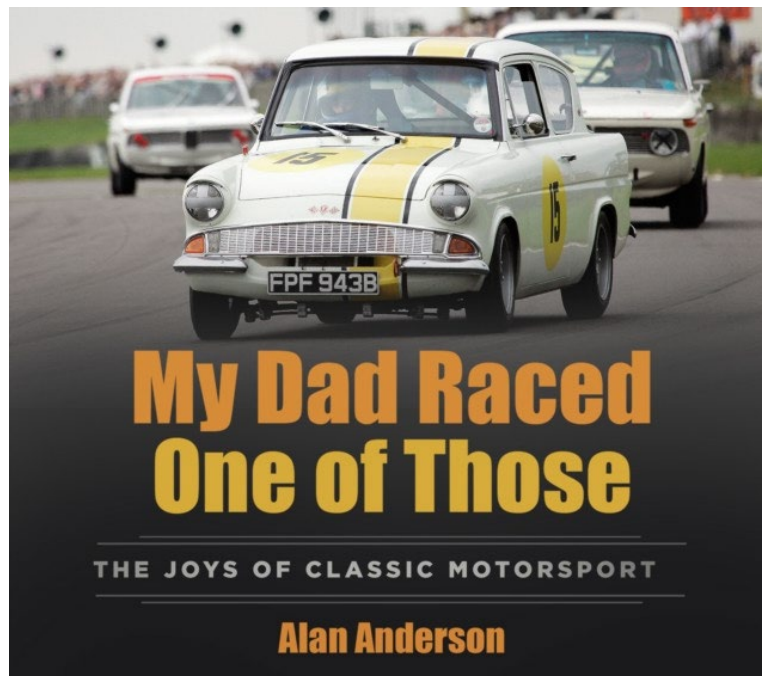
The author has gone into detail to flesh out the stories that are ingrained in the event's history; the Bentley boys, Tom Kristensen (so far, Le Mans most winning driver), the adventures of Ecurie Ecosse and the awful tragedy of the 1955 race which threatened the future of motorsport. The 1955 race has been subject of a moving documentary made by the BBC in 2008 which investigates the race in detail, without sensationalising the events that led to the death of 85 spectators and officials.

The back of the book gives the statisticians the opportunity to browse through the top three for each year, and a lesser-known fact is that Oulton Park's current owner (Jonathan Palmer) finished second in 1985.

There is also a comprehensive bibliography so that you can fall into many rabbit holes to satisfy your curiosity about this unique race. My recommendations? Well, there is Touchwood by Duncan Hamilton, Racing in the Rain by John Horseman and Le Mans 1955 by Christopher Hilton.

However, my interest in Le Mans started with the Steve McQueen film which introduced me to the Ferrari 512 and the Porsche 917 – arguably the greatest sports car ever built.

So, with books, films, and documentaries, along with the museum at circuit, there is nothing else quite like Le Mans!



## My Dad Raced One of Those

By Alan Anderson

[Available Here](#)

Whilst some of us yearn to see big noisy and spectacular single seaters and sports cars racing at the limit, there is an area of motorsport that allows the unassuming, modest and dare I say it, boring cars to get on track and rough it up. There are now many clubs who have cottoned on to the fact that there is a plethora of older cars and owners who enjoy taking their cars to circuits, talking about them and racing them in a ‘gentlemanly’ fashion. This gives us – the spectators and marshals – the opportunity to look back, sometimes with rose tinted glasses and watch Ford Anglias, MGAs & Midgets, Beetles, Minis, Mk 1 Cortinas et al hurl themselves around racetracks, often at lurid angles and thoroughly enjoying their racing. Hence the title!

So, my Dad never raced. However, he was an extremely competent, safe and fast driver and had an uncanny knack of being able to scrounge cars from his boss – Jim Swift. He used to bring home exotics such as the Jaguar 420G (complete with walnut picnic tables), a Vauxhall Ventora, Jaguar XJ6 (3.8) and even a Ferrari. Sorry, I am getting off the subject!

The book delves into the world of classic motorsport, but from the angle of individual cars – rather than race series or individuals – and documents a broad range of cars from the humble to the more exotic (think BMW M3, Ford Sierra Cosworth, etc).

It is an ideal book to pick up, read a couple of pages and come back to it later. There is no story, other than a well written catalogue of cars we all used to see on the road and watched them being raced. After all, who would have thought that a lesser-known Soviet Bloc car, the Moskvich 412 would be a race winner (well a class race winner!)

Oh, and even the CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship fields such cars as Andy Southcott and Mark Primett in their Midgets. Seriously quick and spectacular cars.

The end of the book collates some anecdotes from drivers of the period as well, just to keep you interested.

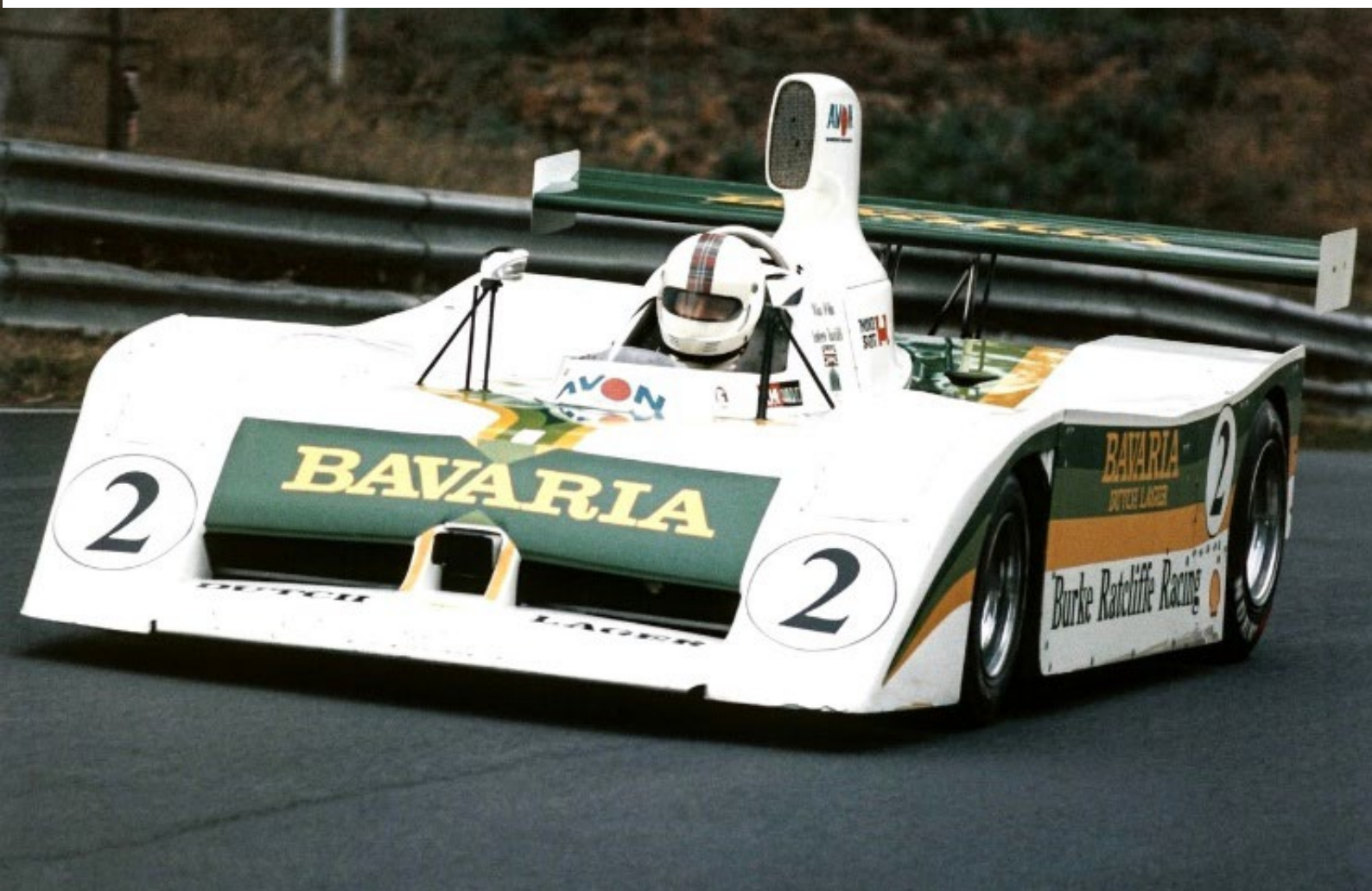
There is an exceptionally good introduction as well from Gregor Marshall, son of the legendary Gerry Marshall whose exploits in saloon cars including Vauxhalls, Capris, Dolomites wowed us all.

The good news is that we can still see these cars being raced, thanks to Donington Historic Festival, Oulton Park’s Gold Cup and the Silverstone Classic. Oh, and not forgetting the Goodwood Members Meeting and Revival. So, there is lots of places we can immerse ourselves in nostalgia and say, “My Dad had one of those!”

# REARWARD GLANCE



Andy Rouse Ford Sierra RS500, BTCC Round 1. Good Friday, 24th March 1989



David Leslie in the Lola T530 he shared with Mike Wilds. The duo won the final Thundersports race of 1986 at Oulton Park on 21st September