

## South east Centre's Chairman's Report for 2007



Since stepping up to the role of centre chairman I have found that the club's activities have been getting increasingly busier. Whether this is due to the popularity of our Dunlop Motorsport News saloon car championship or our other motor sporting activities, it is still pleasing to note that we seem to be given the centre members what they want. I am very fortunate in having a good team of fellow committee members who have all worked very hard throughout the year.

On a sporting note, we have been involved with ten rounds of the DMN championship. Four of which were at centre race meetings at Lydden, whereas the other six were at various circuits where we bought slots in the race programme. On every occasion there have been capacity grids, and quite often we have a full reserve list as well. The eclectic mix of cars has to be seen to be believed, and the favourable comments we get from spectators and marshals, proves that we have hit upon a winning formula. Our fledgling "tin top" series (for road tyred saloons) has also proved popular, with several drivers stepping up from sprinting and enjoying dicing with other competitors. The BARC south east centre challenged the Classic Sports Car Club to a pair of team races against their similar tin tops. It is heartening to say that our team won convincingly, scoring almost three times as many points as the opposition. Hopefully this will be repeated during 2008.

Our other race series is for sports and saloon cars. Quite often we have about a dozen Tiger sports cars, which run in their own class, along with a variety of Caterhams, plus a recently introduced class for up to 1400cc Minis. The beauty of a series is that you can add in extra classes if there is sufficient support. On the sprinting side, the BARC speed championship continues to get loyal support and visits such venues as Goodwood, Gurston Down and Silverstone. This year's champion is David Watson who drove his Radical SR4 with great aplomb, leaving Derrick Jones (BMW coupe) as runner up yet again. Phil Wood has worked extremely hard to ensure that we remain as one of the best clubs for sprints, each of our centre rounds (at Lydden and Goodwood) ran three timed runs for all competitors. This ensured that everyone got good value for money.

On the social side, we have our very successful dinner dance, which yet again was sold out many weeks in advance. Last February we co-promoted a treasure hunt with Borough 19 motor club, which started from Brands Hatch and eventually ended up in Chatham historic dockyard. The route took us through picturesque villages in north west Kent, and a good time was had by all. In March we took part in an inter motor club quiz night at Brands Hatch organised by the BRSCC. Out of 8 teams, the BARC south east centre finished a creditable fourth.

On the racing scene, we ran four meetings at Lydden. Two featured half day sprints followed by afternoon races. One of the others was our fifth annual festival of motorsport. This popular event starts with circuit racing in the morning, then switches to oval racing in the afternoon. A popular addition last year was a world qualifying round for the national hot rods. These cars provided some superb action, along with the popular truck racing and awesome CAMSO V8s. With increased spectator attendance this event is going from strength to strength. Our other meeting featured a two day extravaganza of sports and saloon car racing. The Saturday turned into a mini Caterham festival, with all three graduate classes having double header races. The Sunday featured DMN saloons, tin tops, MG Metros and Tigers.

All in all it has been an excellent season, despite some unexpected damage to our rescue unit. I would like to thank all our volunteer marshals, scrutineers and officials who work tirelessly to ensure everything runs smoothly. Our committee have also had a very busy year and without them the centre would not function, so their work is particularly praiseworthy, especially as they are all volunteers as well. If anyone would like to join the committee please let me know.

Finally, I would like to thank all our sponsors: Dunlop, Motorsport News, Quaife Engineering, Chris Knott Insurance, Cannon's Motor Spares and Alfa Romeo Owners Club

Let us hope that 2008 is also a successful and safe season for everyone.

Rod Birley (south east centre chairman)