



Annual Review

2006

"Festina Lente"

The motto of Berkhamsted School for Girls translates as Hurry Slowly which effectively reflects my second year in class D2 of 70's Road Sports there follows a culinary seasonal review from somewhere around the 10th row of the grid.

Arriving bright and early at Donington Park unlike the weather for the first race of the year, having taken full advantage over the winter of the rule indicating that the weight of the driver was free, it was immediately apparent that I was not the only competitor to spot this surprising omission in the regulations.

**DONINGTON
PARK**

With the race starting in damp-gloom we all set off like eager school boys fumbling in the dark to understand the complexity of a front fastening bra. Enjoying a sporting encounter for second and third in class with Jason Kennedy who gave me an skillful demonstration of the benefits of a front wheel drive Lancia in slippery conditions.

At Brands Hatch my car was purloined by Jonathan Hartop to use in the Classic Road Sport event, although his race came to a premature end, generally believed to be caused by a lack of fuel, Jonathan claimed that he actually stopped to rescue an attractive young lady carrying a picnic basket, scantily dressed in only a red cape.

**BRANDS
HATCH**

With my 70's race mates frolicking across the freshly mown Brands Hatch grass like new born lambs enjoying the spring sunshine, my engine continued to cut-out through the corners so I took the difficult decision to finish my race early before the Paddock Hill doughnut caravan closed for the afternoon.

The weather at Silverstone was so atrocious that even trawlermen would have been looking for a safe harbour, but being intrepid racing drivers with limited imaginations we plunged into the impenetrable spray with the single minded approach usually associated with Lemmings.

SILVERSTONE

Again my race ended early when the carburettors sank below the water line and the car floated to a halt close to the burger van on the inside of Copse corner, as the old pirate 'One Eyed' Bob sailed serenely to his third consecutive class win of the season.

It was now obvious that the Alfa should have received more attention during the winter break than it was given by the boy scout who was paid a £1 to clean it, with the compression registering slightly less than would be expected from an old bicycle pump, new valves were shipped from Italy individually wrapped in the foreskins of Dolphins and the crack in the cylinder head was repaired with molten Unobtanium.

The journey to Snetterton revealed that unfortunately not all the ancillaries had been replaced with the same care and attention that had been lavished on the cylinder head, briefly taking the class lead after slipping inside farmer Morton's Alfa at Riches, like a vets arm up a cows backside, a 10 minute pit stop compromised my race result, Jonathan Hartop finally taking an overdue class win, which was followed by a valiant effort to drink the contents of his Swiss bank account during our post race celebrations.

SNETTERTON

And so onto Croix in Northern France. Whilst the circuit is probably easier to learn than the basic layout in a £50 Scalextric set, the HSCC should be applauded for being prepared to use some imagination when organising our annual programme and their efforts deserved greater support. Despite unwisely eating too many 'white meat' sausages I thoroughly enjoyed the weekend until the gearbox mount fractured resulting in the engine twisting and dislocating the throttle linkage.

CROIX (NORTHERN FRANCE)

An enjoyable race with Steve Cooke's Triumph GT6 and the three wheeling flame spitting Porsche of Paul Aslett at Castle Combe marked the turning point of the year, whilst being lapped by class leader Bob Trotter I was struck with the blindingly obvious realization that a move away from the mechanics who had been looking after my car was long overdue.

CASTLE COOMBE

Having described my physical stature earlier in the year as resembling a old oak wardrobe it was a natural choice to move the Alfa into the capable hands of antique furniture specialists, Wood Restoration in Rugby, who liberally coated my nuts in teak oil adjusted my casters and generally got all four wheels pointing in the roughly the same direction.

With practice for the Oulton Park Gold Cup weekend disrupted by an oil spillage and the distraction of a yellow Mazda spreading itself along the barrier so comprehensively it was difficult to believe it wasn't made of butter. Another enjoyable race was spent following the TVR of Neil Condliffe so closely that I could see the whites of my own eyes reflected in his cars immaculate black paintwork, before the changeable weather conditions again helped me to achieve the fastest lap in class.

OULTON PARK GOLD CUP

With the resurgence in performance continuing with fastest lap during practice at Brands Hatch my hopes of getting more than a sniff of the winners trophy were dashed when Bob Trotter's yellow Escort again disappeared over the horizon with the Jolly Roger fluttering in the breeze.

BRANDS HATCH

At the Silverstone finals meeting Jeremy Anstead's Fiat kept my race interesting by sticking to me like chewing gum on a suede racing boot whilst 'Captain One Eye' gave us all a brief tantalizing chance of victory with a bit of a broadside, before carving back to the front of the class with the skill and precision of a pork butcher slicing up a spit roasted hog, leaving the rest of us to fight over the scraps of the season.

SILVERSTONE FINALS

Finally I would like to thank the HSCC and all competitors in 70's Roads Sports for their contribution in making my 2006 season so enjoyable, and now if the boy scout clutching a damp sponge is still sitting on the high shelf in the garage next to the deep fat fryer, preparations for the new year will begin as soon as possible.