

motorsport uk HIGHVAY



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May 2023

The **Blackpalfrey Motor Club of Kent Ltd (BpMCK)** is a member of **Motorsport UK**, the **HRCR** and of three Regional Associations, the **ASEMC**, the **ACSMC** and the **AEMC**. Blackpalfrey is also a partner club in the **Weald Motor Club** consortium. These organisations allow Blackpalfrey members to compete in a wide range of events, for both **classic** and **modern** cars, organised by many other motor clubs all over southern England.

The home of Historic Road Events in the South East

The Hughes Rally Team have been working hard on our annual HRCR Clubmans Road Rally Championship **Hughes Historic Rally** for several months now and it's all going to happen on **Saturday**, 27th May - starting & finishing in Ashford, Kent with Tests at Manston Airport.

This year, we are pleased to have been able to secure the local support of **Skelton Plant Hire** (01892 837041) and **Coyle Personnel Recruitment** (01233 487950), whereas the HRCR Championship enjoys the sponsorship of **Motorsport News** and **BRANTZ Rallymeters**.

So far, we have a promising entry of ~45 cars and, for the event to run smoothly, as usual, we will need lots & lots of **MARSHALS** to man Controls on the road sections and at Manston.

Chief Marshal, Tom Wilson, will be looking after the Regularity and road sections and Dave Clark will be Tests Commander at Manston.

All details, including entry list, on: hughesrally.blackpalfrey.co.uk/

AS THINGS STAND, AT THIS MOMENT - we still need LOTS & LOTS MORE MARSHALS in order for the event to run as smoothly as we want it to. The Hughes Rally Team have been, and will be, working hard to make the event the success it has always been so, if you can spare a little time to help YOUR Club on 27th May, please contact Tom Wilson < marshals@hughesrally.co.uk > asap – many thanks!



However, the **best way** to register your interest in Marshalling on the Hughes Historic is to complete the form on: hughesrally.blackpalfrey.co.uk/marshals/





Congratulations to Elfyn Evans & Scott Martin on winning the WRC Croatia Rally but, of course, this fine victory was overshadowed by the sad practice accident which took the life of **Craig Breen**; co-driver James Fulton was unhurt. The WRC Community unanimously paid their respects to Craig's memory before, during and after the event, showing how much he will be missed as a friend and fellow enthusiast, whose motto was 'have fun, life is short', by them all...

RIP Craig - sincere condolences to family and his many friends...

Copy for June HIGHWAY by 26th May, please - have YOU any stories, pics etc for YOUR mag?

Editor: Brian Millen, 10 Hawkridge Grove, Kings Hill ME19 4JB - brian@blackpalfrey.co.uk

Club Night - Wednesday, 3rd MAY

7:30pm onwards at the Park Gate, A20 Hollingbourne (188/838537)

Come along and talk about MARSHALLING on the HUGHES Historic

all members & friends welcome

Dates for your 2023 Diary

May	27th	Saturday	Hughes - HRCR Championship
June	11th	Sunday	12 Car Regularity Run
October	1st	Sunday	Tour Of Kent - HRCR Tour
October	15th	Sunday	12 Car Regularity Run
November	8th	Wednesday	Scatter Rally
November	19th	Sunday	12 Car Regularity Run
December	10th	Sunday	12 Car Regularity Run



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The Andy Gibson Memorial 12 Car Rally - 31/03/2023

A report on the final round of the Weald 12Car Rally Championship, but first, a quick run-down of our season so far...

We had ended the 2021/22 Weald 12 Car rally Championship season on a high, having won the semi expert class, but this came with the stipulation that we would have to move up into the expert class. Therefore, it was with some trepidation that we began the new season back in October last year. The first round (Borough 18) went fairly well, we finished mid table and picked up seven points. The second round we chose to marshal, the championship rules stipulating that at least one round must be marshalled in order to qualify. From there it went downhill rapidly. I was really struggling to get my head around expert navigation. The next two rounds (Sevenoaks and Southern) saw us bringing up the rear, finishing in eleventh and twelfth places. The problem was, because I was spending far too long getting the navigation down onto the map, we were losing too much time, and constantly trying to avoid going OTL. This meant that Richard was having to push harder, and we were having to cut to keep us on the timecard. In the fifth round (Maidstone) we Inevitably ended up taking an excursion through the undergrowth, which resulted in the car becoming grounded on the verge as we attempted to re-join the road, our first DNF. We missed both round six (Guildford), due to illness, and round seven (Eastbourne), dropping-out to let a Beginner crew take our place. This hiatus allowed me time to take stock. I looked back over the navigation for the previous rounds and found that the navigation was, in fact, no more difficult than it had been for the previous season. I had been making silly mistakes, mainly due to not reading the route cards properly. I had got into a bad habit during my three years as a semi-expert, of quickly scanning the route card, and had, somehow, gotten away with it. At least now I knew the problem. So, it was with renewed optimism that we started the penultimate round (Bexley), and indeed, we were doing well, right up until the final section. I slipped back into my old ways in the Punto, we lost a lot of time - and ended up ninth. Still, our best result for a while...

Which brings us to the final round (Blackpalfrey promotion), on 31st March. Before we started, I made a conscious decision to CAREFULLY read EVERY route card.



The weather all day had been atrocious. Indeed, the Met Office had just declared that this had been the wettest March for 42 years. At the drivers briefing in the Sugar Loaves Pub, Dave Clark warned us of slippery conditions, muddy roads, standing water, and potholes, one of which was a car eater! This pothole was apparently so deep, and potentially damaging, that Dave had felt the need to mark its position in the navigation. It was beginning to sound as though this was going to be quite a challenging evening!

As soon as we set off, we got off to a bad start. There was a runout from the pub in Hollingbourne (MTC0) to the actual rally start, near Harrietsham (MTC1). Because Hollingbourne was on a different map to the main route, the organisers had provided us with a scale printout to follow. Somehow, I sent us the wrong way, and we soon realised that we were going to be late getting to the start. When we eventually found the correct lane two other competitors were in front of us, who should have been behind us. Mick Rose and Kevin Ablitt in the Puma were directly in front, and they must have been in the wrong order too, because the car in front of them pulled-over to allow them to pass. As they overtook, they hadn't realised that the lane swung sharply to the left, and in the slippery conditions they slid onto the verge, becoming grounded. Unfortunately, their rally was over before it had even begun.

We took the slot right, into the lane where I had plotted MTC1 and a wall of rear lights became visible in front of us. Dave Clark was calling our number "CAR 3, WHERE'S CAR 3?". In a Moses like fashion, Dave managed to clear a pathway, and Richard jockeyed our car to the front. Our timecard was signed, and having only lost one or two minutes, we were off.

The first route card consisted of spot heights, gradients and 'overs'. I struggled to plot the route without passing through either Lenham village or a Black-Spot and, in my confusion, I took a wrong slot, which lost us a few minutes, before I managed to work it out correctly. We arrived at TC2 having dropped 8 minutes, and we also missed two of the three passage controls.

The navigation, on route card 2, was a list of Northings followed by either East or West, and three spot heights to pass en route - fairly simple. There were also two LWR's to plot, so at least we knew where the code boards would be. The route itself headed East between the M20 and Egerton, before reaching TC3 south of Charing. By this stage we were starting to get a feel of the poor condition of the roads, with seemingly small puddles revealing themselves to be deep potholes as our wheels dropped into them. The suspension on the Abarth is quite stiff, not ideal, especially combined with the low-profile tyres. It was going to be a bumpy evening!

The route to TC4 was easy navigation but, somehow, I managed to miss out one of the spot heights (I blame the bumpy roads), which resulted in us missing two more PC boards.

Even with the bumps, I was now starting to get into the swing of it, and the next four sections TC4 - TC8 were very straightforward. The route swung West, passing just North of Bethersden, before skirting South of Smarden, then up the Western edge of the map passing through Smarden Bell, carefully negotiating the killer pothole near Egerton Forstal, and into TC8 near Fairbourne Heath.

Once our timecard had been signed, and I'd struggled to open the final envelope (I'm sure Dave Clark had commissioned a supply of extra tough envelopes!), the route card stated that I needed to plot the final section onto the printed map that had been provided. The same printed map that I had assumed we would no longer need, and had discarded into the footwell at MTC1. Much swearing ensued as I fought against my harness to reach down and rummage through all the discarded envelopes around my feet. Eventually I found the map, which was in surprisingly good condition, and navigated us to the finish at Chegworth.

Once back at the Sugar Loaves, we swapped tales of driving through lake sized puddles, and grand canyonesque potholes while enjoying the sandwiches and awaiting the results. A well organised and enjoyable rally had successfully brought the season to an end.



Thanks to Dave Clark & Brian Millen for their fantastic organisation, and a HUGE thank you to all the marshals for standing out in the grotty weather.

Congratulations to *Duncan Brown & Chas Davies* for their well-deserved win, dropping only 3 minutes, and no fails over a tough route

in very demanding conditions. *Rupert & Carole Burne* came in 6th and *Dave Hughes* had an 'off' night, navigating *Dave Bushby* into 7th place. We finished ninth, having dropped 15 minutes and 4 fails, happy that the navigation was finally starting to fall into place, and we'd managed to stay on the top half of the timecard...just!

Also, congratulations to Richard & Tom Pashley for the overall Championship victory.





Steve Thompson - Roll on next season!

Many thanks to Paul Griffiths for the excellent night-time pics (Something I haven't been able to do since the old days of my Zenith + flash - Ed)

(Simon Ingarfield and I marshalled TC7 – many thanks to Simon for letting me sit in the car, compiling the 'check-list' and keep fairly dry, whilst he dealt with the competing cars. Not venturing into the 'lanes' so much these days, I was aghast at the numerous, potentially damaging, potholes we just managed to miss...the 'Authorities' have allowed them to get really bad and numerous, and will have to work hard and expensively to repair them!

Dave Clark 'just' managed to find enough crews to operate the eight time controls, but it would have been easier if we'd had enough a day or two before the event...where are all the volunteer marshals these days? $-\mathbf{Ed}$)

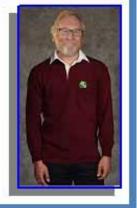
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On page 2, you'll find a list of our events for the next 12 months but, don't forget, as BpMCK members you are able to enter many more events promoted by member clubs of the Associations listed above - all you need is the **FREE RS Clubman Licence.**

Apply-on: <u>motorsportuk.org/Competitors/Competition-Licences/</u>

THE LONG HAUL - YORK MOTOR CLUB'S NORTH YORKS CLASSIC

Sunday 2nd April saw the HRCR Clubmans crews heading for Easingwold in North Yorkshire for the North Yorks Classic, Round 2 of this year's Championship. The start and finish venue was in the Hawkhills complex just south of Easingwold, a government run training centre for emergency personnel and where there is a Cabinet Room for top brass when "up north", dealing with the Northern Powerhouse. Boris has been spotted in recent years! It is an ideal venue for a rally start, with scrutineering, signing on, accommodation all on site and plenty of parking for cars and trailers. Always a challenging rally, our claim to fame is that in 2012 Rich and I in the MGB were Best on Regularities! Now 10 years on we are lucky to get 30th on regularities, a combination of age and a crop of talented young navigators.

Once all the formalities were done and the measured distance checked, we had plenty of time to plot the three regularities received at signing on. This event was notably different from normal in that all maps were provided; we did not need to provide our own OS sheets. This was in part because CoC Ian Canavan

was introducing some novel navigation techniques, some from rallies in Europe. All link sections were marked on the maps as well as being in roadbook form, a potential source of error if not committing to one or the other. Reg 2 used the "Border Approach" method, win which a series of bold straight lines are drawn on the map and, using all roads, your route has to "keep the blue printed lines on the right and as close as possible at every opportunity but never touch or cross it" (see plotted route Map). Reg 3 was a set of tracings in double grid squares in random order to plot on the map supplied, a bit fussy but no problem, then Reg 4 was another new one for me. On the map were marked 3 arrows and 3 points. "You must take the shortest route to the points and the second shortest route to the start of the arrows in number order." This took a bit of working out and you needed to be very careful to see just where the arrows began. So, suitably refreshed and fed, it was a night's rest in the good accommodation on site ready to do battle the next day.

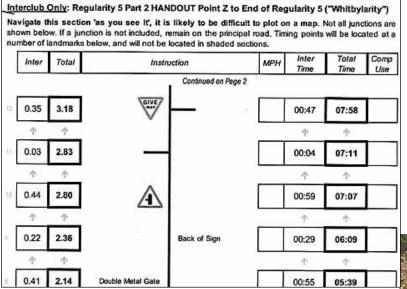
We were at 32 in the Golf Mk1 GTi and, 15 minutes before the off, I collected the details of Reg 1 and the cumulative speed tables for Reg 2. Reg 1 was a variation of Jogularity called "Yorkshirality", a tulip



roadbook but with some of the arrow heads missing and some of the distances missing! However, the other information given aimed to make the instructions unambiguous. It worked out OK and we had a straightforward start, heading east towards Sherrif Hutton. Reg 2 plotted the night before was OK as long as you remembered the LWR triangle "to keep as close as possible to the blue line" It was here that we realised that there were going to be a huge number of code boards! At the end of the rally, I reckon we must have noted over 40 of the things – they were everywhere! They were all numbered and if you put the wrong 2 letters in the wrong box on the timecard, it was WRONG and 15 seconds penalty. The first test followed, a combination of tarmac and loose on the old Wombleton Airfield, quite long and complex but we managed to get it right, which many did not! A short link section to Kirkby Moorside for a passage check and welcome coffee stop. Next up came 'The Quarry' at Spaunton, just 2 miles NE of Kirby in

which we were to do five flowing Tests, all on the loose. The approach to the tests had been diverted along a grassy section, to avoid disturbing a pair of Peregrine Falcons!

All 5 tests were great fun and we got them all right, a contrast with the Tour of Cheshire where we got 3 wrong tests! The finish line of test 6 was also the start line of Reg 3, which meant some quick thinking by me in all the excitement of stopping astride the line and drawing forward to the time marshal. This long regularity took us south to near Slingsby and the start of Reg 4, the shortest and second shortest one! A really enjoyable regularity with lots of junctions, white roads and triangles in the Howardian Hills before a run to the next 2 tests at East Moor airfield, again fast flowing tests on a loose surface. We now had some apprehension as Reg 5 was plot and bash and we had no real idea what was coming. There was a nice tea break at a Yurt Centre near Haxby and a refuelling nearby before the regularity start. 5,4,3,2,1, and I get the instructions, to avoid all spot heights to reach a point where the next half of the



dozens of code boards till we got into Tholthrorpe village where the instructions got the better of me (and many others it appears). We lost a minute here looking for a white on to the airfield where the regularity finished with close set controls. At least we got it all in the end. Just four big airfield tests to finish, all very enjoyable and flowing.

Thanks to Tony North for the pic of Rich & Peter
Back to Easingwold market square for the finish arch

route would be given out, plus the cumulative speed tables for that section. The route was not too testing to plot on the go and we duly arrived at the point for the second half. This proved tricky, a method called by York MC 'Whitbylarity', a sort of herringbone with information alongside (see diagram). The problem is what to do at a junction; does miss a right mean that or does it mean go left? It is tempting to go ahead, as that is the impression the diagram appears. We coped OK, with



and a welcome by the commentator and a display of classic cars, very impressive, before back to Hawkhills, Golf on trailer and a very good carvery meal. This was another one of the unusual aspects of this rally, no awards. After the meal, crews were free to go, maybe to be fit for work on Monday morning. The après rally was absent save for a fairly small group of us who were staying overnight. At the moment there has been little comment on this approach. In its favour is that it kept the entry fee down, the lowest in the series I expect... (any comments, from readers? - Ed). The results, which had been very rapid all day, seemed to take a while so that only the few of us who stayed were there when the results went final at about 20.00. We ended at 38th and were happy with that. Tom Ash and Graham in the Audi came in at 56th, having had a bit of a torrid time near the end. Winners were John Haygarth and Martyn Taylor in



the Opel Kadett Rallye, 19seconds ahead of Ali Procter and Lyndsey Procter in a Peugeot 205GT, with Jon Dunning and Henry Carr 3rd in the Ford Escort RS2000. Overall, a great weekend's rallying in some beautiful scenery and with fine weather. A very long way from Hawkinge but worth the trip, and some novel features that 60 plus years of rallying had not come my way. Never too old to learn.

Peter Boyce

April 2023

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STREETCAR

Although BpMCK is a club that actively promotes Historic and Classic *competitive* car events (as well as, of course, our popular Tour of Kent – part of the HRCR Scenic Tour Series), we also encourage our many members, who *may, or may not,* have a *Classic* car but would, perhaps, like to be involved in 'the new name in grassroots motorsport' – **STREETCAR**. The StreetCar 'disciplines' are based on: **Autotests, AutoSOLOs, Car Trials, Cross-country, Touring Assemblies, Navigational Scatter Rallies, 12 Car Rallies, Road and Historic Rallies** and **Targa Rallies** and all of these events are run by us and other local clubs, to which we are invited.

Steve Thompson - snthompson73@gmail.com, or any Committee Member, is your point-of-contact for StreetCar.

You are encouraged, by MS UK, to join their StreetCar Facebook group here:

https://www.facebook.com/groups/streetcarmotorsportuk

If you want to know more, click on: StreetCar Launch - Motorsport UK Magazine

Old Gits Enjoy a Day at the Seaside

Friday, 21st April saw us set off to Clacton for what was the first closed road event in England and has now become a regular date on the calendar – **The Corbeau Seats Tendring and Clacton Rally**. After a nightmare journey around the north side of M25 and up the A12, we arrived at the trailer parking area at around 6:30 pm and, with the exception of walking into Clacton for a fish supper, that is where we stayed until joined by co-driver Rob Thompson and service manager Grahame Standen, at 08:30 on Saturday morning.

After relocating to our allocated service space on the sea front, followed by some breakfast, it was signing-on and then off to complete a recce of the four stages that made up the vast majority of the competitive milage with each being run three times. The final two miles were two blasts along the sea front on Saturday evening. Whilst we were checking the notes Rob had painstakingly translated from Patterson Pacenot format into the sort of notes we know and love, Grahame and Chief Catering Officer Jane, took the car through scrutineering and noise check. (A bit like an MOT, passed but with a few advisories).

The stages were good with some surprises, such as a section around a farm yard on one, which was a bit like a big Autotest with some changes of surface. There were also some surprisingly long sections of nice wide B road on another. Then there was a section through a village which looked like it would be good fun, but there were also some extremely tight hairpins around grass triangles.

After completing our allowed two runs through each stage, it was back to Clacton for a peek at the sea

front stage, which had to be done on foot. It was shorter than originally planned, with various reasons being given – too much sand on the 'road' or landowner permission withdrawn, being the favourites.

18:00 saw the first car set off along the sea front stage, which took around a minute to complete for most competitors - but the number of spectators was phenomenal, watching not only the stage but the cars driving to and from it and queuing at the start. So many spectators and not a single protestor!



By 7:30pm, the car was in the overnight parc

fermé and the crew were in the Toby Carvery, which was conveniently located right in the service area.

Sunday morning dawned damp and we took the chance to opt for a softer pair of Hankooks on the rear to match those on the front, as we set off to tackle the first loop of four stages. As we drove out to the start of the first stage, it absolutely poured down but, after a delay at the arrival control the rain eased off and by the time we started it was just raining. But, the first part of the stage was noted as 'shiny tarmac'

which proved to be rather slippery, then around half way through we turned a corner, the surface changed and there was a whole load more grip. We almost caught the car ahead at the finish, where the road was bone dry.

The second stage included the very twisty farm section, which started with an impossible hairpin where we almost got stuck as a quick pull on the handbrake had us continue past the turn sideways. Apart from that, the tour of the farm yard was better and more open than we thought it was going to be. The third stage had another very tight hairpin around a triangle, which saw us bash the bank rather hard - but much to our surprise, resulted in some minor bodywork damage but did not damage the steering or suspension.

The final stage of the loop was the longest at over 6 miles and started with a long and wide, but twisty, section of B road including a section with two chicanes through a village, where spectators we out in



force...Great fun! We then returned to Clacton for service, where the front wing was put back into shape and fuel topped up ready for the repeat. At this point it was still fairly dry, although we had experienced a few showers. However, as we left Clacton it started to rain more persistently and we were left to wonder if we should have switched to full wets. As it happened,

with the exception of the shiny tarmac over the first part of the first stage, there was plenty of grip with the tyres, although there were a couple of places where the car aquaplaned a little but we managed to get around the loop without any mishaps, before returning once again to Clacton and fitting full wets for the final loop of stages.

To be honest, I felt more confident on the right tyres but the stage times were only very slightly improved. We completed the first two stages without issue but the penultimate stage, appropriately SS13, saw the end of our day at the seaside. It was at the same grass triangle, with very tight hairpin, that caused us to hit the bank on our first attempt where we came to grief. A perfectly executed handbrake turn (it was, in my opinion!) into first gear and one hellava racket which I thought was a prop shaft failure. We coasted around half a mile and pulled into a gateway from where we watched the final few cars through, chatted with the marshals and several closing car crews, whilst waiting for Grahame and Jane to arrive with the trailer. By the time we were loaded and sorted, it was gone 7 o'clock so we spent another night in Essex (it's the only way!!) before the long drive home on Monday.

Tuesday, we got the car up in the air to find the problem was the axle. The pinion had shed several teeth, which had taken several chunks off the crown wheel teeth. All a bit of a mess so the axle needs to go for a rebuild.

All in all, a very good event which obviously takes a huge amount of organising and sadly fell well short of the maximum 150 entries - great fun but, unfortunately, not such a great result for a couple of Old Gits.

Other local crews didn't fare much better, as Bridge Carey, co-driven by dad Royston and running under the Army Rally Team, had a significant 'off' on the first loop of stages. They were able to extricate the car from the scenery and continue under 'super rally' rules, albeit in a rather second-hand looking Renault Clio.

Tim Mewitt/Liz Jordan also retired after a rear axle link failed on their Escort giving them a fully floating rear axle and a big surprise, as he bounced off a hedge and into a farm, coming to rest against a large agricultural machine.

Bill Cook

*

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Committee Members: Dave Hughes / Harry Pace / Simon Ingarfield President: Brian Millen. Directors: David Hughes / Brian Millen



If any non-members see HIGHWAY and would like to know more about the BpMCK and what we do these days, or would like to join or rejoin, the annual membership fee is only £15 (£5 for under 25s and students) or £20 family membership. If you want to know more, any Committee Member would be pleased to help....

....have a look at www.blackpalfrey.co.uk for more information about the Club and, for our on-line membership system http://www.blackpalfrey.co.uk/index.php/join - specially designed for YOU.

Note: some of the views expressed in HIGHWAY may not be those of The Club.

End 11