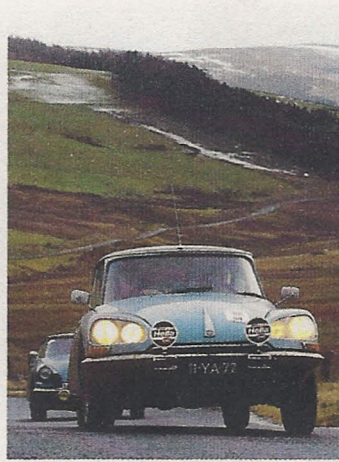




Deep ford with a restart at Bury was an early challenge for winning Godfrey/Awde MGB



Dutch Citroën DSs took the team prize

MIKE JOHNSON

Sporting diary

Races, rallies, trials and more

FEBRUARY

27-28 Goodwood Track Days

Pre-season Masters/Top Hat test is sold out, so expect some interesting cars. Expanded event with specialist displays and a pre-'80 concours for visitors. Entry free 01908 587545 www.themastersseries.com

28 VSCC Pomeroy Trophy

Silverstone. Fascinating members-only event mixes pre-war, classic and modern to find the ideal touring car 01608 644777 www.vsc.co.uk

MARCH

13-15 Phillip Island Classic

Largest southern-hemisphere race meeting, with 500 entries including Throttle in his HWM. This year's event celebrates Formula Ford, Elfin and Mini 0061 3 5952 2710 www.phillipislandcircuit.com.au

13-15 Coppa Milano-Sanremo

Stylish regularity starts in Milan's Piazza del Duomo and heads for the City of Flowers (Sanremo), via Monza, the Lomellina rice fields, the Appennine mountains and Genova 0039 010 5955629 www.milano-sanremo.it

13-15 Race Retro

First event for new organiser covers all historic motor sport, from single-seaters to rallying. Features include Aston Martin and 50 years of Minis in competition displays, plus live Group B rally cars 08712 307157 www.historicmotorsportshow.com

17 Rob Roy Hillclimb

Victoria, Australia. Historic event at famous venue that dates back to '35 www.mgcc.com.au or www.vhrr.com

18-21 Rally Clásico Isla Mallorca

Racing and regularities on the island 0034 971 720 751 www.rallyisiamallorca.com

20-22 Poppy Rally

New Classic Rally Association weekend based in Ypres, Belgium 01633 263366 www.classicrally.org.uk

27-29 The Flying Scotsman

New Philip Young rally for pre-'41 cars, from Brooklands to the Scottish Borders 01235 831221 www.endurorally.com

Also see *Events diary*, p12; *Clubs diary*, p16

MG tops tough cross-country trial

WHEN THE HARDY TEAMS set off from Land's End in glorious sunshine for HERO's LE JOG on 6 December, they had no idea of the tough conditions in store. A ford in Bury, south Wales was the first car-killing challenge on the three-day enduro to John O'Groats, with a restart required after the crossing.

Deeper into Wales, temperatures dropped well below zero and the dark, icy roads resulted in many late arrivals at controls. After wheel-bearing problems hit their VW Beetle, Robert and Edward Kiff

thought their event was over but they went on to take a Gold Award.

Snow added to the trial as cars arrived in Yorkshire and, combined with sheet ice, led to stages being abandoned. Front-runners Sue Shoosmith and Catherine Woodham battled on in their open vintage Bentley, with even a scary slide failing to deter this spirited duo.

After a welcome night's rest in Carlisle, the survivors pushed on through freezing rain into Scotland. A reminder of this regularity's camaraderie came when crews

stopped to help Robert McClean's Rover P4 after a spin that blocked the road in the Forest of Ae. The weather continued to deteriorate before the much-anticipated Rest and Be Thankful hillclimb, and a blizzard had set in by the supper stop in Fort William.

Eventually, the conditions forced the cancellation of the last tests and the remaining crews headed straight to the finish. The MGB pairing of Mark Godfrey and Geoff Awde had the lowest score and took a well-deserved Gold.

Ebay bargain surprises Exeter entrants

JUST DAYS BEFORE THE START OF THE MOTOR CYCLING Club's 99th Exeter Trial on 9-10 January, Duncan Pittaway and Ant Lucas decided to forgo their skeletal GN following advanced warnings of freezing conditions. The two vintage stalwarts bought a Scimitar SS1 on ebay for just £300 and three days later, after minimal preparation, the car survived arctic temperatures to reach the Torbay finish.

The 340 entrants started from various points and converged on the Haynes Motor Museum in Sparkford for scrutineering. Early sections proved relatively smooth due to the frost, but black ice on side-roads along the route was more of a challenge and Tillerton's icy restart was the undoing of many.

Tristan White and Mike Richards posted an impressive performance in their highly developed Hillman Imp, while Paul Bartleman was on unstoppable form in his Troll. The final section, Slippery Sam, led to an unexpected failure for Roger Ugalde and Caroline Egalton's ex-Goff Imhoff Allard J1. To the organiser's surprise, 51 entrants claimed gold medals.

Hero for many was Terry Flay, driving his daughter's Ford Escort. After losing the windscreen, he refused to give up and carried on through an eye-wateringly cold night. Next January there will be a special event to commemorate the centenary of the youngest of the MCC's historic trials.



Pittaway and Lucas gun SS1, bought days before the trial



CHARLIE WOODING/STEVE WELSH

Julian Lack's Liege storms Fingle