

With the nights drawing in, the clocks wound back and the weather well and truly turned, it's hard to believe that we're just a few weeks on from our end of season meeting at The Dip, where we crowned our champions and bid our racing family farewell until the spring.

To well and truly stick a fork in it, here's a special end of season edition of Cuttings, covering the season gone and some updates from behind the scenes.

Graham

Committee News

With 2025 under our belt, we are already looking forward to 2026.

The first thing on the list was to take stock of the finances and make any necessary investments into equipment before the Club's financial year end, which is the end of October (so that we're ready for the AGM). To this end we've made a number of purchases, including gazebos, banners, microphones and a new bed for the block trailer. Please let us know if there is something we may have missed.

Having proven itself worthy over the season, we've also increased the capacity of the solar system on the race trailer. Having had a very sunny year, we've only had to resort to the generator once, which makes Race Control a slightly more pleasant place to be and makes our race weekends carbon neutral... well probably...

The next step is the Rules and Regulations meeting, which remains a highlight on every committee member's calendar. This is the annual meeting where we pore through the rule book, looking for all the uncrossed Ts and undotted lower case Js we've missed the last few dozen times we've done it. There are a couple of items we know we need to look at, but if you have any suggestions, please let us know.

As we look towards the AGM (date to be confirmed), we want to thank all that have helped over the season, whether helping to run the meetings, tow the trailers or done the many other things large or small that make our club what it is today. As always, particularly in light of some of the challenges we've faced this year with illness and life in general, we do encourage any of you who wish to do more and can spare some time, to consider joining the committee. There is always room for one more pair of hands, whatever your skill-set and it's a great way to help your club deliver the fun we've come to expect—you'll even get a warm fuzzy feeling for your efforts*

*If symptoms persist or worsen please contact your GP



51 racers raring to go on the start line at the Cross Country event in September (Bob White)

2025 Season Review

As a sport founded on a quintessentially British brand of eccentricity, it seems only right to start off this year's season review by mentioning the weather: we tend to find our seasons defined either by the number of wet meetings or the number of dusty ones, and this was very much the latter! Even when it actually rained at meetings, which at times seemed miraculously forecast defying this season, somehow it didn't seem to make a dent on the parched earth, with dust remaining a persistent and unwanted companion.

Somewhat ironically, the theme started at our inaugural meeting of the season, which again was held at Spring Live! at Ardingly showground. Historically, late April tends to struggle somewhat for reliable weather – those playing along at home may remember that our first appearance at this show was cancelled due, in part, to worries over the mess we might make, eventually seeing us relegated to the carpark, where we have remained since. This year saw the camping and racing areas swapped, giving us much more space to play with, including a couple of trees and some steeplechase obstacles (though we did manage to resist incorporating the latter). As is par for the first meeting of the year, we saw a

fantastic turnout of 39 mowers, with multiple new faces Groups 3 & 4. With a little over half of these entrants in Group 4, this proved the liveliest class by far, at one point leading to, what would be referred to in Banger Racing circles as a wrecking train; as a number of drivers failed to avoid each other, leading to a long line of temporarily stranded mowers. Notable mentions also go to Gary Botting, Jon Davis and Rob Rowlands, who all had very spectacular tumbles; Rob being caught off guard by his steering spontaneously reversing itself – he turned right and the mower went left... resulting in him going right, while the mower went left. Jenson Cresswell took the Group 2 win, Dean Fuller Group 3 and Kenny Goodesmith Group 4.

Our Double 4 hour endurance meeting was next up, returning to the Matterley Basin near Winchester, though this time relegated to a smaller area in an adjacent field, which proved less than ideal. The meeting attracted a respectable turnout of 17 teams, none in Group 2. Hot, dry, flinty and dusty, the track was a challenge none the less, with many experiencing a surprising amount of tyre wear over the course of the weekend. Bullseye Racing finished the first race 11 laps to the good, going on to win the second by 4; an overall win which assured them the Group 4 trophy.

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Continued from page 1

phy, with R&M Racing + OB winning Group 3, and with it were the first team awarded our new Les Pantry 'way to mow' spark and shine trophy.



Group 3 at the Kent Country Show (Dan Jones)

Following this, we raced the Kent Country Show in the shadow of the Wrotham Transmitting Station, around 4 miles from Brands Hatch, in a field ideal for spectators, sitting as it was in the bottom of a sort of bowl. Again, this proved to be a dusty (which was particularly frustrating to the classic car club stationed next to us, who elected not to return on the Sunday), although not altogether unpleasant venue, attracting 34 entrants and giving its fair share of action. Naturally, as racers of horticultural equipment, streakers are a bit de rigueur for our events, so instead, at one point we had a stray dog decide it wanted to race with the Group 2s. As it was showing them up, we had to pause the race and return it to its owner to save further embarrassment. Jenson Cresswell again dominated Group 2, Sean Tanswell took the win in Group 3 and Alfie Smith Group 4. Unfortunately, although the promoter accepted some mess, the land owner had other ideas, so this is unlikely to be a venue we'll return to – though the promoter does run a number of shows, so all is not lost. Still, at least we got to see Top-loader...

We then took another siesta from the core sprint calendar and held our World Championships at Motorfest near Chelmsford. Despite rain and a very impressive lightning storm on Friday night, this proved to be a very

good decision for us due to the dust, with the smaller quicker races minimising its spread, despite the wind blowing towards the show – something that is never popular at car shows. In all, 23 attended, including the first outing for Hayden Clegg with the big boys; having grown up around the sport and put in many many laps over the years, it was no surprise that he gave his Dad, Colin, some stiff competition in Group 3. Ultimately Jenson took the crown in Group 2, Sean Tanswell did the same in Group 3 and Alfie Smith retained his title in Group 4. Following this, in the traditional "Champion of Champions" race, the three winners took part in a race with a staggered start based upon their fastest lap time of the weekend. As usual, and by design, this became very close in the last few laps, however in a very rare moment, and one that would turn out to be crucial in the Group 4 British Championship, Alfie spectacularly flipped his tractor, which allowed Jenson to take the win and damaged his shoulder in the process. Mark Almeida then rounded out the day by winning the European Tractor Cup, showing a clear ability to transfer his skills from the short oval to mower racing in just a handful of meetings.

Back to sprint racing and a return to West's Wood Fair in East Dean. The steep hill proved once again to be a challenge to racers and campers alike, and if you're a fan of dust, this really was one for the connoisseur. Very early on, the fine powdery dust caused visibility to become an issue. With the offered water bowser not making an appearance till the Sunday and making little more than a dent when it did, it was decided to run the larger Group 4 in World Championship format to reduce numbers on the track. When it



Group 4 struggle for visibility at Alford (Ruby Cano)

came to the British Championship, where this is not possible and the races have to be longer, we encouraged those not in contention to sit these

races out. One driver who could not be dissuaded was Kenny Goodesmith, who despite an off involving Karl Selby in almost zero visibility, was keen to make the most of Alfie's absence (and probably regretting not attending the Kent Country Show!). Despite the hill, the dust (which ultimately resulted in the drivers voting to finish early on the Sunday) and hijinks at the bar (well maybe because of the latter), the show proved popular once again: Graham Tibbenham interrupted Jenson's clean sweep in Group 2 (the only blip of the season), Sean Tanswell won Group 3 and Kenny Goodesmith Group 4.

Blake House Craft Centre (aka The Great Maze) made a welcome return to the calendar in mid-July – having been

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Racers battle the dust at the Double 4 (Josh Gottesman)

12 Hour

The first hurdle in putting on a successful 12 hour, indeed in putting on any meeting, is finding a field. This is of course *the* most critical thing to organise, but also the most illusive.

Since its inception in 1978, the 12 hour had always been held within spitting distance of Wisborough Green—the crucible of lawn mower racing—until 2024, when we decided to try holding it at The Trooper near Winchester.

Whilst undoubtedly the venue had its issues, it did prove a point: it could be done.

Which leads me to *my* point—as it stands, we have not confirmed a venue for the 2026 12 hour. We would very much like to continue to hold it close to 'home' as it really helps logistically; but at this juncture, nothing is beyond consideration.

If you know for a grassy field of a suitable size and location, that could be made available for a 12 hour in mid August 2026, please get in touch.

Engines

Those of us that have been here a while will remember a bit of a panic a few years ago when the usual suspects stopped selling the Loncin 413, which led to us making enquiries into ordering them direct from Loncin.

This proved to be very successful, and for the last few years we have continued to place an annual order—we don't have to homologate a new engine, consequently the playing field remains equal and as an added bonus, we can sell them on to you for less than the other outlets were.

Everyone's a winner.

Well, this year is no exception; having exhausted the 2025 stock, more are on the way, so watch this space.

As it stands, we are quite happy with the engine options found in our handbook and don't intend to make any changes, but if you'd like to suggest another option and are prepared to put an example forward for dyno testing, please get in touch.

Continued from page 2

a staple venue for some 17 years pre-COVID. The venue's rock hard ground has proven extremely versatile over the years, coping well come rain or shine, so the amount of dust proved something of a surprise this year – all of it blowing straight over the paddock, which was somewhat inconvenient to the wine drinking WAGs and darn right torturous to drivers looking to cool down after racing in the blazing sun.



Max Fosh & Jack Aitken with Callum (Callum McIntyre)

Alfold was next. In something of a master stroke, this time swapping camping field for racing field, which gave us about the smoothest track of the season, though this decision was very much conditional on the weather



Alfie enjoying a bucket of water after taking Bullseye Racing across the line for another 12 Hour win (Jason Ingold)

– as it happened, there was a sprinkling of rain on Saturday morning, but the dust seemed to return with added vigour following lunch. On Saturday we were joined by Youtuber Max Fosh, who, somewhat underhandedly swapped with professional racing driver Jack Aitken, not that this appeared to help. Jenson took top step in Group 2, Dean Fuller Group 3 and Alfie returned to the top in Group 4.

Due in part to an unusually early August bank holiday, we then took a bit of a protracted break from sprint racing while committee and racer alike prepared and recovered from the annual 12 hour endurance meeting, which returned to Five Oaks. The meeting attracted 40 teams, with 38 of these starting and 37 finishing, with the winning team having completed 420 laps in this time, or to put it another way: 334 miles – around 20 miles (25 laps) short of a trip to Gretna Green. One of the teams, Mowlboro Racing, whilst they didn't manage to record a single lap, they did manage to make it on to the track, following a concerted effort to finish their mower into the wee small hours of Friday night, and indeed the wee small hours of Saturday night – an effort any student would be proud of. Ultimately, The Knight Riders retained their title in Group 2, Mower With Attitude took Group 3, Bullseye Racing took the overall win and regained the title in Group 4 and The Sweedbashers took the Tourist win. Feedback from racers and crowd alike was very positive, so all in all something of a success, which isn't to say that there are not things which we'll look to improve for next time.

In a change from the scheduled programming and in the style of last year's very popular event, we then

held a Cross Country event at Leon Clark's farm in Kirdford. The track totalled around a mile and skirted as much of the property as possible – a large portion of it following the route of the River Kird, offering a soft, but moist, landing for those who abuse track limits. Although Youtuber Lucas Cochrane, had a very good try, all drivers managed to avoid a dip, though a few did seem to take a liking to the kayaks elsewhere that were being used as track markers; alongside blocks, bales, buckets, tyres, hose and basically anything else that was available. Although Lucas did have perhaps the most memorable spill, Algirdas Mociejunas does deserve an honourable mention for his spontaneous impersonation of a leaping salmon on the Saturday which unfortunately damaged his wrist and ended his weekend. Ultimately Jenson took the win in Group 2, Sean Group 3 and Alfie Group 4. James Pawley, whose KP460 powered Murray and Lawn Bug were absolutely flying (and sounded evil!) took the Tourist trophy, and the fastest lap time in all but a couple of races over the weekend.

Then followed the Newbury Show, a new event on our calendar and our most Westerly of the year. The allotted space proved somewhat restrictive, which ended up causing some issues with run-off room, particularly when a want to preserve the showground (to hopefully secure a return) required frequent track changes. We persevered however and were rewarded by an enjoyable weekend, which aside from the racing included several trips to the show ring, multiple food vendors, showers and the all-important beer tent. Though a somewhat lighter shower earlier on seemed to have little effect on the parched earth, ultimately a very heavy downpour put paid to racing on Saturday afternoon to preserve the

Continued from page 3

ground. Some very close racing in all groups, particularly between Dean and Sean in Group 3, which was quite spectacular at times, sealed the British Championships for the season and as for the meeting, the familiar trio of Jenson, Sean and Alfie took the wins in Groups 2, 3 and 4 respectively.



Mike Lee leads a gaggle of 25 and 35s at The Dip (Chris Moran)

We rounded off our 2025 season with a 'fun' meeting at The Dip: a staple of our calendar since the turn of the century. As most of us have come to expect, it was very bumpy, but as one of our more 'temperamental' venues when it comes to weather, after quite a lot of rain in the preceding weeks, it was neither exceptionally wet nor exceptionally dry. The plan for each day called for four 20 minute 'Animal' races, with the winner in each class claiming the British Grand Prix trophy, and the addition of a leading '0' on their race number in 2026. We also held two Ladies races over the weekend, which proved ultra-competitive, exhilarating (particularly for partners!) and extremely close – the weekend's winner having to be decided by fastest lap time, separated by hundredths of a second. As has become traditional, the meeting was rounded out with a 'Lucky Dip' race, where drivers pull a number from a bucket, deter-

mining which machine they will use. Groups 2 and 3 once again went to Jenson and Sean respectively, Group 4 saw a maiden meeting win for Mark Almeida after a great first season. Laura Goodesmith once again won the Ladies Race and Spencer Chappell took the Lucky Dip.

The end of season presentation and party took place at the Dip on Saturday night, along with a club barbeque. After a very dominant season, Jenson Cresswell retained his crown as Group 2 British Champion, Sean Tanswell regained his in Group 3 after some phenomenal battles with outgoing champion Dean Fuller – second wins for each. With brothers Kenny Goodesmith and Alfie Smith each missing a meeting, Group 4 came right down to the wire, with Kenny taking the win by just 6 points. Sean was awarded the Drivers Driver award by popular vote and quite deservedly, Mark Almeida was crowned 'Best Newcomer' having certainly hit the ground running in his first season. Naturally the party went on in to the night, making Sunday something of a slow start...

So there you have it, 2025 in a little over as many words – a year defined by dust, and perhaps by the continued dominance of the Murray Wide-Body in Group 4; with just 3 exceptions in the top 14 competitors in the British Championship. How long ago was it that some joked that we may as well call ourselves the Wheel Horse Racing Association. I wonder what's next?!

Only one way to find out: See you in 2026!

As always, full results can be found at: speedhive.mylaps.com/organizations/23693



R&M Racing + OB were the first to lift the new Les Pantry 'way to mow' spark and shine trophy at the Double 4 (Josh Gottesman)

2025 Championships

2025 saw pitched battles and tense moments in all Groups as the reigning champions fought tooth and nail to hold on to their titles, with only Jenson managing to do so in Group 2 after a near perfect season.

Trophies this year were made of either Buffalo or Bison horn (the difference between the two being that you can't wash your hands in a buffalo... I'll get my coat) and a slate mounted photo. The winners of course also having their names added to the shields that hang in The Cricketers Arms.

Full results are available at: speedhive.mylaps.com/Organizations/23693/Championships



Group 2 British Championship

1. Jenson Cresswell (555)
2. Charlie Thurston (450)
3. Graham Tibbenham (421)



Group 3 British Championship

1. Sean Tanswell (545)
2. Dean Fuller (501)
3. Stuart Johnson (421)



Group 4 British Championship

1. Kenny Goodesmith (481)
2. Alfie Smith (475)
3. Pete 'Murray' Sque (365)