

UK government announces three-month 'closed road' motor sport consultation

The Motor Sports Association's campaign to bring closed road motor sport to mainland Britain received a major boost last week, as the coalition government confirmed that it will shortly begin a three-month public consultation to establish how existing legislation can be amended to allow motor sport to take place on public roads.



The announcement was made during a debate – secured by Ben Wallace MP (Wyre and Preston North) and involving Mike Penning, the Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Transport – at Westminster Hall last week. The MSA has been pushing successive governments to empower local authorities with the right to suspend the Road Traffic Act without having to resort to an Act of Parliament. Such an amendment would open up the way for competitive motor sport events such as stage rallies, sprints and hill climbs to take place on a limited number of British roads, as happens across most of mainland Europe.

MSA Chief Executive, Colin Hilton, welcomed the news: "We are delighted that the government has recognised that a minor change to the Road Traffic Act could have huge benefits, not only for the sport itself, but also for the communities involved and we are grateful to the Under-Secretary of State for Transport for listening to our proposals with such an open mind. As the governing body, we are proud of our excellent track record of safety and risk management, and throughout the consultation process we will be

demonstrating that proper safeguards are already in place to ensure that these events would be safely and responsibly staged."

Three-time Formula 1 world champion, Sir Jackie Stewart, expressed support for the initiative. "The British motor sport industry is one of the UK's most successful enterprises and we indeed lead the world in this field," he said. "There are many other countries that use their roads on a temporary basis for significant sporting events that attract worldwide interest. In many cases it can even progress safety standards on those same roads for the benefit of the general public and all road users."

Former F1 world champion Nigel Mansell OBE agreed, saying: "This would be a great move forward for the sport in the UK and would bring visitors and pride to parts of the country that wish to stage such events. I am delighted that this government seems to be willing to embrace motor sport which will assist the UK's world-leading position, and improve the sport's ability to help provide opportunities and focus for young people."

The full debate can be watched here (beginning at 2hrs15mins): <http://www.parliamentlive.tv/Main/Player.aspx?meetingId=8051&player=windowsmedia>

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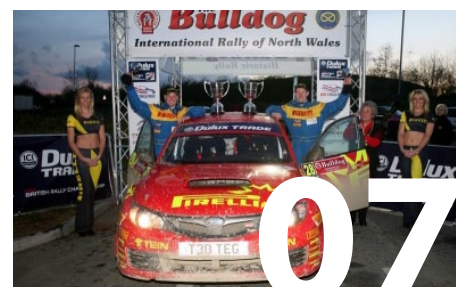
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National Motorsport Week 2011 gears up

Plans for this year's refreshed National Motorsport Week are coming together. With the MSA now fully supporting the initiative that was originally established by the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA), and the date moved to coincide with the Goodwood Festival of Speed, National Motorsport Week is all set to start fulfilling its potential.

"We're not good at blowing our own trumpet here in the UK and, whether it's our unrivalled national motor sport scene or world class motor sport industry, this is one sector in which we really have something to celebrate," says Colin Hilton, MSA Chief Executive. "It's no coincidence that eight of the 12 current Formula One teams are based in this country, or that we are one of only two countries that host all four of the FIA's top international championships. We also boast more than 750 motor clubs with a total membership of around 200,000 enthusiasts. It's all part of the same success story and one that all too often gets overlooked."

But more than just celebrating all that UK motor sport has to offer, the advent of a high-profile National Motorsport Week is being used to engage with new audiences and to attract new participants.

"Go Motorsport is the MSA's year-round commitment to raising the profile of the sport, but National Motorsport Week provides a great platform to increase awareness of what our sport and industry has to offer," continues Hilton. "At one end of the scale we're encouraging our F1 teams and premier venues to hold open days for the public, and at the other end we hope that clubs and associations might set up 'taster' events or other initiatives to boost their membership."

To ensure that National Motorsport Week hits the headlines and achieves widespread public prominence, the MSA has held a series of meetings with many of the key players in UK motor

sport, including Vodafone McLaren Mercedes, Mercedes GP Petronas and Virgin Racing, as well as major venues such as Goodwood, Silverstone and Mercedes-Benz World. The initiative has also been given the 'thumbs up' by the media, with support already promised by the BBC, *Daily Telegraph*, *The Sun* and Haymarket Media Group.

"We need to set up these high profile activities in order to generate awareness for National Motorsport Week and to create a platform from which others can promote their own events during this period," explains Hilton. "It really doesn't matter how small an activity may be; they all play a part in making more people aware of what UK motor sport has to offer."

The MSA is preparing a 'Toolkit' to explain how to get involved with National Motorsport Week. It will include all you need to know, including campaign logos, headline facts about both the sport and the industry and tips on how to get involved. The toolkit will be circulated among all MSA-registered clubs, MIA members and other interested parties. It will also be available on the MSA website or from the Go Motorsport office:

info@GoMotorsport.net

A complete listing of National Motorsport Week activities – large and small – will be posted on www.NationalMotorsportWeek.co.uk once it has been updated by the MIA.

If you are planning an event of any description during NMW, please let us know so that we can include it in the listings.

TECHNICAL / REGULATIONS

Gearbox Kart Class Regulation Amendments

There have been a number of amendments to the Gearbox class regulations – published in the 2011 MSA Kart Race Yearbook – concerning front and side bumper attachment points. For further information, please click here: www.msauk.org/karttech

Brake Disc Failure

The photograph shows a brake disc failure on a Comer Cadet kart. Competitors are urged to be vigilant when checking for any signs of potential failure, and to replace the component if any cause for concern



is found. Any failures should be reported to the MSA Technical Department with

photographic evidence and, where possible, the component itself.

Front Hub Failure

The image shows a kart front hub that reportedly failed after no more than one and a half laps of use from new. At present the cause of failure is unclear, and the MSA is investigating to establish whether or not there is a potential safety



issue to be addressed. In the meantime competitors are urged to keep an eye

out for signs of potential failure, and to request that the component is replaced if any cause for concern is found.

Rear Axle Failure

Pictured is a recent rear axle failure on a 250 National gearbox kart. Kart rear



axle failures continue to be of some concern, and any issues should be

reported to the MSA Technical Department with photographic evidence and, where possible, the component itself.

MSA launches new quarterly magazine for British motor sport

The MSA has re-launched its quarterly magazine for the UK motor sport community, with the first issue of the renamed MSA magazine being delivered to 44,000 MSA-registered competitors, volunteers and clubs in March.

MSA magazine (formerly known as *Motorsports Now!*) is the governing body's flagship publication. It is now produced on behalf of the MSA by Think Publishing, the 2009 PPA Independent Publishing Company of the Year, which won a six-way competitive pitch last year to take over the title from the beginning of 2011.



The 74-page MSA magazine contains news, views, regulations and judicial decisions emanating from the governing body, alongside features – written by some of the leading names in motor sport journalism – on the people, cars, places and events of UK motor sport.

To view an electronic version of the spring 2011 edition of MSA

magazine online visit,

<http://www.msauk.org/site/cms/contentCategoryView.asp?category=508>

2011 Sports Club Survey launched

The Sport and Recreation Alliance has launched an online survey to assess the financial health of sports clubs across the UK.

The information gained from the survey will support the Alliance's lobbying work and will allow it to campaign on behalf of national governing bodies, such as the MSA, on a range of issues including:

- Reduced rates of VAT for clubs
- Lower utility bills
- Alcohol licensing costs
- Music licensing costs
- Drainage charges
- Gift Aid
- Improvements to the CASC scheme
- Access to facilities.

Representatives of MSA-recognised clubs are invited to complete the survey by visiting:

<http://www.sportwise.info/surveys/sportalliance/srasurvey.htm>

MSA requests nominations for membership of 2012 Specialist Committees

The Motor Sports Association is seeking nominations for individuals to fill the vacancies on the Specialist Committees that represent the interests of the various disciplines of motor sport.

The Specialist Committees meet two or three times a year, normally at Motor Sports House to discuss and debate new regulations and other issues. The following Specialist Committees may have vacancies available for next year:

- Autotest Committee
- Cross Country Committee
- Historic Committee
- Kart Committee
- Kart Sporting Sub Committee
- Kart Technical Sub Committee
- Race Committee
- Rallies Committee
- Autocross & Rallycross Sub Committee
- Dragster Sub Committee
- Sprint & Hill Climb Sub Committee
- Street Sport Working Group
- Trials Committee

All applicants must be a member of an MSA-recognised motor club or Regional Association which must 'sponsor' the application. However, there are no formal qualifications required other than the benefit of experience in motor sport. The role is entirely voluntary, although expenses will be paid to cover travel to meetings at Motor Sports House, and the appointment is normally for a three-year term.

HOW TO APPLY

Applicants should submit a brief CV of their motor sport involvement and achievements, including any relevant qualifications, together with name, address and contact details to the sponsoring MSA-recognised club or Regional Association. The sponsor will forward the application to Andrea Wren at Motor Sports House, Riverside Park, Colnbrook, SL3 0HG. This must be done as soon as possible as applications must be received before the end of June 2011 at the latest.

MSA switches to green energy

The MSA has adopted a 'green' electricity supply package as part of its commitment to environmental responsibility.

The power supply to Motor Sports House is now drawn from renewable energy resources and is expected to reduce carbon dioxide emissions by approximately 150 tonnes per year, which is equivalent to that emitted annually by 42 cars.



MSA delivers training to Maltese ASN

MSA Trainers Allan Dean-Lewis and Sue Sanders visited the Malta Motorsport Federation (MMF) last month on behalf of the MSA in its capacity as an FIA Institute Gold Standard Regional Training Provider.

The Malta Motorsport Federation (MMF) made a successful application to the FIA Institute last year for grant aid to assist with the development of a range of training initiatives. The MSA is now developing a 'Train the Trainer' programme and a range of other proposals, including young driver safety development programmes, which will form the basis of the MMF's training and development framework.

Tonio Cini, President of the MMF, said: "For the first time, after just four years since its establishment, the MMF will be in a position to give training for up to 16 Training Officials and 20 Young Drivers as a result of this grant aid. We are thankful to MSA who we selected to assist us in this work, and to KMS for their support throughout to secure this initiative for Malta. It marks a new approach and a new way of thinking for our sport, and which we welcome."

MSA training seminars concluded for 2011

The MSA recently concluded its series of annual seminars, which this year were targeted at Stewards and Clerks and delivered at 13 venues across the UK, with a total attendance of 628 – an increase of almost 10% on the last series held in 2009.

The seminars were led by MSA Head of External Affairs Allan Dean-Lewis and a presentation team comprising Ian Watson, Nigel Drayton, Dave Lucas and Peter Lawton, who in turn were assisted at some venues by Tony Fletcher and Rod Taylor. The revised Seminar format, featuring more interactive work, was particularly well received by those who attended. The next series of seminars is planned for early 2012 and will be targeted at MSA Club Officials.

Fry appointed UK Business Ambassador

Mercedes GP Petronas CEO Nick Fry has been confirmed as one of the coalition government's new Business Ambassadors, who are described by Prime Minister David Cameron as being "among the most experienced and successful people from business and UK Universities."

"It is with great pleasure that I recently accepted the role of Business Ambassador," said Fry. "The motor sport industry in the UK plays a key role in our economy; in addition to promoting trade and investment for the UK at home and abroad, I hope to be able to represent our industry and bring benefits to all concerned."

Marshals' registration

The MSA has undertaken to update its marshals' database this year and will thereafter do so on an annual basis.

Currently, those who have registered as a marshal remain on the database indefinitely. As a result, many people who are not actively marshalling are still receiving communications and information from the MSA. In order to cleanse this data, the MSA will be sending out registration documents later this year. All marshals who wish to be registered on the database will be asked to renew for 2012, even if they registered as recently as 2011. The MSA licensing department will then send out personal registration and record cards after processing the renewals. All marshals should receive these documents by the end of the year.

Once this initial postal registration for 2012 has been concluded, annual renewals will then be able to be completed via the MSA website.

Brands event funds TV for local hospital

A road safety event organised by Brands Hatch raised enough funds to purchase a flat-screen television for the communal room at the Dolphin Ward for children at Chatham Maritime Hospital. The event was supported by Oulton Park, MotorSport Vision Racing, the BRSCC (South East and East Anglian), BARC (South East) and the 750 Motor Club.

"The television is perfect," said Ward Playleader Annie Huxtable. "Before this they had nothing in the room and with the children here for weeks at a time it's now much more like a second home for them. Both this and the DVD player are much needed."

Event organiser Andy Lyle said: "One of the aims of the event was to help reduce hospital admissions and we hope that the gift from those who attended will provide further assistance by improving the environment for the children that they care for."

WOMEN IN MOTOR SPORT

Briton Pym selected for Geneva shootout

The CIK-FIA has selected Hannah Pym as one of 10 drivers to take part later this month in a shootout in Geneva, the winner of which will receive a fully-funded drive in this year's CIK-FIA Karting Academy Trophy.

Pym was selected after being put forward by the MSA for the FIA Women and Motor Sport Commission-backed initiative. On 26-27 April she will go head-to-head with nine other drivers, representing as many countries:

- Savannah Megan Courtenay, 13 (Spain)
- Melissa Calvi, 14 (Luxembourg)
- June Mali Jahnsdatter Blad, 13 (Norway)
- Lucile Cypriano, 15 (France)
- Lubov Andreyeva, 15 (Kazakhstan)
- Kim Oomen, 14 (Netherlands)
- Bianca Cristina Anton, 14 (Romania)
- Caitlin Wood, 14 (Australia)
- Idil Gökmen, 13 (Turkey)



Chris Walker - Karpix.net

"I was away in Paris on my French Exchange with my school when I was told that I'd been put through to the shootout,

and it took me a minute to digest this massively exciting news," said 15-year-old Pym. "To represent my country, doing the sport I love is an unbelievable opportunity. I have been continuing hard with my training, so I feel physically fit and I have been mentally preparing too. I will put everything I have learnt in my six years of karting into showing my driving ability. Wish me luck everybody - I promise I will give it everything!"



Chris Walker - Karpix.net

CHAMPIONSHIPS UPDATE



Jakob Ebbrey Photography

Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship

Reigning champion Jason Plato kicked off his title defence with two victories from three races at Brands Hatch, where Matt Neal was also a race winner.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 1

- 1 Jason Plato – 38 points
- 2 Mat Jackson – 30
- 3 James Nash – 26



Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship

Team UK crew Elfyn Evans and Andrew Edwards were victorious on their home event, the Bulldog International Rally North Wales, but David Bogle heads the title race.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 David Bogle – 38 points
- 2 Elfyn Evans – 36
- 3 Adam Gould – 31



Paul Lawrence

Dunlop/WONAGO.COM MSA British Historic Rally Chmp'ship

Nick Elliott and Chris Brooks levelled the score with Julian Reynolds and Ian Oakey on round two, the Bulldog Rally in Wales, but reigning champs Stokes and Weaver still lead the way.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 David Stokes – 62 points
- 2 Rikki Proffitt – 60
- 3 Julian Reynolds – 57



SBD Motorsport MSA British Sprint Championship

Stewart Robb Senior annihilated the outright sprint course record at Castle Combe, which hosted the opening round of the 2011 championship.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 1

- 1 Stewart Robb – 13 points
- 2 Terry Holmes – 11
- 3 Tom Potter – 10
- = Mark Smith – 10

Continued on next page >>>

CHAMPIONSHIPS UPDATE

Chris Walker - Kartpix.net



Ginetta MSA British Junior Kart Championship

Callan O'Keeffe dominated the opening rounds of the 2011 championship at PF International, winning both of his heats and both Finals.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 Callan O'Keeffe – 100 points
- 2 Roy Johnson – 94
- 3 Connor Jupp – 92

Rich Danby - www.zip.co.uk



MSA British Sporting Trials Championship

Steve Courts won round three of the MSA British Sporting Trials Championship, the JB Taylor trial, but Ian Bell leads the championship.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 6

- 1 - Ian Bell - Hamilton - 78 points
- 2 - Ian Wright - Sherpa Indy - 77 points
- 3 - Andrew Bell - Crosslé - 62 points

Nic Ayre



MSA British Autotest Championship

Simon Echlin beat reigning champion Alastair Moffatt to victory in the opening round after the latter dropped 20 seconds with driveshaft failure.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 1

- 1 Alastair Moffatt – 10 points
- = David Thompson – 10
- = Roger Holder – 10
- = Rob Rolston – 10

RallycrossUK.com



Quaife MSA British Rallycross Championship

Andy Scott won the season-opener at Lydden Hill, scoring a maiden victory for his new Tony Bardy Motorsport-run Ford Focus ST.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 1

- 1 Andy Scott – 30 points
- 2 Andy Grant – 27
- 3 Pat Doran – 25

KMUpPhotos



Hankook MSA Welsh National Rally Championship

Shaun Gardener and Ben Innes won round two, the Bulldog National Rally, to secure a maximum points haul.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 Alex Allingham – 48 points
- 2 Tom Naughton – 46
- 3 David Howells – 45

Hankook.ie



Hankook MSA Northern Ireland Stage Rally Championship

Kenny McKinstry scored his second victory in a row on the McGrady Insurance BishopsCourt Stages Rally.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 Kenny McKinstry – 24 points
- 2 Connor McCloskey – 20
- 3 John McGaffin – 16

LindsayPhotoSport



MSA Scottish Rally Championship

David Bogie sealed his second consecutive MSA Scottish Rally Championship win on the Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 2

- 1 David Bogie – 60 points
- 2 Euan Thorburn – 55
- 3 Mike Faulkner – 54

CMMI.NET



REIS MSA Asphalt Rally Championship

Steve Simpson and co-driver Aled Davies won the opening round of this year's REIS MSA Asphalt Rally Championship, the Tour of Epynt.

Championship positions (provisional) after Round 1

- 1 Steve Simpson – 25 points
- 2 Damian Cole – 22
- 3 Dave Pattison – 20



Evans and Edwards take maiden BRC victory

Team UK's Elfyn Evans and Andrew Edwards secured their first ever Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship event win on home soil at the Bulldog International Rally North Wales.



The pair trailed Team UK graduate Adam Gould and current Team UK co-driver Seb Marshall for the first four stages but subsequently moved ahead to claim the spoils. "We're really pleased and surprised a win has come so soon in such a long championship, but we'll take it a rally at a time," said Evans.

Lynn takes double win in FRenault season-opener

Team UK racer Alex Lynn scored a double victory in the opening Formula Renault UK meeting of 2011 at Brands Hatch. Lynn's win in race one was a light-to-flag affair, with Team UK graduate Will Stevens securing second place, while in race two Lynn decimated the lap record on his way to victory.

"Today has been just fantastic – I'm so glad with my start to the season," said 17-year-old Lynn. "I'm really confident with the car and how things are going. The whole team is in a really good place at the moment and I couldn't ask for anything more."

First MSA anti-doping seminars delivered

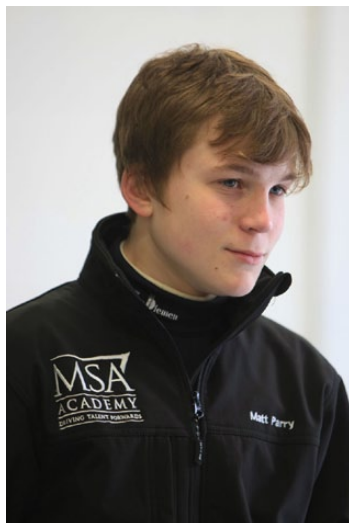
MSA Coaches Tom Onslow-Cole and Duncan Tappy delivered the first MSA anti-doping seminars to Cooper Tires British F3 International Series and Avon Tyres British GT Championship drivers at Silverstone last month. The MSA Academy roadshow then moved on to the Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship at the Bulldog Rally and the anti-doping message will be delivered to all the BTCC drivers next week at Donington Park .

Onslow-Cole said: "Fortunately anti-doping is not a big issue in motor sport, but it is nonetheless an extremely complex subject. Not many competitors realise that a lot of over-the-counter medicines and dietary supplements contain Prohibited Substances and can result in sporting sanctions. It's therefore essential that we make competitors aware of the Prohibited List, and the fact that it is their own responsibility to ensure that no Prohibited Substance enters their body, willingly or otherwise."

"Arrangements are being made for drug testing to take place," confirmed MSA Chief Executive Colin Hilton. "The MSA Academy is making all the relevant information clearly available to drivers so that they can understand what the regulations mean to them. If a driver ultimately fails a test, there can be no excuses and certainly 'I didn't know' is not a defence."

AASE student Parry joins Team Lotus

Dunlop MSA Formula Ford Championship of Great Britain racer and MSA Apprentice Matthew Parry has been invited to join the AirAsia Team Lotus Driver Development Programme on a long-term deal.



The 16-year-old multiple kart champion – an MSA Advanced Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence (AASE) student – will be the only British driver on the scheme.

"The chance to link up with Team Lotus is fantastic," he said. "It is not the sort of opportunity that comes along every day, and I am very fortunate that Team Lotus and AirAsia have decided that I am worth backing. I am looking forward to making full use of the experience and facilities on offer to me as I make the transition from karts to cars."

The initiative is overseen by former F1 driver Alex Yoong, who said: "I believe that Matthew shows all the hallmarks of a very talented driver, and I am excited to have signed him as part of the AirAsia Team Lotus Driver Development Programme. We will provide Matthew with advice and guidance throughout his debut season with Fluid Motorsport Developments in Formula Ford, and look forward to sharing in his success."



Widening participation and raising awareness of motor sport around the country, particularly among young people

Cheshire school takes 2011 BSKC title

Altrincham Grammar School for Boys has claimed the 2011 British Schools Karting Championship (BSKC) crown at the series finale at Daytona Milton Keynes.

Team-mates Max McGuire (17), Alex Wilson (14) and Zubair Hoque (14) fended off competition from more than 30 rival schools and colleges from around the UK to clinch the Go Motorsport-supported BSKC title for the Cheshire school.



McGuire said: "The BSKC is an absolutely brilliant championship. It's great fun, it's competitive and it's extremely cost-effective. I know several people who started off karting in this championship and are now looking to start racing professionally."

Eddie Hall, Deputy Head at Altrincham Grammar School, added: "What I particularly like about the BSKC is that it's a departure from the kind of sports that schools traditionally take part in."

The victorious students will be rewarded with a VIP factory tour of Red Bull Racing's state-of-the-art Milton Keynes facility, in addition to a day of professional driver training in Arden International Motorsport's cutting edge race simulator. The 2011 BSKC was contested by more than 1,350 students from over 450 teams, with schools from England, Wales, Scotland and Northern Ireland all vying for the spoils.

Join the Go Motorsport campaign

There are many ways for you to play your part in encouraging more newcomers into all areas of motor sport:

- Direct anyone interested in competing, volunteering or visiting a live motor sport event to the 'Go Drive', 'Go Help' and 'Go See' sections of the Go Motorsport website, www.GoMotorsport.net
- Help us to set up a visit to your local school by emailing the relevant contact details to info@GoMotorsport.net
- Promote the initiative by running Go Motorsport decals on your competition car. A selection of free decals is available from info@GoMotorsport.net
- Include Go Motorsport advertisements in your event programmes. Artwork is available from the 'downloads' section of www.GoMotorsport.net
- Establish web links to the Go Motorsport website where relevant or possible.
- Distribute Go Motorsport and Let's Go Karting promotional materials. Flyers, pencils, DVDs and other materials are available from info@GoMotorsport.net

Ryland James appointed South Wales RDO

Well known motor sport personality Ryland James has been appointed as the MSA's Regional Development Officer for South Wales. With more than 40 years of motor sport experience, Ryland is well known within the motor sport community and will bring this knowledge to the MSA's Go Motorsport campaign to attract more people to the sport.

As well as conducting presentation within schools and colleges, Ryland will also be liaising with venues, motor clubs and the Welsh Association in order to spread the motor sport message and increase participation.

If you wish to contact Ryland, or would like to book a school visit, please contact info@gomotorsport.net.



Peterborough MC teams up with RDO

As part of Go Motorsport's award-winning nationwide School Visits programme – more than 50 presentations have been delivered to over 5000 students so far this year – Regional Development Officer Richard Egger teamed up with the Peterborough Motor Club to make a combined visit to Hampton School in Peterborough. Five groups totalling 140 students were given presentations on 'how to get involved in motor sport' followed by a question and answer session.

Three competition cars were on display for the students to inspect: a 'forest specification' Ford Escort Mk1 rally car; a Mallock that is regularly used in sprint events; and a road-going Citroen BX used for road rallies, autotests, trials and the occasional sprint. Each was accompanied by its driver and generated considerable interest in the sport among both the students and the staff, as well as their friends and family. Peterborough Motor Club is looking to capitalise on this by running some novice-friendly events over the summer months.

Calling all clubs!

Any MSA-registered clubs that are not currently featured in the 'Go Find' database of the GoMotorsport.net website should email info@GoMotorsport.net if they wish to be listed.

Detailed information on more than 200 clubs is currently included in the database, allowing visitors to the Go Motorsport website to find their nearest listed club by way of a 'postcode search' function.

MEET...

MSA Academy Coordinator **Greg Symes**

The MSA has expanded its remit in recent years to cover the development of motor sport. Here, Greg Symes discusses the MSA Academy, the education and development of young competitors, and the importance of British drivers competing on the world stage.



For how long have you been involved in motor sport?

I guess I was born into it; believe it or not my birth was actually news in *Autosport* magazine, because at the time my dad, John, was Operations Director at Brands Hatch. Two of my earliest memories are of answering the phone to Derek Warwick and Murray Walker when I was about three years old; I told Derek that I was busy Hoovering – he jokingly said that he was going to report my parents to the NSPCC! – and I told Murray that my dad couldn't come to the phone because he was stuck in a trench. What he'd actually said was, "Hang on, I'm drenched."

How did you come to be working for the MSA?

When I was 14 I did a couple of weeks' work experience at Motor Sports House. After that I would work in the office during school holidays, and later when I was at college I had one day per week to spare, so I would work then as well. That carried over to university – I studied Events Management at Greenwich – when I had even more free time. I became involved with the Technical Department, specifically with Historic Technical Passports and Scrutineer Training Seminars.

Shortly after my degree finished I was asked to call Robert Reid, who'd just been appointed the MSA Performance Director and had been tasked with creating a driver development framework, which became the MSA Academy. Somebody was needed to work with Robert to get the initiative off the ground and then to coordinate it; the MSA thought that I was right for the role, and I've been doing it ever since.

For those who might not know, what is the MSA Academy?

The role of the MSA Academy is basically to provide the tools and resources for young drivers to make the most of their talents and to help them develop both as a competitor and as an individual. The focus is primarily on human performance and driver development, while providing a safety net that enables becoming a professional driver to be a legitimate career choice.

For potentially elite drivers it's about equipping them with the underpinning knowledge that they will need to progress in their professional careers; we have identified the building blocks that will give them the best possible chance of succeeding. It's not about media training and diet advice (although these do play a part); it's about learning and developing all the attributes required to become a top level athlete.

The flip side is that many will not make it as professional drivers, so the MSA has a responsibility; firstly to ensure that they don't sacrifice their general education in pursuit of the dream and secondly to ensure that they have as many options as possible should they run out of talent, budget or opportunities.

How is the MSA Academy structured?

For karters and junior drivers we have the Performance Master Classes, which are delivered at events across the country by a young, dynamic team of MSA Coaches; as well as myself there's Tom Gaymor, James Wozencroft, Tom Onslow-Cole, Duncan Tappy and Bradley Ellis. We also have Eliot Chalifour and Gareth Evans from Porsche Human Performance on board to work on fitness and nutrition programmes for our students.

Above that is the Advanced

Apprenticeship in Sporting Excellence, which is a government-funded two-year course for 16- to 18-year-old potentially elite drivers that's delivered by Loughborough College. It is not only a training and development programme but it also equips students with a range of academic qualifications to carry forward when they graduate.

Then there's Team UK, which is a select band of the UK's most promising drivers, who receive coaching from David Brabham, Mark Higgins and Nicky Grist, as well as access to some of the country's top performance experts and motor sport facilities.

What are the most challenging and rewarding aspects of your job?

The challenging part is probably the sheer amount of work involved. I spend a lot of time travelling around the country and I work a lot of weekends. Last year, for example, I worked at over 40 motor sport events. But the long and irregular hours are a very small price to pay for the reward, which is that I get to work with some great people. When you see people like Robert Reid, David Brabham and Mark Higgins at work you can see why they have been so successful; the level of graft, dedication and attention to detail that they apply to everything they do is incredible, and it's a work ethic that any aspiring young driver should aim to emulate.

We have made great strides in the last couple of years and when people take the time to look in detail at what we are doing, they are blown away. We are extremely fortunate that an organisation like Racing Steps has also understood the great value in what we are doing and RSF's support is a great boost to what we are able to do with the whole Academy.