

Towncross Engineering South Downs Stages 2012

Runners and Riders

1. Paul Diamond/Steve Cox – 2.0 Ford Escort MkII

Paul and Steve are almost one of the family now, appearing for the seventh time on the South Downs and nearly always sporting a different colour! Last year's fetching bright green has this year given way to an all white scheme again. 2011 was special for them as their persistence paid off with an inaugural win. They have only been out once since this event last year which was for a very wet CARnival Stages at Abingdon which resulted in a non finish due to a visit to the scenery whilst lying third. Steve has been rallying on and off for twenty years, ten of those with the Escort which started life in Ireland. Steve has accompanied Paul for ten years and is well known as the meanest man in the sport. His tightness ran to new lengths this year as he wouldn't even deplete his stock of ink to write anything about himself!

2. Adrian Brown/Chris Jarman – 2.5 Ford Escort Mk1

Cornishman Adrian is returning for the third time to try and repeat his success of 2009 and seek revenge for missing out last year when a spin and a stand off with a chicane on the early damp stages cost him victory. They set six fastest stage times but that was still not enough to make up for the earlier time lost. Adrian is a company director of an office equipment retailing business supplying copiers and printers nationwide. He competed on his first rally in 1988 and since then has been through a variety of rally cars including various Escorts, a Peugeot 205, Subaru Impreza and Metro 6R4. His best result ever was a second overall on a National A Rally and has had four outright wins on smaller events including here last November on the Winter Stages. He is a former ACSMC and ASWMC Champion. Co-driver Chris has been co-driving on rallies and driving on Sprints and Hillclimbs for many years, including partnering Adrian to his 2009 win on this event. The Escort runs a 'John Read Engines' built 2496 cc modified Vauxhall engine which produces 321 BHP and this is coupled to a Swedish built tractive 6 speed sequential gearbox. The rest of the car is what is considered Group 4 spec which is pretty much as per the works escorts of the 70's and 80's i.e. Bilstein suspension, fully floating axle, Minilite wheels etc.

3. Dominic Worsfold/Steve Chapman – 1.6 Ford Fiesta Mk1

This is the outfit that so nearly pulled off the giant-killing act last year. Leading the event after the first two stages they then lost time whilst experimenting with a new style of straight lining the chicanes on two wheels. However they were still quick enough throughout the day to hang on to second place, humbling many a quicker and more expensive car. Can they pull off the big one this year? No one will be trying harder.

Dom is 34 years old, is self employed and has been doing both road and stage rallies for 16 years. As if nearly winning the South Downs last year wasn't enough his life was improved still further a week later when wife Natasha presented him with a baby daughter. In stark contrast to the noise and razzamatazz of motor sport Dom is also interested in bird watching and walking, but hopes to compete on a few more events in 2012.

Steve, who is 35 and works for Rolls Royce just down the road, has been co-driving for Dominic for a couple of years now but in that short time they have won their class on both tarmac and forest rallies, including the Rallye Sunseeker.

The Fiesta is a self built car which sports a fully welded and plated lightweight shell with T45 multipoint cage. The engine is a 1600cc Crossflow on Jenvey throttle bodies with 'megasquirt' management. Transmission is a Quaife five speed unit with LSD, Cosworth brakes and a disc braked rear beam. Suspension is via Leda dampers with self modified helper springs with fully adjustable TCAs and rose jointed top mounts to his own design. To finish it off it has a carbon digital dash with carbon seats and an extended steering column in order to position the occupants for ideal weight distribution. All parts are made in house with the engine and management system developed by Dad Neil.

4. Paul King/Alicia Miles – 2.0 Ford Escort MkII

Paul, who is the MD of TOWNCROSS ENGINEERING in Bognor Regis is once again our main sponsor. He has been rally driving for 23 years has won the ACSMC Championship five times and was runner up last year. His first event was actually here at Goodwood where he finished 44th overall (out of 45 finishers!). He is ably guided around the stages by Alicia (AKA 'Lil') who is Social Secretary for Bognor Regis Motor Club. She works in the Automotive Dept of Northbrook College and has co-driven for Paul for the last two years. She has earned an enviable reputation for calling the bends spot on and baking exceedingly good cakes but has yet to perfect the art of doing both at the same time!

The Escort was built in 1999 from 1.1 Popular plus which Paul bought for £300! All the work was done in his shed with a bit of help and support from Autotechnics in Chichester. The Escort is powered by a 2.0 Litre Vauxhall engine producing 275 BHP, and is prepared to Group 4 spec on 15" wheels. Despite having sponsored the South Downs Stages for five years and competed on it six times he has yet to win it so could this be the year, especially as they have had a couple of excellent results recently with a class win and fourth overall at Rockingham and second overall at Brands Hatch last month.

5. Richard Upton/Roland Atkins – 1.6 Vauxhall Corsa Maxi

Richard is a self-employed mechanic who started rallying in 1990. He then moved into motorcycle racing until a hefty crash persuaded him that four wheels were safer. More usually seen in a Sierra Cosworth during the last ten years, taking victories on three occasions, he is revelling in the chance to try the Corsa Maxi today. He has been the Class 4 champion in the ASEM Stage Rally Championship four times. As he is presently transplanting the mechanicals of the Sierra into an Escort Cosworth shell he happily accepted the offer of a drive in Dave Keen's Corsa Maxi.

Co-driver Roland can be found fitting bathrooms and kitchens during the week, but today he is having his first attempt in the hot seat of a rally car, having serviced for Richard for some time.

The Corsa was built by Fowler Motorsport and sports a wide track and wide steel body. It is powered by a Swindon Engines built 1600 Vauxhall engine which pokes out about 200bhp and is mated to a 6-speed dog box.

6. Mark Spencer/Geoff Skillen – 2.4 Ford Escort MkII

Mark and Geoff are rallying returnees, reappearing on stage in 2011 after a sixteen year lay-off. Back in the eighties they won eleven rallies outright and are now back to blow the cobwebs off the car and themselves. (I wonder if the original overalls still fit?) Early results look promising including a second overall here at Goodwood on the Winter Stages last November.

Geoff describes sitting alongside Mark as 'just like going on your favourite funfair ride' (let's just hope his favourite isn't a roundabout!). He has racked up a lot of time in the hot seat doing National and International events in a variety of different cars.

The Escort has been built gradually since 2010 by Mark and was finally finished last June. Power comes from a Vauxhall red-top which lets loose 300bhp. Those horses get to the rear wheels via a Sadev 6-speed sequential gearbox and Atlas axle. The car weighs just 910kg.

7. Roger Moran/Joy Hoyle – 2.5 Ford Escort MkII

Roger and Joy return for their second stab at the South Downs having campaigned a handsome orange Porsche to tenth place last year. This year they appear sporting a 2.5 litre Millington powered MkII Escort complete with tractive sequential gearbox with flat shift.

Roger, who runs a motorhome business to pay for his motor sport, goes rallying in the winter months but is more commonly seen throughout the year as an ultra-competitive Hillclimber. He was British Champion in 1997 and runner up this and last year behind his son Scott. He is used to having 630bhp of oomph pushing him along in his Gould single seater so I imagine anything that comes out of an Escort rally car should feel like a pair of roller skates.

His rallying pedigree is also enviable having been a leading competitor on the Motoring News road rally championship back in the eighties, when that series was one of the leading rally championships in the country.

Joy is a Chartered Accountant by day and as well as partnering Roger on rallies is also a Hillclimb competitor, usually seen urging a pink Vauxhall powered Caterham to beat the boys. She had particular success this year by beating all the locals in her class at Craigantlett in Ireland to win by over a second and also at Shelsley Walsh.

8. Ian Hucklebridge/Gary Johnson – 2.0 Ford Escort MkII

Ian is a Director of a car body repair centre in Aylesbury and has been rallying for many years. He bought the Escort 18 months ago from Will Nichols who used it to win amongst other events the South Downs Stages in 2005/06. It will be Ian's fifth appearance on this event and he has previously won his class. Can he achieve his best result today?

Gary is a retired company director also in the car body repair business. He also rallies his own car but enjoys partnering Ian at Goodwood.

The Escort has a 2.0 JRE prepared Vauxhall engine with sequential gearbox.

9. Rikky & Pat Bartlett – 2.0 Nissan Almera F2

An ex Moto Cross rider, Rikky decided to follow his Dad Pat into rallying about four years ago using an ex-Justin Dale Peugeot 306. After 3 years of Pugging they decided to invest in the ex-Nissan Motorsports Europe Almera F2 car that you see them in today. The car was the last works one built by Nissan

Motorsport Europe at Slough and was built for the 1999 Sanremo Rally. It was later used by Mark Higgins to contest the British Rally Championship. This is their second consecutive go at the South Downs having come 12th overall and 2nd in class C.

Pat is an ex-driver of Mk1 Escorts and still keeps his hand in on the occasional club Sprint.

10. Alan Thistlethwaite/Mick Klein – 4.3 Aston Martin Rally GT

Alan is a 55 year old company director from Welwyn in Hertfordshire, whilst his 35 year old co-driver Mick is from Datchworth also in Hertfordshire.

The Aston, which is a rare beast to find in modern day rallying is based on the baby V8 Vantage and is one of four such cars built by Prodrive for Aston Martin in 2006 and is prepared by David Appleby Engineering. Four of these cars were built, three in LHD form and one RHD, originally for rallying in Europe where they cater for this category of car. They were also used at the 2006 Race of Champions at Wembley where this car was driven by no less than seven times and current World Rally Champion Sebastien Loeb and seven times World F1 Drivers Champion Michael Schumacher. The engine of the Aston which is still being developed with David Appleby Engineering is closely based on the all alloy road car 4.3 litre V8 unit but has been tuned to make it more flexible and responsive for the demands of rallying. 430bhp reaches the rear wheels via a 6-speed sequential gearbox which has been developed in conjunction with Hewland. Larger brakes are fitted along with a comprehensively modified suspension set up. Weight has been reduced to around 1350kgs and work is being undertaken to reduce this further by the implementation of a new state of the art electronic control and wiring system to dispense with the many functions of a luxury car which are not required in rallying.

The pair have rallied the car for the last three years and last year won Class D on the ACSMC Rally Championship.

11. Terry Armstrong/Chris Armstrong – 3.9 Ford Escort MkII

Terry was Champion of the Sussex Challenge, a series of rallies held at the circuit back in the mid-nineties. Son Chris is co-driving in the Rover V8 powered Escort. Together they run the family Body Shop business in Crawley.

The Armstrongs were one of the first entries for the inaugural South Downs Stages in 2005 when they managed tenth overall and then followed this up with a fifth in 2006. However they will be hoping to do better than last year as they had to retire just over half way through the event.

12. Mark & James Snelling – 1.6 Peugeot 106 GTi

Mark & James began rallying in 2009 in a 205 GTi after taking part in several track days. Their best result to date has been a 7th overall and class win on the 'Get It Sideways Stages' at Down Ampney. Today they debut a newly built car in the 106. James recently passed his BARS Test after co-driving for two years as he fancies a go behind the wheel himself. I guess this means that James had better be on top form or could face a coup!

13. Terry Luckings/Russ Burton – 2.0 VW Golf GTi

Terry and Russ return here for their fourth attempt having won their class in 2009.

During last year they achieved their first finish in three attempts on the Richard Burns Rally and also won their class on the Winter Stages here at Goodwood.

54 year old Terry is an IT training consultant from Kent, whilst co-driver Russell is a government officer with Croydon Council and in addition to co-driving for Russell, sprints and time-trials his own Mazda MX5. The guys have been rallying together for 15 years with some degree of success although work and financial restrictions have caused them to cut back of late.

The Golf was purchased in 1995 and has a 2.0 16v engine running Jenvey Throttle Bodies and a DTA engine management system. This drives through a 6-speed sequential gearbox.

14. Johnnie Ellis/Dave Green – 1.6 Ford Fiesta

2010 marked a return to rallying after a ten year break for Johnnie. In the late nineties he was successful in campaigning a 1600 Nova which was a regular class winner. Then in the year 2000 he contested the Peugeot 106 Cup.

This will be Dave's second year as a co-driver.

The car has an M-Sport body kit and is powered by a 1600 Vauxhall engine.

15. Jon Segger/Mark Cann – 2.0 Ford Escort MkII

Jon is an IT Security manager from Suffolk and has been stage rallying on and off since 2004. Mark is an agricultural engineer from Norfolk and has been co-driving for Jon since 2006.

Jon originally built the Escort in 2004 with a 2.0 Zetec engine which helped them to a few good results including a class win at Swindon. This all came literally to a grinding halt when the diff shattered on the 2007 North West Stages. An axle upgrade grew into a bare-shell rebuild around a 2.0 Duratec engine. Family commitments and financial constraints have meant less events in the last couple of years but they did do last year's Richard Burns Memorial Rally where a faulty oil pressure gauge cost them a respectable finish.

They have previously scored a third, second and fifth in class here on the South Downs.

16. Richard Brogan/ - 2.0 Ford Escort RS2000 MkII

2011 marks Richard's sixth South Downs Stages. His best result has been eighth o/a and second in class in 2009.

17. Ian Barnard/Christopher Newton - 1.4 Vauxhall Nova

Ian, has been rallying since 2004 and is a garage owner from East London although his family originate from just down the road at East Dean so he is at home in the area. Last year at the South Downs he had an epic battle for Class A honours with the Nissan Micra of Abi Mahmood, eventually losing out by seven seconds. At the end of last year he took an excellent Class A win at Rockingham and will be looking to repeat that sort of performance today.

Chris has competed in stage rallies co-driving for his brother for a number of years in

the south east in another Vauxhall Nova, with Ian being one of their best and closest competitors. This is the first event that Ian and Chris have been in a car together, let alone rally car. Today could be interesting!

18. Chris Selfe/Paul Lowman - 3.0 BMW Compact

Independent Financial Adviser Chris took his initial bow on the rallying stage here at Goodwood a mere twenty years ago. Sadly his first taste of the sport ended in a rather sudden and solid meeting with the wall at St Mary's, a feat he will be anxious to avoid repeating today. Having replaced his original Compact with the current lightweight model last year he endured a fraught season where the key word was 'unreliability'. However, not to be put off, he has re-built and re-organised for 2012 and is ready to hit (not wishing to tempt fate) the big time today.

Paul is a building engineer from Alresford and used to service for Chris before occupying the hot seat from 2008 onwards.

19. Ken Powell/Richard Wise - 4.2 Rover SD1

(Ed- Having written the following epic biography about Ken and Richard I'm kind of hoping that they will actually appear on the day this year! Sadly having done the same last year they had to withdraw their entry at the last minute due to leaving spectators like a bunch of meerkats searching for an SD1!)

Ken is another in our increasing list of 'born again' rallyists, having not let loose on the stages for about fifteen years although he has been co-driving on Endurance rallies for the last few years. He started rallying in the early '80s doing single venue rallies in an ex-police Rover SD1. He then built a new SD1 in which he claimed top ten finishes on the National Breakdown and Welsh National rallies. Then came a family and an enforced sabbatical. However now that the youngest is now 17 and pestering Dad to co-drive Ken is back.

Richard has contested over a hundred international rallies including the Lombard RAC no less than thirteen times! As well as British drivers he has also partnered Belgian and Japanese. He was the founder and first instructor at the Bill Gwynne International Rallyschool for Co-drivers. He started rallying whilst still at school in 1978 and 'retired' in 2002. He was then tempted back into the hot seat by the RAC Rally revivals. This will be his first event since his 'second' retirement.

The Rover started out as a police car but got a brand new Gartrac shell from Austin Rover. It started with a John Eyles built 3.9 engine but the pistons made a bid for freedom one day at Goodwood, liberally coating the circuit in Mr Castrol's finest for the enjoyment of other competitors. A cross-bolted 'bullet proof' 4.2 then moved in and still lives there today.

20. Gareth & Emlyn Hurford-Jones - 2.0 Ford Escort Cosworth

Gareth began road rallying at the age of 20, throughout the South of England. He then moved on to stage rallying in the early 90's, in a "much loved by all that saw her", Toyota Celica - especially when launching it off the hill at Longcross with a great level flying picture that has been around the world and which was actually followed by crashing 7 seconds later! In 2005 Gareth was very lucky to find a very tidy Ex Works Escort Cosworth for sale and this is what you see today. After an extensive rebuild in 2010 the team are heading off to Belgium to compete in the Tarmac Rally Championship, with only 3 events in the UK Brands Hatch, Goodwood and Down Ampney being tests leading up to the big ones in Europe. The team are sponsored by Red Dragon I.T. Ltd and will be entering their main sponsor's event, the newly named Red Dragon I.T. Stages at the very popular Down Ampney venue near Swindon.

Emlyn took over co-driving for Gareth after father Ceri retired from the hot seat and this is his 5th event. They have always come away with a trophy since rallying together so no pressure today then!

The car is an ex R.A.S Motorsport European Championship LHD Escort Cosworth 909 Rally Car. It was one of the first ever built and used by RAS in the European Championship and was driven, amongst others, by Patrick Snijers. The engine is built to GpA spec.

21. Iain & Andrew Gibson – 2.0 Honda Civic Type-R

Iain started his motorsport competing as a navigator on road rallies in 1985, he then moved to driving on sprints and hill climbs with enough successes to earn him ACSMC Speed Champion in 1995 and the CCC Championship in 1999 in a 1.6 Civic V-Tec. He drove on his first Stage Rally here at Goodwood in 1997 and won his class first time out at the wheel of a Suzuki Swift GTi.

Brother Andrew started co-driving at the '97 Goodwood event and is also a competitive cyclist particularly excelling at hill climbs where he is his current club champion.

The Civic is a Japanese market spec car which was built into a competition car in 2003 from brand new. It originally competed in the Toyo Tyres Road Saloon Racing series in the hands of Neil Armstrong and then Britcar endurance races including the Silverstone 24-hours. It began a second career as a rally car in 2008 but the guys say that it is still a race car at heart and feels very 'at home' at Goodwood. It is still basically in endurance racing format with just a change of springs required for the rallies.

22. John Gorton/Andrew Komosa – 2.0 Subaru Impreza RA STi

John, who is a legal executive for a local authority, has travelled down from Blackburn to drive his co-driver Andrew's Impreza. John started rallying at the age of 19 on local road rallies in the north west of England, moving to forest stage rallies in the '80s and competing on such well knowns as the Lakeland Stages, York National, Hadrian Centurion, etc at the wheel of a MkII Escort. As these sort of events became more expensive he moved to single venue tarmac events all over the north of England. During the last few years he has only competed occasionally including here at the South Downs Stages last year. Co-driver Andrew, who is a prosecuting solicitor in Surrey, is not only the owner of the Impreza but has been totally disabled-blind since 1986, and is the only blind person in the UK with a current MSA National A competition licence. His first foray into rallying was in 1979, navigating a Cortina 1500GT on some of the famous Motoring News road rallies, before moving on to stages after losing his eyesight. It took Andrew seven years and numerous appeals to the RAC MSA before he was allowed to continue participating in his favourite sport. He uses tactile stage maps which he feels with his fingers ... the only trouble arising over bumpy bits! He is also chairman of the GT40 Enthusiasts Club, having an original '66 car. (Drool, drool -Ed)

The car is a 'Clubmans GpA' self sponsored by AviationLawyer.co.uk and is relatively factory standard apart from Cusco suspension, RoadSport tuned EG20 engine and usual safety equipment. It was previously owned by Neil Armstrong who took it to numerous top ten placings in 2007/8.

23. Paul Harvey/Becky Pullen – 2.0 Ford Escort Cosworth

43 year-old Paul is the driver/coordinator of Alpha and Omega Christian Motorsport Team. He started in 1989 by going to the Bill Gwynne rally school, then later that year purchased a Ford Escort Mk2 1600cc and had the car until 2005. It was then replaced with a Ford Escort Cosworth that they presently have. The outfit are a small family based independent Christian rally team mostly based in Suffolk, with Paul's brother Mark on the spanners, his wife looking after the admin and co-driver Becky. On their last outing in September the gearbox broke, so they are hoping for a better result this time!

The Cossie is an ex Ford motorsport recce car used by Carlos Sainz, and, we note, has a five-speed Swedish group N gearbox. Perhaps they are expecting snow?

24. Brian Farminer/Amanda Jane Terry – 1.4 Ford Puma

Brian and Amanda are the 'Grandparents' of the South Downs Stages having competed here every year since the event's inception back in 2005.

Brian won the Fiesta Racing Championship in 1988 and 1991; having previously rallied in a Mini successfully in the mid-70's and raced Renault 5's in the early 80's. He now instructs for Mithril Racing based at Goodwood Motor Circuit and has probably done more laps of the circuit than anyone else. Brian was also the driver of the support race safety car on the British Touring Car Championship for 9 years. Amanda is Payroll and Admin Manager for a care agency and took up co-driving when Brian returned to rallying. She had been a serious spectator and went to all the BTCC races over many years, which is how she met Brian, but the step up to competitor was still a big one!

Having contested six of the other South Downs events in Brian's ex-racing Fiesta they appeared in the Puma for the first time last year, having taken first and second in class at other events during the year. The car has a 1400 16V engine with worked head, Piper cams running on Jenvey throttle bodies with DTA management, 4 branch manifold and stainless steel exhaust system. Suspension is courtesy of Proflex 2 way front & rear (rear coilovers) with tarmac springs. To further enhance the handling the car has a Puma Racing wide track kit front & rear, power steering, Wilwood alloy 4 pot front calipers with cross drilled

vents, disc braked wide track rear beam, Tilton bias valve, alloy hydraulic hand brake, Aeroquip brake lines throughout, and finally steel braided fuel lines.

25. Roy Edwards/David Shields – 2.3 Ford Escort MkII

With a combined age of 148 Roy and David can lay claim to be the Grand Daddies of the South Downs Stages. They are regular visitors to the event, having only missed last year since its inception eight years ago.

Roy is president of Tunbridge Wells Motor Club and by profession is the MD of Ton Hire, a vehicle hire company in Paddock Wood, Kent. He has been competing for over fifty years in all forms of motor sport. Amongst others he took part in the Players No6 Autocross series in the '60/'70s, and was British Autocross Champion in the early '70s.

David won his first motor sport trophy in 1964 and has partnered a number of different drivers over the years. He was a member of a trio of Escorts that won the Club Team Award on the 1970 RAC Rally, finishing a respectable 18th overall. After a break he met up with Roy again in 2004 and they have been competing together ever since. Long may they continue to do so.

The Escort is a late replacement for the Mk1 Twin Cam we usually see them in. Sadly this managed to catch fire during the recent Brands Hatch Stages although damage was limited to under bonnet although some pictures would seem to suggest that the co-driver was barbecued at the time!

26. Tim Clarke/Richard Taylor – 1.6 Ford Escort MkII

Tim began rallying in the latter part of 2010 and has just done a couple of other events since, so no doubt today will be a continuation of the learning curve. His best result to date is 34th at Brands Hatch.

Richard has co-driven for a variety of drivers and this will be his third time with Tim.

Tim has built the Escort himself over a few years to Gp4 spec but with a fairly standard Crossflow engine.

27. Barry & Holly Cromack – 1.6 Citroen Saxo

Barry is a driving instructor by trade so the finish marshals can expect 'slowing down' hand signals as he approaches the stop control. Having marshalled on many types of rally he began competing in 2005 with a Citroen AX in Class A. He achieved many top three class positions before crashing and writing it off on the 2009 Richard Burns Memorial Rally. He then set to and found a 'very experienced' Saxo shell on E-bay. It had been used on the Saxo challenge in Belgium and saw action on the Ypres Rally for a couple of years before emigrating to Ireland and then back to Wales where it became a Rallycrosser. Then Barry, Holly and mechanic Wayne spent five months building the car back to rally spec, the result being what you see today.

Holly has been involved in motorsport from a very early stage – sorry age. She has been a cadet marshal since they were invented and today makes her debut as a co-driver (applause). Her ambition is to work within the World Rally Championship as a mechanic. She has also helped to build a 2CV that raced in the 24-hour event at Snetterton in 2011. We wish her well and hope she realises her ambition.

28. Scott & Darren Stutchbury – 1.9 Peugeot 205 GTi

This is very much a family effort with all elements involved. Scott has been rallying for over twenty years since he was 18, but had a break to bring up a family/rally team. His wife looks after the finances (yes we know what you mean Scott), son Ryan wields the spanners and daughter Keziq provides the good luck kisses (worth at least a second a mile I reckon), whilst brother Darren occupies the hot seat. Darren used to be younger than Scott but his experiences in the hot seat on nine rallies have now made him older! The guys built the Pug at Magenta Sport for the Rallycross Stock Hatch Championship but before it saw action there Scott decided to change it to a rally car. It is powered by a Group A 1.9 8v engine with a choice of 5-speed close ratio gearbox with 4.8 diff or a 6-speed box with an LSD. The original fuel injection was replaced with twin 45DCOEs. It stops courtesy of 4-pot callipers, 280mm discs and a bias pedal box plus discs on the rear. Negotiating chicanes becomes easier with electric power steering and the bumps are eased by Gaz large coilover shocks on the front with 300lb springs and Bilstein dampers on the rear. Finally the power reaches the ground through 15" Peugeot alloys running on Hankook tyres.

29. Paul Bagnall/Derek Webb – Ford Escort RS2000 MkII

30year old Paul is a 3D computer artist for property development (now that's different) and started as a road-rally navigator for his dad in 1978. He has a long list of un-noteworthy performances behind him – but hopefully has enjoyed most of it. He lives in London and says that it is novel these days for him to drive any car let alone a rally example. His first time sitting in a drivers seat for months is when someone is counting him down to start a stage, so watch out for some fairly dramatic improvements in time as the day goes on.

Derek is a 'retired tycoon' (according to Paul) and is the co-ordinator for the new Corbeau Seats UK ASEMC Tarmac Rally Championship. He has a long and illustrious history in rallying which began in 1967. As a driver he won the South East Rally Championship in '77 before moving across the car to co-drive

Japanese Rally Champion Teruo Katsuta on ten rounds of the WRC, on the way winning their class on the '81 Lombard RAC. After many successes partnering Richard Ive on Belgian rallies he finished his co-driving career on the '04 Peugeot 205 Challenge. He found himself back in the driving seat in 2008 when he contested the 2008 running of the South Downs behind the wheel of a Porsche 911.

The Escort began life as a hillclimb car and then served thirteen hard years as a rally steed when budget permitted. After melting its clutch on the Rally of the Midlands in '09 it went for a two-month rebuild and re-emerged two and a half YEARS later only to blow the engine on its first event. Paul says that he has stolen money from his wife's loft conversion mortgage to repair it and be here today. (I really hope that he reaches the finish otherwise the next thing I write about him could be his obituary – Ed)

30. Les & James Horn – 1.3 Ford Ka

Les is now on his third son to crew the Ka although the others are still about to tell the tale. Les and James are Southsea Motor Club members from Waltham Chase and are wheeling out the Ka for yet another South Downs. The car is a part of the Horn family having been driven on the South Downs at various times by Les, Edward and Tom. Dad has the highest placing so far though with a second in class in 2009. No doubt James will be behind the wheel before too long.

The Ka is an ex-Ford promotional car which won it's first year's Ka Championship.

31. Geoff & Clair Martin – 2.3 Ford Escort MkII

32. Mark Feeny/Richard Pashley – 3.5 Triumph TR7 V8

Mark returned to stage rally driving in 2006 after a 25 year break to raise a family. The TR7 left the Speke Factory in Liverpool with built in rust in 1977. It's transformation into a rally car began in 2002 and took four years to build. Mark was originally intending to fit a 2 litre Dolomite Sprint engine, but in order to cope with the excessive weight of the driver, a V8 Rover lump was fitted. It still has several of the original parts, including the truly hideous tartan door cards, and the vaguely accurate speedo. It also has the steel girder bumper inserts, which, whilst ridiculously heavy, did lead to the car being somewhat infamous in local rallying folklore. This is the car which, during a spin (which happens a lot) on the 2007 Longmoor Loco stages, demolished a brick 'outhouse', but still managed to get a 2nd in class award.

Mark says 'They don't make 'em like this anymore – thankfully'.

33. Philip Clarke/Amanda Potter – 1.3 Ford Escort MkII

Philip has been rallying for 'a few decades', whilst Amanda is embarking upon only her second time in the hot seat. In addition to rallying she also plays football for Braintree Town Ladies team and works for an Auto Engineering Company for the day job.

34. Rob & Ashley Aslett – 1.9 Peugeot 205 GTi

Following their debut year in Stage Rallying Southsea Motor Club members Rob and son Ashley are back for another crack at the South Downs to try and better last year's result. This is the fifteenth 205 that they have owned. Rob has previously competed on Endurance Rallies in a Peugeot 205XS and they both take part in club 12-car rallies.

Ash is a Motor Vehicle technician student at Sparsholt college and is also learning to drive – guess what in!

The Pug took two years and two weeks to build with 10% done in the two years and 90% in the two weeks. They have had a 100% finishing record on the five rallies they undertook in 2011 and are looking to continue that today.

35. Harry Sherrard/Ivor Heading – 1.6 Mini Cooper

Having raced on and off for a few years and been an instructor for Peter Gethin Driving Courses here at Goodwood Harry says that he came to spectate on last year's South Downs Stages, was 'blown away' by the fun factor of single venue Stage Rallying and therefore went and bought the Mini Cooper to compete this year. We are delighted that this is the effect the event has on spectators and hope that there are more who might be similarly inspired out there today. In between buying the car and this event the Winter Stages suddenly popped up, so they entered and promptly won their class! I think that they may find their competition a little stiffer today but we wish them all the best.

55 year old Ivor has been a lifelong 'petrolhead' but had never competed before last November having succumbed to Harry's persuasions to co-drive for him whilst watching here last year.

The Cooper is an ex-Clubmans Category Challenge car with basic safety aspects already installed. Xceed Motorsport turned it into rally spec. They had a few handling problems first time out but hope to have ironed these out now.

36. Brian Stevens/Matt Carter – 1.3 Suzuki Swift GTi

Brian and Matt have (originally) travelled a very long way to be here today as Brian is a New Zealander and Matt an Australian. Brian began competing in his homeland about twenty years ago by doing hillclimbs, autotests and occasional stage rally co-driving. After moving to Blighty in '99 a two year sabbatical gave way to an entry on the Abingdon CARNival in a 205GTi. He then developed a taste for Mazda rotary engines, taking an RX7 to class honours and third overall in the 2006 ACSMC Sprint Championship before popping the engine into a Westfield which scared him silly. Matt's motor sport background began in bike racing and moved to pedalling a Honda S2000 in sprints and hillclimbs. He hopes that his knowledge of sprinting at Goodwood will help them today.

Brian's aim for the day is not to finish last in class and Matt's aim is not to wet himself sitting next to 'The Mad Kiwi'.

The Swift is returning from ownership 'up North' and has a Bill Falconer engine and Bilsteins all round. If you like it Brian would listen to a sensible offer after the event.

37. Gary Candy/John Grey – 1.8 FT Bonito Special

Gary and brother-in-law John return for their third crack at the South Downs Stages and they are hoping for a better run this time after suffering a persistent misfire throughout last year's event.

Gary, from Poole, began his motorsport on two wheels in moto cross and then came into the four-wheeled version via autocross and slaloms in a MkII Escort.

John was persuaded into active motorsport as a relatively late starter at the age of 43 having agreed to co-drive in a drunken moment over a curry. That was eight years ago and since then he has contested the Historic Rally Car Register's clubman rally championship in a Mk1 Cortina GT and reaching 2nd overall in 2005, although it did end in tears with a severely car damaging accident in 2007.

The FT Bonito (I've yet to see another anywhere – Ed) took Gary eight years to completely rebuild, having purchased it as a road going car which hadn't turned a wheel for twelve years. The body was produced by a German company known as Fiberfab and has been designed along the lines of a Ford GT40. It is bolted onto a VW Beetle floor pan, using suspension and brakes from that car also. Mated to this is a 1.8 16v Golf engine mid mounted in the car and driving through an Audi 5-speed gearbox. The engine has been balanced and the cyl head gas flowed. Fuel is delivered through a pair of Weber 45s. Gary says that the car is still an ongoing development project.

38. Dave Martin/ - 1.6 Peugeot 205 GTi

Dave's motorsport experience has been in rallycrossing where he has competed for for eight years, but has now swapped to rallying where this will be his second event.

The Pug was recently purchased from Andy Reid and uses motorbike throttle bodies to deliver the fuel to the 1.6 engine.

39. Suze & Matt Endean – 1.3 Nissan Micra

Husband and wife team Matt and Suze first met when competing against each other on Autotests. Besides the small matter of marriage this led to other things, particularly competing on rallies with Suze initially in the co-driver's seat. This led to itchy feet though and a desire to see rallying from the other side of the car. Matt subsequently built 'Muriel' the Micra, initially to Endurance Rally spec and Suze ventured forth behind the wheel and notched up a second in class on both of the first two events she entered in 2010 and, by year end a second in class in the Championship. This led to her taking her BARS test in order to drive on Stage Rallies and also an evolution of the Micra to Stage Rally spec. albeit still in a fairly basic form but with plans to modify her further (the car that is not Suze).

Matt is an Assistant Director of an advisory service for schools but is also a big car and particularly rallying enthusiast. He has competed on various different events over the last few years and can often be seen on Endurance and Road Rallies behind the wheel of a Rover 25. He came third overall on the National Endurance Road Rally Championship in 2007 and 2011.

40. Mark Withers/Chris Penney – 1.9 Peugeot 205 GTi

Today is Mark's first time as a driver having started rallying in 1985 and having co-driven Justin Dale, Ian Robertson and Duncan Waite at National and International level. He works for Carlin Motorsport, currently working with former WRC Champion Carlos Sainz, whose son Carlos Junior looks set for a career with them in F3 racing.

Chris, who is a lighting engineer, owns the Pug and Mark says he will be 'hanging on for dear life'! The car is looked after by Dale Autosport Developments.

41. Ross Wilson/Russell Thomson – 2.0 Ford Escort Mk1

Ross is another of our visitors from the Isle of Wight where he owns his own car body repair business. This will be his first Stage Rally but he has competed on Isle of Wight Car Club Autotests. Russ is also self-employed and is an successful club competitor turning his hand to the hot seat today.

The Mk1 has been restored by Russ over several years and he has built it to near Gp4 spec with a 16v Vauxhall engine.

43. Paul Haines/Vince Bristow - 1.4 Peugeot 106 XSi

Paul is contesting only his second ever stage rally today having made his debut at Brands hatch three weeks ago. The original plan was to rally a Rover 25, but due to myriads of problems he made a late switch to his 106 which has been brought up to stage rally spec from road rally trim. Co driver Vince has many years experience driving an Escort all over the world, even as far away as New Zealand.

44. Richard & Liz Pugh – 1.8 MGB

Husband and wife team Richard and Liz have been Historic rallying for twenty years. They began with a Jaguar XK140 on the Circuit of Ireland in '91 (beat that for a first event!) and if that wasn't enough they moved the next year to a Frogeye Sprite to freeze their important bits off on the Monte Carlo Challenge which started from Berlin. In the same car they finished second overall the following year in the Welsh Speed Sport night rally championships. In '93 an MGA arrived and stayed to give sterling service for several years including 10th on the Monte Challenge and 13th on the Classic Marathon. After awards too numerous to mention the MG was replaced with a Volvo Amazon to tackle the forest stages of the Historic Rally Championships, but also ended up taking part on the 50th anniversary of the East African Safari Rally in Kenya, its exploits on which another book could be written on its own. They took a few years off and have now returned with an MGB (Hooray! The last time I saw one of them rallying at Goodwood I was behind the wheel, so long ago that the marshals still wore animal skins - Ed). If this wasn't enough they also race a Formula Junior Stanguellini and Hill Climb a Sebring Sprite. 826 FRX was discovered as a 'basket case' in 2009 and was discovered to have been an ex-works press car, although it never competed in period. It was restored by MG Motorsport to as near works spec as possible and the South Downs Stages is its first time out!

45. Hugh and Debby Myers – 1.8 Saab 96 V4

This is another first for the South Downs – our first Saab! Regular Bognor Regis MC members Hugh and Debby, who celebrated their 40th wedding anniversary last year, are Historic Rallying enthusiasts who, for several years, campaigned a Datsun 240Z (in which they won the Historic Class on this event in 2008). After a break of rally car ownership for two years they have recently invested in the Saab following outings in the co-driver's seat in various examples of such a car on various Historic rallies. Hugh is the driver but his latest rallying exploit was as co-driver in a class winning Saab 96 on the 2011 Roger Albert Clark Rally. Debby also competed on the event in 2010 and came close to winning Category 1. The Saab, resplendent in a colour scheme to that used by the works team in the mid '70s, was built by Droitwich Saab in the late '90s, but has not been rallied since 2007. It was built to Gp2 spec with the 1815cc version of the German Ford V4 engine which powered Saabs in those days. This will be their debut in the car.

46. Jim (David) Boxall/Allan Brown – 1.6 Peugeot 205 GTi

This will be Jim's first appearance behind the wheel for over ten years and Allan's first ever as a co-driver. Allan has been sprinting and hillclimbing for eleven years and they have been doing some 12-car rallies together for the past 5 months. This will also be their first time out in this car.

47. Ali Green/Jean Chmura – 1.3 Riley Elf

The South Downs wouldn't be the same without Ali and Mavis (Riley) bringing up the rear- on the road that is. I think they have yet to actually finish last in the overall standings. Ali was one of the ladies who competed as a co-driver on the Faberge sponsored Fiesta challenge in 1979. Nowadays her main interest is organising the annual Regis Classic Tour and as from last year the Regis TAP. She is also a very active member of BRMC and co-edits their magazine with husband Mick who is also the Clerk of Course here today. (So if they win today you might want to have a word with him first!). She reckons they get the best value out of the event as they are on the stage for longer than anyone else. Co-driver Jean hales from the depths of Cornwall and can normally be found navigating on Historic rallies, however she enjoyed her first taste of stage rallying here last year so much that she has returned for more this year. I don't know what goes on inside that car but whenever you see photos of them the crew are always in fits of laughter. Mavis was a garage 'find' in Cinderford and was restored by Paul and Steve Loveridge. She is 48 years old and is urged around Goodwood by a 'Cooper S' conversion to her 1300 A-series engine.