

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS RADIO CAR CLUB

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<http://www.twrcc.co.uk>

## Newsletter No. 53

### Introduction.

Firstly can I welcome all those of you who have joined us since I sent out the last newsletter. I hope everyone has enjoyed racing at TWRCC and will be staying with us when we move outdoors for the summer season. For the first time (I believe) in our history we have a waiting list of people wanting to join the club. I see that as a very positive sign despite the loss of the Tunbridge Wells track but more about that later.

### Web-site.

Thanks to Dave for continuing to administer the site on the club's behalf. The number of hits stands at about 11,500. Results are usually available in the evening of the day of racing and e-mails are sent out to those who have requested them saying that the site has been updated. There is now a Wanted/For Sale section on the site which is of course free for you to use and a link to a discussion forum with a TWRCC area apart from others. You can also go direct to the site at [www.rccarworld.com](http://www.rccarworld.com) and select "forum".

### Thanks.

As I've said on many occasions the success of the club is very much dependant on the support we receive from you, the members. With that in mind I'd like to mention a few of you here. One job that has (or had) to be done prior to the start of the season is to move the tracking to Hugh Christie. Thanks to Steve Andrews, Jim and Danny who helped me do that possibly for the last time. Steve and Grant repaired the shed after it received its ritual kicking and Gary Wise very kindly collects the trophies for us as he lives near to our supplier. Kris still helps us in race control with sorting the cards and getting the heats and finals on the P.C. Jim organises a Christmas collection (which you all give generously too) for race control staff which is very much appreciated. Incidentally that includes not only Ian and I but also Steve Hamblin, Derek Gearing, John Maddex (Snr.) and Jim himself (he doesn't get a present) who all help with the transponders. Jim was also responsible for cutting and dowelling the track ends so that they fit together and are less likely to move during racing.

Steve is nearly always at the hall when I arrive and there seem to be a few regulars that help with the tracking. Mark Turner, Gary Fleet and James Brooker have all helped to my knowledge but I apologise if I've omitted anyone. Mark's young son appears to be in charge of marshal points. Grant as usual is still dreaming up those challenging tracks but it might be nice for someone to give him a break for a week occasionally. The track seems to go away pretty quickly now, but there is still that same little band of drivers who disappear as soon as racing is over. If you don't believe me go to the door and watch (or listen). Brian Hopkins still seems to be Mrs. Mop going round the hall tidying up. To all these people and all the others who help the club in their own small way can I just say THANK YOU to you all.

### Spring Meeting.

This year's spring meeting will take place on 4<sup>th</sup> May 2003 at Hugh Christie Technology College in North Tonbridge. Enter via the usual entrance in White Cottage Road and park around the main playground. There will be a bar-b-q on site as usual although Dave Vanns is unable to run it for us this year but Jim and Derek have volunteered (?) to be in charge

of it as Dave has said we can borrow the equipment. As before it will cost drivers £5 to race (including bar-b-q lunch) and £1 for non-drivers who want lunch. Barry and Kris Healey have agreed to run the raffle for us so can you please have a look round for some prizes to donate and give them to one of them. The format for the day will be similar to previous years in that there will be normal buggy and saloon racing plus team and skill events. Due to popular demand (!) we will also have a race for non-drivers and pit crew. There is a possibility that members of race control may drag themselves away from the computer to take part. Don't forget there are no motor restrictions on the day so you can run whatever you want. The meeting will open with a concours at approximately 9.15am, which will be judged by Dave Burton, and we expect to finish around 4.30pm. Prizes and certificates will be presented to the days winners after the track has been put away and we have tidied up. Do try and come along to support the club – last year we had excellent weather so here's hoping this year will be the same. The smaller Roy Howard Hall is available if the weather is wet.

### The Track Situation

As I'm sure you all know our outdoor track at the YMCA centre was lost during October last year. The YMCA said they could no longer afford to run all the buildings that they were currently using and so had to make cutbacks, with St. John's being a casualty. We were given three weeks notice to quit which meant that we had to empty the garage and remove the rostrum. Unfortunately I was given the news just after the newsletter had been sent so I was not able to pass this information to everyone immediately. This led to some rather strange rumours flying around, not least at other clubs visited by some of our members.

The situation at the moment is that we have looked at the following sites. Notcutts Garden Centre at Pembury which Steve found but unfortunately the area has been earmarked as parking for contractors if the new hospital is built on the current site. Brian Hopkins suggested a site at Hayesden Country Park but was turned down as it was thought it would be out of keeping with the park setting. He has another possibility that he is working on as I write. John Maddex has looked into a couple of possibilities but sadly they turned out not to be feasible. Derek Gearing has also followed up two possibilities for us but parking was a problem at one of them.

All the Councils have been approached, some more than once. Tunbridge Wells have said they have nothing but the Sport Development Officer is looking again for me. Tonbridge and Malling have also said at least twice that they can't help as have Sevenoaks. Paddock Wood has still to answer a letter sent on 23<sup>rd</sup> January! Dealing with KCC has proved a long and arduous exercise as dealing with many large organisations does. I have repeatedly rung their officers in the Property department to find out if the old track may be available to use before building work starts and as yet there is still no firm answer. I have tried Polhill Garden Centre and The Hop Farm but neither could take the time to reply. The Hop Farm didn't even reply to my e-mail asking for the names of the owners! The only Council that did take a positive view was Southborough Town Council. They answered promptly and suggested two possible sites. Sadly neither was suitable because of either parking, toilets or both. However we have been invited by them to put forward a proposal for a track to be included in the re-development of the site in Southborough that stretches from the main road back onto the Ridgeway. The document is now with the Council and I understand should be discussed by them in the middle of April. The only disadvantage to this site is that work may well not start for two years.

Another area we looked at was a farm site in Matfield. This is a fruit farm but the farmer is willing to make space for us and grub out some trees. It's a very pleasant location and

would certainly not have a vandalism problem but the down side is that it is off the farm track by quite a distance which could be difficult in wet weather. There would also be a problem with toilets as the area is some distance from the nearest building but he seems very keen for the track to be built there.

It was very unfortunate that The Courier let us down badly following the visit by the Mayor for the trophy presentation. It took many phone calls to arrange only to find that not only was the photographer present for about three minutes but our item didn't even make it into the paper. I wrote to the Editor and explained the situation about the track and that we were relying on the item to generate some interest and possible offers of sites. I also told him I had written to the Sports Editor asking if he would be willing to print our race results and was surprised by his reply. I quote from my original letter to the Editor:-

*"The reply, astonishingly, was that radio control car racing was not a sport! Perhaps he [the Sports Editor] is not aware that the RAC has recognised it as a sport for some years. It would be interesting to hear his justification for including articles on fishing and how inserting a hook through a fish's mouth could ever be classed as sport".*

The result was that they agreed to do an article focussing on the club's need for a track but sadly what appeared in print was of limited practical use and serves to illustrate that a newspaper will write its own copy if they don't like what you tell them. They incorrectly stated that we were looking for members when in fact Ian (who did the interview) said no such thing.

So to sum up we have some possibilities that are on the go but we still need members to be alert for any possibilities they might see. If you do spot a suitable site then in the first instant speak or write to the owner as I'm afraid I haven't the time to do this myself at the moment. If they sound interested then let me know and I can follow it up with a document I have ready prepared. This was put together initially by Mike Spurway and was used as the basis for the Southborough proposal. Mike also circulated a form at the 23<sup>rd</sup> March meeting asking members to pass on information about possible sites but so far none have come back. When looking at a possible site the things we will need, apart from about 800 square metres for the track itself, are parking for fifty cars, electricity (although a generator is an option), toilets and some storage for the track etc.

Funding is of course a crucial issue. The options are interest free loans from members, sponsorship from local companies, bank loans and grants from various bodies. At the moment I don't think there is much point going into this in depth other than to say we may call upon members for financial support at some time in the future or possibly if we decide we can do a large proportion of the preparation ourselves then physical help will be needed.

#### Good News.

Two pieces of good news this time. Darrel Gearing is a proud father for the second time. Congratulations to him and his family. Also Barry Healey has made it to the big 40 (is that good news?).

#### Clubman Trophy.

As you may remember we award this to someone who has consistently worked for the good of the club. I did say when I presented it that there were in some ways a down side to presenting a trophy like this. What I mean is that the people you presented it to in previous years (or indeed those who have never received it) may think that they don't deserve it.

That isn't necessarily true. Last year Brian and Kris shared it, but they both still do just as much to help as they always did. It's just that it's nice to spread it around a bit. Incidentally an idea that was put to us which we have adopted is that those who are (or have been) presented with the Clubman trophy will receive a small trophy as well which will be theirs to keep. This year we presented it to Steve Andrews. Steve has been with the club right from the start and has always given of his time in a variety of ways. He strimmed the area around the off-road track, he puts the tent up and takes it down, he's almost always at the hall before me (not on the 23<sup>rd</sup> March though Steve!) and has got the tracking into the hall. Also I know he helps out less experienced members with their cars. So on behalf of the club – thank you Steve.

### The Winter Season.

The new style cards were in use for the winter season and seemed to work quite well. For 40MHz, all the frequencies you have are written along the bottom but the one that is allocated to you (and the one you are to use) is on the white square in the top right hand corner. If we need you to use a different frequency we will put a small card behind yours with what you are to use on it. For 27MHz, just look at the column you are in and use that unless there is a card to say otherwise. Please don't write on the cards – if you want some changes made tell Ian or me.

I did as usual ask if anyone wanted to take part in a Tamiya formula but there were only three takers so it was a non starter.

Once again there were mince pies, sherry and seasonal music for the meeting just before Christmas, thanks to Jean for heating the pies and getting them to the hall piping hot. There was also fruit juice for those that wanted it which was just as well considering how much sherry somebody managed to tuck away!

One thing I mentioned in the last newsletter was that you would only be able to do both classes if there was room and that you would need to pick which class was to be your first choice. As we only have the hall until 13.00 there is no time for an extra heat. Sadly this fact was lost on one of our members (well his father actually) who because there was only space for his son to race in one class became abusive. He said and I quote "You and Ian run this club for your own benefit". As you can imagine, not the sort of thing you expect when you give up your Sunday mornings for free. What the "benefit" is I can't imagine. Perhaps it's the benefit of getting up at six o' clock on a Sunday or perhaps of getting there an hour and a half before some of the drivers. Perhaps it's the benefit of going home after racing to count the cash, balance the accounts, fill in the paying in book, cut out the printouts and stick them in, work out the points, update the spreadsheet, upload results to the web site and send the e-mails. Perhaps it's the benefit of spending most of your spare time looking for a track and dealing with the associated letters and phone calls that it generates. You see, Ian and I are very much like all you drivers, in that we turn up and just do the best we can. Sometimes you crash your car and break it, sometimes we hit the wrong keys on the laptop, but I'm afraid that's how life is – not quite perfect.

It's strange but there is an element of people thinking that because they pay to come and race they are paying us to do everything for them, and ours is not the only club where this has been an issue. This club runs purely on the basis that everyone (or nearly everyone) makes a contribution of some kind at the meetings. If Ian and I had to do everything then there would be no club. Actually, if I think about it and I'm really honest, there **is** a benefit and that is quite simply to see the whole thing come together and work as well as it does. If you feel that's a "benefit" that Ian and I ought not to have then you need to say so now.

## Results for Winter Season 2002/2003

Saloons. Fifty eight started the season with forty three qualifying for trophies. There was some excellent racing during the season with Adrian and Dave swapping the lead several times and actually having tied scores after all ten meetings. In F1 James and Gary were comfortably ahead of the rest while in F2 Mark was in a similar position. There were also plenty of close battles going on in all the formulas (including another tie) which were good to see and a vindication of the points system that we use. Formula listings (for next season) for those that have renewed will be available at the spring meeting.

The letter 'P' after the position denotes where penalties were applied.

### Formula TQ

1 <sup>st</sup> and Club Champion	Dave Mills	671 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Adrian Bidewell	661 "
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Grant Riddall	635 "
4 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Morton	623 "
5 <sup>th</sup>	Chris Mears	614 "
6 <sup>th</sup>	Clive Bonner	608 "
7 <sup>th</sup>	Dan Hamblin	598 "
8 <sup>th</sup>	Kris Healey	583 "
9 <sup>th</sup>	Andy Doorne	558 "
10 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Spurway	536 "
11 <sup>th</sup>	Rob Dorling	522 "
12 <sup>th</sup>	Jason Gidley	515 "
13 <sup>th</sup>	Sam Collins	494 "
14 <sup>th</sup>	Phil Gidley	489 "
15 <sup>th</sup>	Roger Packer	471 "
16 <sup>th</sup>	Richard Hathaway	468 "

### Formula 1

1 <sup>st</sup>		James Brooker	602 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>		Gary Wise	583 "
3 <sup>rd</sup>		James Parascandolo	543 "
4 <sup>th</sup>	P P	Steve Collins	525 "
5 <sup>th</sup>		Clive Woodall	516 "
6 <sup>th</sup>		Barry Healey	499 "
7 <sup>th</sup>		Dave Penfold	481 "
8 <sup>th</sup>		Danny Mattess	446 "
9 <sup>th</sup>		Lee Smith	425 "
10 <sup>th</sup>		Leigh Mellett	393 "
11 <sup>th</sup>		Dave Rogers	385 "
12 <sup>th</sup>		Matt Weekes	369 "

### Formula 2

1 <sup>st</sup>		Mark Turner	558 points
2 <sup>nd</sup>		Gary Fleet	501 "
3 <sup>rd</sup>		Dave Edwards	494 "

4 <sup>th</sup>	Lee Edwards	454	points
5 <sup>th</sup>	Claire Piper	447	"
6 <sup>th</sup>	Mark Stubbington	400	"
7 <sup>th</sup>	Mike Hoare	389	"
8 <sup>th</sup>	Paul Young	373	"
=9 <sup>th</sup>	Colin Howard	365	"
=9 <sup>th</sup>	Marleen Maher	365	"
11 <sup>th</sup>	Brian Hopkins	362	"
12 <sup>th</sup>	Kelly Walker	326	"
13 <sup>th</sup>	Jack Sales	321	"
14 <sup>th</sup>	Martin Hoare	313	"
15 <sup>th</sup>	Steven Parry	248	"

Buggies. Seven started the season with five qualifying for trophies.

1 <sup>st</sup>	Steve Andrews	672	points
2 <sup>nd</sup>	John Maddex	647	"
3 <sup>rd</sup>	Danny Litchfield	644	"
4 <sup>th</sup>	Nicky Riddall	627	"
5 <sup>th</sup>	Darrel Gearing	609	"

#### Finance.

We are still in a strong financial position with no large purchases this season apart from a third speaker which allows better sound throughout the hall. The usual expenses have to be paid like hire of the hall and public liability insurance. We now have a deposit account which means we get slightly more interest on our money but not much! Our funds (at 06/04/03) stand at:-

- Deposit account    £6,250
- Current account    £236.68
- In hand                £15.64
- Float                    £10

Out of this we have to pay for two sets of trophies (winter and spring) and the expenses for the spring meeting.

Please remember the clubs accounts are with me at every meeting and **any** member is entitled to see them.

#### Membership.

Membership runs from May 1<sup>st</sup> to April 30<sup>th</sup> so please can you all bear in mind that as I said three meetings ago you need to have paid your membership by April 15<sup>th</sup>. After that date we will be inviting those on the waiting list and visitors to join. This does not mean that if you haven't joined by that date you won't be able to, because it will depend on how many have renewed. All prices are as before and as printed on the membership form and don't forget you only move up to senior prices if you are seventeen before May 1<sup>st</sup>. Race day fees are still £3 for adult and £2 for juniors. If you reach the age of seventeen during your membership you then start paying adult race fees but there is no extra membership charge until you renew next time.

#### Summer Season.

The outdoor (summer) season begins on May 18<sup>th</sup> 2003 and will be run on the playground at The Hugh Christie Technology College in North Tonbridge. There is a full calendar on a separate sheet so you can stick it on your notice boards. You will see from this that there is **no** practice meeting this season. This is because we are starting slightly later than usual

and you will have raced on the same tarmac at the spring meeting two weeks before. As usual the formula will be best seven from ten to count with seven needed for a trophy.

Buggies can run whatever motor they want and saloons will all use 27 turn except for TQ drivers who can run modifieds up to 12 turn. Just a reminder to buggy drivers that when we go indoors in November you will have to use 27 turn motors as was agreed last year. Of course the playground area is not ideal for our purpose but so far it is all that has been offered to us although I did ask at a race meeting for suggestions for a better location none were forthcoming. Please remember that you can only do both classes if there is room. It is far better for as many as possible to race one class than it is for some to do two classes at the expense of others who can't race at all. Make sure you are booked in by 9.10am to guarantee a place. After that time vacant places are given to visitors. If you arrive after this there may not be room for you to enter. If the weather is doubtful you can ring my mobile number which is 07801 453678 to find out but **don't** ring my home number early in the morning. You will make yourself very unpopular!

While we're on the subject of different classes I'm not sure how much longer we can sustain a buggy heat for. A heat with only two cars in is a real pain because it's so hard to get volunteer marshals to fill in. Quite honestly the best option would be either ten buggies or no buggies. That might sound tough on the drivers but it's a fact of life that support for buggy racing is declining and has been for some years. You only have to look at the number of clubs that have converted their off road tracks to on road ones to see there is only a fraction of the support there was four or five years ago. There was talk about another club sharing an off road track if we built one but that came to nothing. We'll carry on and run them this summer but beyond that may require a serious re-appraisal.

Don't forget that transmitters need to be in the pound (the green boxes) at all times other than when you're racing or practicing. The boxes are labelled with a heat and final on them so after all the heats are over make sure your transmitter is moved to the correct box for your final. Transmitters must have a name label on them and must be returned after all races, even the finals apart from the very last one. Penalties will be applied to drivers whose transmitters are not in the box. Please make sure that you stay on the rostrum until all the cars have finished otherwise you may obstruct the other drivers view of the track. When the tones go for the end of the race cross the loop and stop a reasonable distance after it and don't go round again.

Now on to that old favourite of marshalling. When your race finishes you need to switch both the car and transmitter off, give back the transponder, put the transmitter in the pound and go out to marshal **immediately**. That doesn't mean after you've looked over the results or dissected in minute detail what happened in the heat before with other drivers. A little huddle of marshals doesn't help us in race control to see who is there and who isn't. As was said before if the race is ready to start and you are not there you will lose points. At the last meeting someone left for home with a transponder still attached to his car. Not only did he do this he failed to marshal, removed his transmitter from the pound before the meeting was over and of course had no intention of helping clear up afterwards. In the light of this we may now re-arrange the placing of the transmitter boxes to restrict access and make it easier to check those that are missing. Any transmitters remaining after the meeting will no longer be taken home by us but will stay in the shed until the next meeting. Don't say that we didn't warn you!

When marshalling please watch your section of track and replace the tracking as quickly as you can. You also need to do this at the end of the race before you go back to the pits.

If you broke your car during the race you still need to marshal. The only exception to this is if you have found someone to stand in for you. If you do please let Ian or I know and remember you need to be at your post until the last car has finished.

Lastly, my dear wife says that nobody would read this all the way through, so if you're still with me here's a brain teaser for you. Correct answers on a piece of paper with your name – I'll pick a winner out of the hat at the spring meeting and you can race for free that day.

There are two brick buildings standing back to back with no windows but a door in each. In the first are three mains light switches labelled A, B and C. In the second are three mains light bulbs that are connected to the switches but you don't know which is which. You are in the first building with the switches but once you come out, you can't go back in. How can you correctly label the three bulbs in the second building? You have no equipment at all other than a set of full size snooker balls, an old Max Bygraves CD and a pen to write the labels with, which are all in the first building with you (and no, you don't prop the doors open with them!). Good luck.

Finally.

To finish can I just say that we always welcome ideas or criticism of the club or indeed this newsletter from members. If you have any views then let us know.

Thank you to everyone who has helped and raced at the club this season to make it such a success. Don't forget this is meant to be fun so do please.....**enjoy your racing.**

Brian      April 2003

## STOP PRESS

08/04/03

KCC who are using the Tunbridge Wells building at the old track have rung to say that we **cannot** continue to use the track short term because they are "now into the building phase at the site". We'll see.....

# TUNBRIDGE WELLS RADIO CAR CLUB

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## 2003 SUMMER SEASON

20 <sup>th</sup> April 2003	<b>**NO MEETING**(Easter Weekend)</b>	
<b>4<sup>th</sup> May 2003</b>	<b>***SPRING MEETING***</b>	
18 <sup>th</sup> May 2003	Round 1	Summer Championship
1 <sup>st</sup> June 2003	Round 2	“
15 <sup>th</sup> June 2003	Round 3	“
29 <sup>th</sup> June 2003	Round 4	“
13 <sup>th</sup> July 2003	Round 5	“
27 <sup>th</sup> July 2003	Round 6	“
10 <sup>th</sup> August 2003	Round 7	“
24 <sup>th</sup> August 2003	Round 8	“
7 <sup>th</sup> September 2003	Round 9	“
21 <sup>st</sup> September 2003	Round 10	“
5 <sup>th</sup> October 2003	Round 11	(if req'd) “
2 <sup>nd</sup> November 2003	Practice	Winter Championship (Indoors)