

# *Classic*

UPDATES & MONTE NEWS



# WELCOME

Monte Carlo is always special; it never seems to lose its magic but this year was extra special as it was the first time back with the Rallye since 2020 and the weather was beautiful. It was while we were down at the port watching the cars coming in to parc fermé that it felt particularly warm. So warm in fact that we had to take off our jackets. Then we spotted the temperature on the sign outside the pharmacy. It was 24°. No wonder we felt hot, but we weren't complaining. We had wall to wall sunshine for the rest of the trip.

In this Monte special edition of the newsletter, we have two great stories of different ways of getting to Monte Carlo. One by a competing crew, Fraser and Barrie Hendrie in their Austin A40 Farina, another by Alan Brisbane and Ken Brown on a road trip to the sun in Alan's latest acquisition, a Triumph TR6.

Also in this edition is an update on the ADO revisiting the front suspension; part 5 of Simon Ganderton's 'K' series 5 speed conversion; the latest event on the ERDC 2023 calendar – Des Cols d'Ecosse and a list of the rest of this year's events.

We were very sorry to hear that Alan Duncan, who many of you know, died on Thursday 23 February 2023. We would like to send our condolences to Catherine, his wife, his family and his many friends. We hope to include a tribute to Alan in the next newsletter. His funeral service will be held at 10.45 on Tuesday 14 March in the West Chapel at Daldowie Crematorium.

Finally I have decided to part with my rally prepared Austin 1300. Full details in next month's newsletter. It would make an excellent Monte car.

Douglas Anderson

[dglanderson1@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:dglanderson1@yahoo.co.uk)





## UPDATE

The ADO which we are building is very much a prototype, so we are testing various modifications to the running gear. Some are major, for example James Barratt's twin cam engine and 5 speed gearbox conversion, others are much simpler but could potentially have a beneficial effect on the behaviour of the car. One such modification is a suspension kit offered by Chevalier Classics.

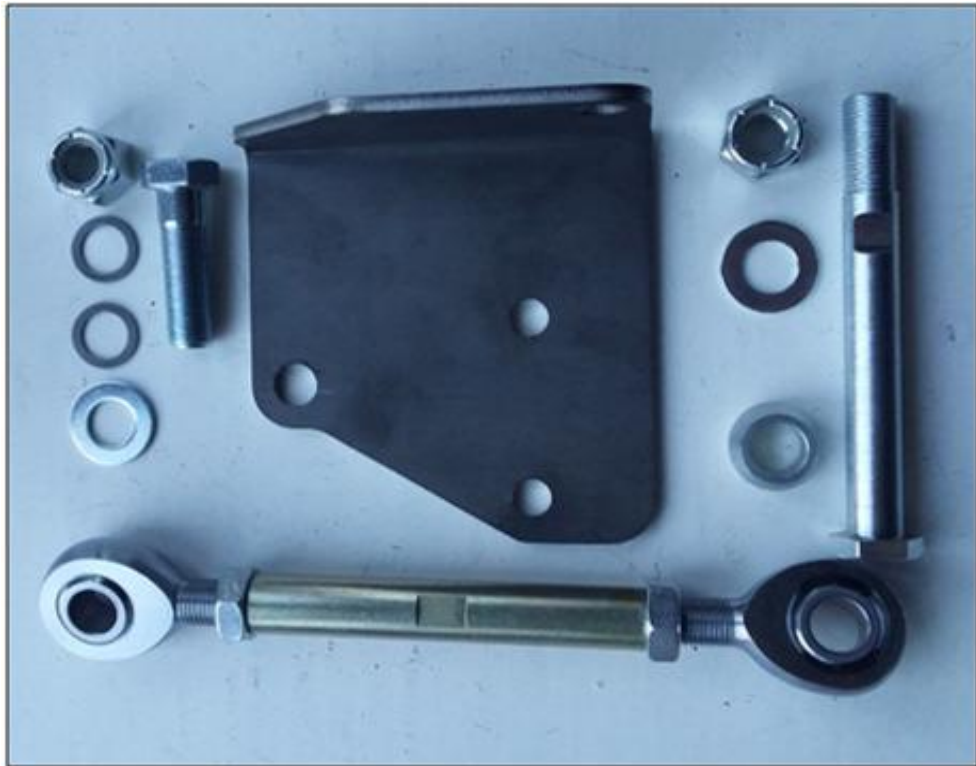
This kit is designed to improve the handling of Midgets/Sprites/A40 etc. It is a bolt on kit which triangulates the top arm of the standard front shock absorber. I have heard some good reports from people who have fitted this kit and they said it made a big difference to the handling of their car. The idea behind the conversion itself is not new but Malcolm Le Chevalier's version has been cleverly redesigned using readily available parts. I have put an order in for one of his kits.

Malcolm introduces the fitting instructions for the kit by giving the background to his idea.

*I have been looking at and pondering triangulation links for a long time, was put off by the cost of the kits on offer. I figured I could create my own kit at a reduced cost by using as many standard, off the shelf parts as possible, simplifying the manufacturing processes and by avoiding welding at the trunnion end (welding becomes a safety minefield and makes future maintenance difficult if you have a problem with the arm).*

*As you will have seen from the pictures, the basic premise is a simple double rod-end link, with a custom bracket and extended trunnion bolt. The only parts that will ever see any wear will be the rod ends, which if they ever do, are an easy and relatively cheap item to purchase and replace. For more details E Mail [chevalierclassics@gmail.com](mailto:chevalierclassics@gmail.com)*





Fully installed link

## **M G Midget K Series 5 Speed Conversion Simon Ganderton Part 5**

### **Propshaft**

With any gearbox change there will be a need to have a custom propshaft and this is one of the more daunting aspects, however because the gearbox output has a sliding spline it is not necessary to achieve any specific finished length. With the gearbox in the car and fully mounted in its final location I measured the distance between the end of the gearbox and the rear axle flange. I then laid the Mazda propshaft on the floor next to the Midget propshaft and set them to this length, I marked them both giving around 250 mm of overlap and cut them to this length such that the join will be right at the flange end of the Midget propshaft.

The Midget propshaft is considerably smaller in diameter than the Mazda one and fits inside with considerable clearance so all that is needed is to sleeve the smaller one to be a snug fit inside the larger one. To do this I cleaned up both tubes and measured them before turning up a pair of appropriately sized collars on the lathe, the intention being to have a collar attached at each end of the overlap. The collars were then fully welded onto the Midget propshaft, this then became a snug fit inside the Mazda propshaft. I marked the position where the collar would be inside the larger tube and drilled a pair of holes, 10 mm or so diameter through it. I then assembled the shafts so that one collar lined up with the end and the other with the holes, these were then welded thoroughly together.

This method allowed for the two propshafts to be joined with a fully welded seam and because of the overlap used they retained their alignment. The result is basically attaching the Midget flange and universal joint to a shortened Mazda propshaft and it worked. I was interested to know if this method was as good as it seemed to be so I did not subsequently have the assembled propshaft professionally balanced. Road tests have confirmed that there is no discernible vibration present.

### **Fuel System**

A fuel injected engine needs a fuel supply which, rather than pump only the actual fuel used, pumps a continuous flow of fuel all the way around the system and back to the tank. This requires some adaptation of the fuel tank to accommodate the pump with its associated swirl pot and the addition of a return line back from the engine bay. I used an MGF fuel pump which came with the swirl pot and the easy push-fit connectors, the intention being to adapt the fuel tank to take a standard pump setup which could be easily replaced if needed.

I started by flushing the fuel tank – obviously, and then cutting the forward right hand side and bottom away to give easy access. I fabricated a new front to accept the MGF flange, this was to be secured in place with a gasket and clamp ring and six M6 screws. The pump is connected to the flange with some flexible pipe so I was able to mount it vertically as it should be but with the flange facing forwards rather than flat as in an MGF. The swirl pot was secured to a small bracket added inside the tank.

With the location set I then welded in a new base to the fuel tank, this was about 25 mm lower than the rest of the tank and is intended to provide a low point for the swirl pot so that if fuel runs low it is able to pick up as much as possible. With everything checked the side of the tank was welded back in place and a crude pressure test conducted. The finished tank was painted and the pump, swirl pot and flange fitted for the last time.



Fuel Tank



Swirl Pot



Fuel Hoses

A pair of new copper pipes were then run under the car with "P" clips to secure them in place. An in-line filter was added, and the push-fit hoses attached to the copper pipe, these then just push onto the pump flange outlets. The fuel pipes arrive in the engine bay at the left hand side, just as the original one did, they are then connected to the manifold with flexible fuel hose.



# MONTE SPECIAL



I am delighted to be able to announce that all of the cars which left from Brooklands made it safely to Monte Carlo. We would like to congratulate all of them, in particular Andy Wolfe and Simon Russell in a Ford Escort who finished a magnificent 37<sup>th</sup> in their first Monte. Lewis and Simon Ayris, in a VW Golf just missed out on a top 100 placing. Another excellent result. The Lancia Stratos from Italy crewed by Jason Wright and Stefano Traverso finished 122<sup>nd</sup> and the Turkish crew of Cengiz Artam and Recep Ali Keydal in a Ford Cortina GT were 227<sup>th</sup>. The story of ERDC members Fraser and Barrie Hendrie follows this page and is a testament to their perseverance in overcoming mechanical problems to get over the Finish Ramp.



# Monte Carlo Rallye in an A40

Fraser Hendrie/Barrie Hendrie



Entering the Rallye Monte-Carlo Classique had been a very loose plan in my head for a few years. Dad as an engineer in his 80<sup>th</sup> year and car enthusiast had watched many of the Scottish starts of the Monte Carlo Rally, and my son has been car daft since an early age with an encyclopaedic knowledge of cars both old and new. The notion of acquiring an old car that we could all work on together and potentially enter the Monte Carlo Classique in, seemed like a good idea.

Last year fate presented an A40 Farina Mk 2 with a for sale sign in the window a mere 100 yards from my front door. A few phone calls and a quick viewing later it was parked on the driveway. The bodywork was reasonably sound for a car of its vintage, but the mechanicals were not great. Over the spring and summer most of the issues were addressed thanks to the A40 club's seemingly magical ability to produce parts from stock or know where to get them and my son's willingness to crawl about below the Austin.

It became evident that the relatively sane Monte Carlo Classique was not going to be available this year, so our only option was to enter its big brother, the



Rallye Monte-Carlo Historique. I reviewed the web site and although it looked challenging, we decided to apply for an entry. Reality hit home when I received an e-mail from the Chairman of the A40 owners club congratulating us on entering what he described as “arguably the highest profile car rally in Europe.” As a result of this e-mail, preparations gained an urgency as we tried to rule out as many points of catastrophic failure in the car as possible. Our initial aim was simply to make it to Monte Carlo and then see how far we could get from there.



The first stage was getting the car to Brooklands for the London start, this was a leisurely drive from Edinburgh which went well. On the morning of the Monte start I changed the wheels and tyres over to winter ones, as per the requirement for scrutineering, only to discover that fully laden our little A40 “squatted” a little lower than it did in testing and the front wing fouled the tyre tread on full lock. Luckily our spare pair of snow tyres were a different brand, slightly narrower and worked (just) so we completed the rally with steel wheels on the front and alloys on the back. We were met by previous entrants at Brooklands who were very helpful in getting the car liveried up and giving us some additional last minute advice before a 4pm start and a short drive to Dover for the ferry.





The concentration leg began in earnest the following day driving from Calais to Langres, Bourgoin Jallieu and on to St Andre Les Alpes. This long drive with little opportunity for more than a few hours sleep was fairly challenging to us as first timers with no real idea of how to pace ourselves. As we got to St Andre Les Alpes, I foolishly started to believe that we would make it to Monaco.



This thought was punished almost immediately as I began to struggle to change gears climbing the hill out of the checkpoint and eventually had to stop. A photograph of the car, which was posted to Facebook by a spectator was the method by which my wife at home knew of our breakdown!



The offending part was a leaking clutch slave cylinder. A passing support crew from another team stopped and helped us to top the clutch reservoir up, bleed it through and we limped into Monaco, late but still in the Rally.





There then began a quest to find a compatible clutch slave cylinder for the car before we were due to head out the following day at noon. With advice and suggestions from our support team back home as well as the kindness of complete strangers we managed to get the part needed from the AutoBMC team with just a half hour to spare before our start the following day. We drove over the start line in Monte Carlo and skipped a few special stages to head straight to the time check point. This gave us an hour to make the necessary repairs in a public car park allowing us to stay in for another day, all be it now in third from last position.



There then followed 3 long days based out of Valence in the Alpes, driving among stunning scenery on narrow twisty mountain roads that were hugely enjoyable to tackle. Each day had 3 sectors to complete that in total took around 8 - 9 hours of continuous driving and navigation. A lapse in concentration or indeed following the hand signals of a seemingly helpful Frenchman at the roadside could (and did!) easily see you going off miles in the wrong direction. Our aim was simply to finish the event, so each day we completed as many of the special stages as possible and then made a run for the time control point.





Many of the roads were so steep that our little A40 was frequently reduced to second gear to make it to the crest, and the notoriously poor turning circle meant there was the odd 3 point turn as well. The weather was kind to us as first timers, so although there were a good few snow stages which add an extra layer of complexity much of the driving was on dry roads. The whole event on snow would be an even greater challenge.







The A40 held the road remarkably well and other than the one minor mechanical issue and a light brush with a parapet that resulted in some cosmetic damage, did not let us down at all. To my surprise even after a week of hard driving, it got us all the way back to Edinburgh exhausted but without a hiccup. As our inaugural rally, we made a huge number of mistakes, and were frequently greeted by seasoned competitors who laughingly recounted their own first experience of the Rally and nodded as they recalled making many of the errors that we had. They were however, without exception encouraging and helpful.







As an endeavour the RCMH is a ridiculous, difficult, challenging event with often obtuse rules and a near vertical learning curve. That said it offers something quite rare in 2023 which is the chance to go on an adventure, where the outcome is not guaranteed before you start. Despite the fatigue, the long days and the many challenges, we had an absolute ball and were well looked after by the Automobile Club of Monaco.



Although we did not have a support crew or vehicle like many of the teams, it was great to see Douglas & June Anderson who organise the UK start there to greet us in Monaco as well as a few other familiar faces. Our thanks are due to Chris Mockeridge, John Varney and Keith Dodsworth back in the UK willing us on, with frequent e-mails and text messages. Would we do it again? .....watch this space!

**Fraser Hendrie**

# Monte Carlo Road Trip in a TR6

**Ken Brown/Alan Brisbane**

After being accepted for the Classique in the 2 years prior to COVID then being unable to enter France for 2021 and 2022 we agreed to go this year, 2023. Although disappointed that there was no Classique we were not deterred and off we went on 24th January. In previous years I have taken a 1500 MG Midget, and Alan an SLK Mercedes. This year Alan's recently purchased Triumph TR6 was to be the shared vehicle. Alan Thompson in his 1960s Triumph Spitfire unfortunately had to withdraw as he lost his co-pilot and Steve Petrie in his MGF due to changing jobs.

The TR6 was tested on the ERDC Côte de Tay run which started at Crieff Hydro and was looked over by Jim Wilson who gave it a clean bill of health. I suggested Alan took a list of spares (just in case) which were packed in the boot around the spare wheel, the boot is so much bigger in the TR6 compared to the Midget. Here is my road trip diary



## **Tuesday 24<sup>th</sup> January**

We drove off from Alan's in Ashgill heading south for Brooklands on the 25<sup>th</sup>. The car performed well, the bonus of the over drive on a 2.5 litre engine with twin SUs meant we achieved 31mpg just under 3,000 rpm. Our hotel for the night was the Walton Travel Lodge. We had been invited to join a school friend to celebrate her 60<sup>th</sup> birthday and opted to take a taxi. Our first trip in a Tesla, boy did it shift. After a lovely meal and great company they gave us a lift back to our hotel in a Porsche 911 soft top, 3500cc and that can shift as well, just a bit more room in the back would have been good. A cracking day, one of several different cars.

## **Wednesday the 25<sup>th</sup>**

We headed round early to Brooklands and once in the paddock, parked up and visited the museum. Although more famous for motor sport it was also a great aviation and aeroplane factory. We met some curators who let us sit in a Hunter Hurricane and the Jump Jet. WOW. There is more space in the Midget!





Outside we looked at the last remaining section of the Concrete track built in 1907 on which cars reached up to 200mph with its high bank and no barriers. As we looked through the car museum, we saw cars some of which are over 100 years old and the Napier Railton which John Cobb drove and developed and won



the land speed record of 394mph between 1938 and 1947. I tried out the Formula one race car simulator. It was very, very sensitive on the throttle and once out of the paddock and on to the 2.75 miles Brooklands circuit it was go, with a lead foot and fingertip touch on the wheel I managed a lap of 46 seconds. What a fantastic experience.

Time for signing on and meeting up with Douglas, June and the others who were entering. June as always had everything ready and the process was straight forward, Douglas gave us our visitor passes. Outside in the paddock we were met with a diverse range of cars and not just from the UK including Andy Wolf in his fully prepped Ford Escort to the father and son in their Austin 40, who were both participating in the full Historic Rally. We would meet up with both teams at several points over the next few days. Start time came and we were all sent off, by Douglas, cheered on by the spectators who braved the rain.





The traffic was very slow getting on to the M25 but once on the motorway we cracked onwards. We had decided to take the tunnel this year rather than the ferry: tunnel 25 minutes, ferry 1 hour 40 minutes. We drove in and almost without stopping or waiting were straight on the train arriving in France at the wonderful Chateau de Cocove just in time for the restaurant and a first class 3 course meal with mini courses in between. Afterwards we caught up with Andy and his team for a couple of pints and a few laughs.



#### **Thursday 26<sup>th</sup> morning.**

We headed off to Reims trying to focus on driving on the righthand side of the road again. Roundabouts are fun! As usual when travelling with older cars we got a wee bit of attention. There was a very strong wind, and it took a fair bit of concentration driving at 130km/h. I became aware of exhaust gases entering the car on the driver's side now and again which on inspection we traced to a grommet in the bulkhead that had popped, too old and stiff to push back in, but sorted with gorilla tape. There was also a missing brass nut on the manifold!

On approach to Reims we headed west to visit the old racetrack where the shell of the buildings still exist and the track is now part of the main road network. The last race was in the 1970s. There is a group working on the restoration and a few of the buildings back from the road have been completed. Once we had a good walk round, we drove the track. I think a few cars must have come off into the fields where there was negative camber. We were more controlled!

Once in Reims, we parked under the hotel very near the city centre, and headed out in the late afternoon to sightsee, eat then watch the Reims Monte send off. As the evening approached huge crowds of spectators arrived to view the cars and watch them being sent off. Once we walked round and inspected the array of cars, Porsche, Fiat, Alfas, Mini, Opel Cadets, MGs, BMW, SAAB, Ford just to name a few, we headed over to the restricted seating area in front of the start ramp where, with the pass from Douglas, we gained an excellent vantage point,

in the cold, but dry evening conditions. Each car was given a full introduction in French, and two young ladies issued the crew a pack which included bottles of Champagne. Local dignitaries draped flags over the wind screens until the point of go. There were many photographs and videos being taken, commentary over the loudspeaker, roaring from exhausts and the tooting of horns all adding to the atmosphere as the cars set off on their overnight drive to Monte Carlo, over 600 miles and not on the motorways.



After the last car drove off, we grabbed a beer at a local pub and headed back to our hotel, the bar tender would have put Tom Cruise to shame in Cocktail with his bottle juggling. We just had a few malts!

### **Friday 27<sup>th</sup> Reims to Monte Carlo, 610 miles/980KM**

This was to be a long drive, so we were up sharp and on the road by 8am to get to Monte Carlo at a reasonable time. The plan was to alternate the driving every 200km with a few fuel stops on the way. When driving in France it is the passenger who needs to lean out of the window at the tolls, relying on the skill of the driver, so when this is not possible and the window is stiff, it can be easier to just get out of the low-lying car as long as you have picked the right lane to be in and not one with a token! The journey was fine, a little high-level snow at one point but nothing to concern us and as we headed further south towards the Med the rain and clouds started to clear. Several castles on the hills and other items to see gave interest to the journey.

As we approached Monte Carlo on a Friday night it was nose to tail, but with an extra bypass switch on the cooling fan being used there was no overheating. I had noticed on the precheck at Ashgill that waterless coolant was used in the TR6, good decision by the previous owner.

After locating the hotel on the second pass, Alan secured access to the underground car park at the back of the hotel, this was a further 4 levels down! A problem with the car was the sensitivity of the horn in the centre of the steering wheel. The occasional blast when people thought you were warning them was one thing but every turn in a concrete car park was something else entirely. Disconnection was discussed.



Once checked in to the hotel, showered, and kilts on we headed down to the Fairmont to meet the teams. A lovely walk passed the casino and gardens where we were met by the doorman of the hotel shouting “All right Jimmy!” and after shaking his hand and we headed in. When speaking to some of the teams from the UK, some who had been awake for 36 hours, one young lady asked if she could have a photo with Alan and myself, so it’s not just the cars, it’s the kilts too. We headed for the bar and enjoyed our 16 euro pints, met Douglas and June, chatted with the A40



chaps who were on the hunt for a clutch master cylinder. After a good blether and a few more photos with the ladies we grabbed a bite to eat and went for a walk before heading to back to our hotel. It had been a long day, and the Rallye re-start was in the morning.

### **Saturday 28<sup>th</sup> January**

After breakfast we walked down to the harbour in the sunshine as the wind had changed 180 degrees and was now coming from the south. With the passes we were allowed into the Parc Fermé where we caught up with the some of the UK crews and a few others. It's a great opportunity to see what can be done to cars and we had a great chat with a MGB GT driver using a Weber carb on the 1800 engine.



We had a fantastic vantage point looking down on the start and watched car after car heading out towards the hills and on to Valence. Cars were now present from London, Reims, Turin, Bad Hombourg, Oslo.





We jumped on board a guided bus tour and toured the town and an hour later we were back in time to cheer the A40 heading out.

It was then a mandatory visit to the ACM shop for Monte Carlo Rally team shirts and gifts, then back to hotel so we could drive one of the later stage routes.



We headed out of town with the roof down, horn blasting at each turn, up into the mountains to the Col De Turini, 1607m above sea level. To say there are several hair pin bends is an understatement and I was hoping the horn would wear out!





The views were absolutely stunning, and the 2.5 litre petrol engine just roared away as we climbed, making Alan happy, well as happy as he could be. When we reached the top, we treated ourselves to an amazing hot chocolate, which also warmed our hands. I drove back down another route, with the snow at the side of the road but it was a pleasure to drive in the sunshine. We drove down the edge of the valley with a rock face on one side and a huge drop off on the other.

Back at the hotel we changed and headed out to an Italian restaurant which was first class, and then walked down to the harbour for a few beers, which turned into 5 and some dancing with the locals, another fun night.

### **Sunday 29<sup>th</sup> January**

Saw us heading up to Valence to catch up with the cars, who would be to the northwest up in the hills. Another great road to drive. We met up just after a stage where the snow studded tyres had been used and crews were changing them over to save the studs. We followed the route to Valence, where everyone needs to stick to the speed limit between stages, as the police were out on motor bikes and cars pulling over competitors.

The late afternoon saw all the cars coming in and getting their time card signed, and several other cars from a local car club also attended. They were a good crowd and there was a great atmosphere.



We headed off to an AirBNB in the old town for the night, taking in the old walls surrounding the town, a local burger shop provided the evening meal, the cheapest meal that week, but was very good. It was an early night for the big drive North in the morning.

### **Monday 30<sup>th</sup> January**

As we needed to be back at work on Wednesday, we decided to break the back of the journey, so we were determined to drive Valence to Calais, onto the train and drive to the North West of London - 680 miles. During the drive the water skooshers stopped working, note to self, when using water from a plastic bottle to throw onto the wind screen, ensure the car is traveling at less than 40mph, failure to comply results in a soaking. The drive was fine, we were getting better at picking the right lane for the tolls, and just got out of the car to pay. Reaching the Travel Lodge after 4 lane traffic on the M25 was a fine resting point, a shower, an evening meal, a pint and bed.

### **Tuesday 1st February**



The final leg back up to Ashgill and on to Edinburgh. This was relatively event free, traffic was busy at Birmingham, and we had a few bottles of water for the windscreen. Might be worth a water pistol in the spares box. Or a spare pump as it would be smaller. Back safe and sound it was a good clean of the car to wash off the salt and road grime. Overall 2800 miles, average 31 mpg.



And finally, almost everyone wants to know about the trip and how it went, perhaps the Classique will be running next year and a few more will try the adventure. Many thanks to Douglas and June for the Brooklands start.

**Ken Brown**

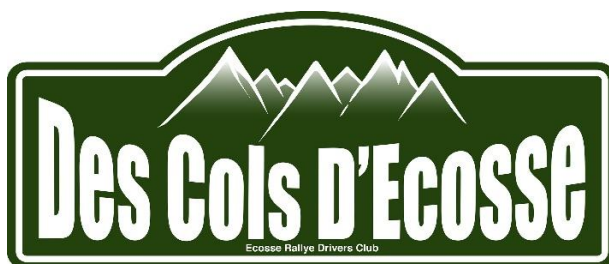


**COULD THIS BE YOU NEXT YEAR ... ?**

## ERDC EVENTS 2023



25 January 2023



25/26 March 2023



2 September 2023

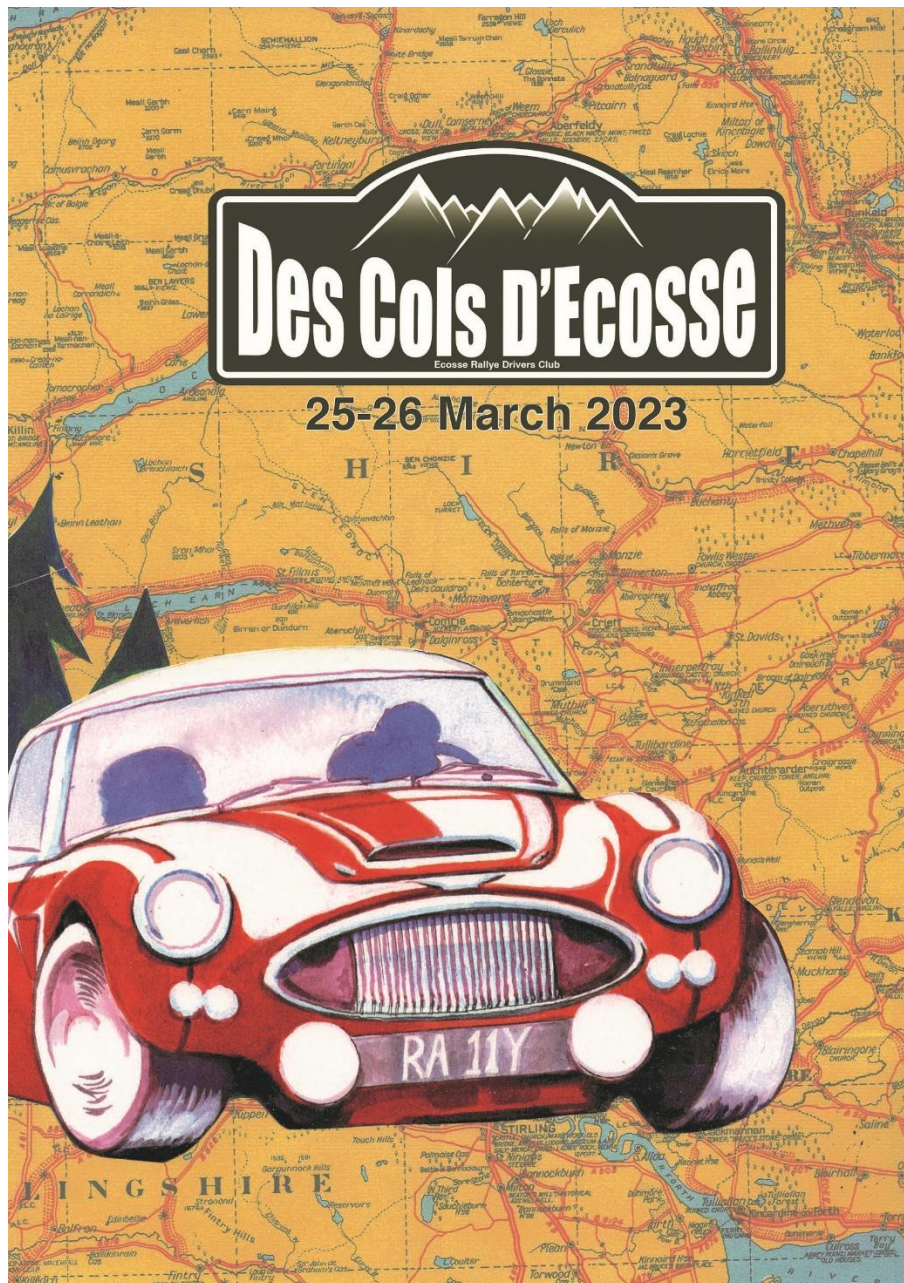


4 November 2023



18 November 2023





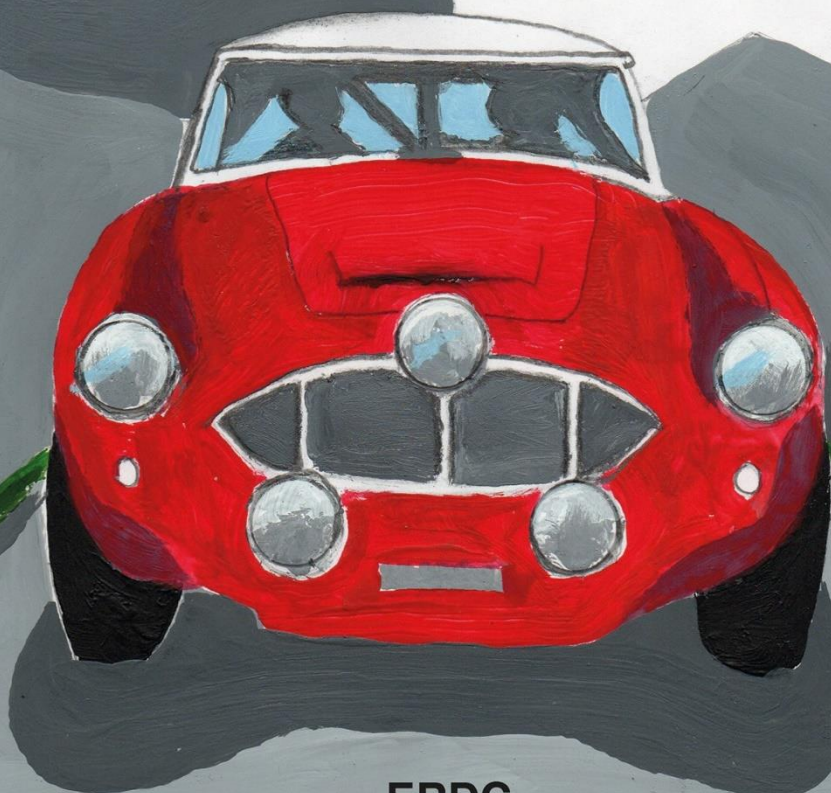
Two day, long distance event on some of the best roads in Scotland. It is an auto distance trial in the tradition of the original Trials. Navigation is by Tulip Road book with the option of navigating some sections on OS maps.

Starting and finishing in Perth, with an overnight halt in Grantown on Spey, this event is back by popular demand. Entries are coming in quickly but with only three weeks to go, don't delay in getting your entry in as the hotel rooms in Grantown are filling up fast. The special deal at the Craiglynn Hotel is £48 per person for dinner, bed and breakfast on Sat 25<sup>th</sup> with a £20 single supplement. Regs and entry form on ERDC tab of the [www.monte.scot](http://www.monte.scot) The entry fee includes a Scottish Breakfast at the Harvester at Broxden after signing on.





**2 September 2023**



**ERDC**