

Record ER turnout for Suffolk classics festival



■ Panoramic view of the 40+ cars that made up the Eastern Region stand at this year's Helmingham Festival of Classics and Sports Cars

■ HELMINGHAM Festival of Classic and Sports Cars saw the Eastern Region on show once again.

The event staged every year in the ground of Helmingham Hall in Suffolk featured over 400 classic and sports cars with many taking part in a con-course run down the drive of the stately home. For those familiar with the Goodwood Festival of Speed, Helmingham is the Suffolk version – a lot smaller but with a very relaxed and laid back feel to the whole day.

ER EVENT

HELMINGHAM FESTIVAL OF CLASSIC AND SPORTS CARS SUNDAY, AUGUST 5

As at Goodwood there is the chance to get up close and personal with many cars on display.

This year the Eastern Region turned up in force with over 40 cars on our stand, with support also from Underwoods, Mazda main dealer in Colchester and their hospitality unit.

An added feature this year was the convoy drive of about 12 miles.

Forty cars left Beacon Hill Services in our very first colour-coordinated run! We must try that again someday...

Getting everyone to Helmingham in the right order was a challenge involving much waving of Martin's arms.

Thanks to all those who came along and made this our biggest and best display of MX-5s, Roadsters (and a Miata) yet.

MERLOT DIARY

Lots has been going on with Project Merlot since the last newsletter, so here is a brief update.

■ JAE, July 22

Project Merlot makes a guest appearance at the UK's premier Japanese car club show and proves a hit with celebrity stunt driver Russ Swift.

■ Helmingham Festival, August 4

Part of a 40 car plus ER stand.

■ Brands Hatch, August 26

Merlot gets it's first experience of the famous Kent circuit – albeit at 30mph.

■ Four-wheel alignment, August 28

Project Merlot visits Wheels-inMotion for a specialist suspension check.

■ Cadwell Park, August 29

Martin, Robbie, Jon Eley and Performance 5's Phil Dixon take on the challenging Lincolnshire circuit nicknamed the 'Mini Nurburgring'

■ Woodbridge Airfield, September 15

Two new track day drivers, Chris Gage and Gary Smith join Ken Ward and Katie Pyle driving on the Suffolk track.

■ Owners Club National Rally, Gaydon, September 16

Displayed on club's motorsport stand.

SPONSOR'S UPDATE

We are pleased to announce that Project Merlot now benefits from a four-wheel alignment by Wheels in Motion.

Main sponsors and supporters:

- Aon Insurance
www.aonprivateclients.co.uk
- EMG Mazda Cambridge
www.emgmotorgroup.co.uk
- Performance 5
www.performance5.com
- Solar Graphics
www.solargraphics.net
- Godfrey Engineering Ltd
www.godfreyengineeringltd.co.uk
- Jonnie5 Designs
www.jonnie5designs.co.uk
- Dandycars
www.dandycars.com
- Cambridge Area Training Ltd
www.cambridgeareatraining.co.uk
- Javelin Trackdays
www.javelintrackdays.co.uk
- DWR Classics
www.dwr-classics.co.uk

Chat about all things ER online

■ Club areas now have their own section at www.mx5ocforum.co.uk. Pop in and check out the EASTERN REGION FORUM under the AREA FORUMS section.

EasternRegion

October 2007

www.mx5easternregion.co.uk

MX-5 OWNERS CLUB

Coordinator Martin Curtis e-mail martin@mx5easternregion.co.uk Telephone 01473 711774 Mobile 07752 750894

Steve's motor outshines opposition at grey JAE

ER EVENT

Japanese Auto Extravaganza SATURDAY, JULY 21 & SUNDAY, JULY 22

■ JAE is the biggest gathering of Japanese car clubs in the UK.

Once again the Owners' Club had a stand which the Eastern Region turned out in force to support.

This was my third JAE, and on the previous two occasions the weather has played a big part in the weekend and this year was to be no exception!

Leaving Ipswich in sunshine we were hopeful that this year we would get the sunny weekend that you would expect in July, but as we got nearer to the venue at the East of England Showground in Peterborough, the sky darkened and the rain started – real 'nuisance value rain'!

Saturday was therefore spent with umbrellas up, then down then up again – although those of us who watched world famous stunt driver Russ Swift perform on damp tarmac right next to our stand soon forgot about the weather. The skill of that guy has to be seen to be believed, and the precision with which he throws cars about is amazing!

And he can do a do-nut, rotating the car seemingly on the spot, at such a speed the thing is almost just a blur!

As evening approached the weather worsened.

Fortunately we had the benefit of three club marquees on the site – although one of these was occupied by the car of Steve Hider, and for the full story of



■ Polished performances from Steve Hider's immaculate Roadster (above) while stunt supremo Russ Swift (right) takes a shine to the Eastern Region's track car Project Merlot.

his weekend check out the current edition of STHT.

After a while it became clear the second marquee had not been well positioned, as a small lake at least about three inches deep formed under it! The largest marquee stayed dry inside, although it did get very crowded in there at times.

I think most people camping on site survived the night, but having to tip toe through a couple of inches of water to get into your tent was not the best start to a good night's sleep.

Most of the tents stayed dry apart from Robbie Marsh's which had puddles in it!

Against all odds the sun came out as Sunday morning dawned and we were able to spend time touring the site and checking

out the other club stands and cheering on the Owners' Club entrants in the show and shine competition.

Steve Hider's was one of two MX-5s selected in Saturday's Mazda heat to be entered in Sunday's grand final where he went on to win best Mazda in show. Lots of us in the Eastern Region know Steve and his white Roadster and the amount of effort that he has put into the car. The win at JAE 2007 confirmed what we all knew many Owners' Club rallies ago, that Steve's car is indeed a real champion.

So JAE 2008 then, it can't be wet for a fourth year in a row can it? Come along and find out, you won't regret it, watch out for details.



National Rally is full of Eastern promise



■ Eastern Region members Steve Alleyne (right), Jamie Tink (centre) and Mandy Huggins show off their well deserved trophies won at Gaydon.

■ IT'S becoming a bit of a ritual now, but once again the Eastern Region came away with top silverware from an Owners' Club National Rally. Congratulations to the following members:

Jamie Tink winner, Best Kept MK2 (for second year running), **Steve Alleyne** winner, Cool MK3 (also his second award in two years), **Mandy and James Huggins** 2nd place Best Kept MK3.

Lou and Andy swap Little Britain for life in Sin City

■ EASTERN Region are on the MOOV. The nights are drawing in and the leaves are beginning to turn, so another summer is coming to end and plans are being made for Christmas (groan). However not all ER members have months of cold and gloom to look forward to – Geoff Walton our former Area Coordinator is now living in Australia, and what's more his stripey Mariner Blue Roadster is on its way out to him aboard a container ship. But it's not just Aus where we have an ER outpost, as regular Eastern Region

members Louise and Andy Baverstock will be resident in Las Vegas by the time you read this. Louise is already planning to buy a Mazdaspeed Miata and join the local club the "Miata Owners of Vegas" (MOOV for short) and Andy is planning to buy a Ford Mustang! So good luck Team Bavers in your new home, and to Geoff, Louise and Andy, remember us as you enjoy the heat and the sunshine this winter. When can we all visit?

MARTIN

Summer sleepover under stars, a fitting finale to Big Weekend

ER EVENT

THE BIG WEEKEND

SATURDAY/SUNDAY, AUGUST 18 & 19

■ BILLED at the start of the year as 'The Big Weekend' with so much else going on we never really got to grips with this event until quite late, but after many changes of plan the final result was indeed big enough! Saturday saw 17 cars leaving Thetford with more joining en-route to take part in a brand new run planned (and re-planned a few times as well!) by Jamie and Clair Tink. This was their first run

and took in many parts of Norfolk previously unexplored by the Eastern Region.

The route was a real triumph and Mr and Mrs Tink's hard work really paid off. The final destination was the home of Steve Hider and Mandy Clayton in Long Stratton where a traditional Eastern Region Barbeque was laid on. To complete the weekend a large contingent spent the night camping on Steve's lawn and by all accounts some people were rather late to bed!

■ Thanks to Jamie, Clair, Steve and Mandy for making the weekend a real success.

'Fenlanders' out-foxed by local hunt on Cambridgeshire jaunt

ER EVENT

FENLAND FIVES' FIRST FORAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

■ SUNDAY morning brought a bright sunny start for 11 Fives to head off on Daz's now-famous Cambridgeshire run.

We wandered through the North Cambridgeshire fens to arrive at the Ramsey comfort stop, with the break giving the first-timers a chance to discuss the pros and cons of convoys.

Leaving Ramsey for the second part of the run, no one could have expected what we encountered next.

First, we joined the 'Tour De Huntingdonshire' cycle race and then the local hunt out with the hounds. Did anyone see the fox?

We completed more than 90 miles, and some of the group did a few more – no names will be mentioned, but they were led by one who had completed the run more times than most.

We all arrived safely at The Swan in Conington for a pre-booked lunch that was enjoyed in the garden by all.

Once again our thanks go to Daz for making all the arrangements.

BILL MEDLOW

Down the Hatch!



ER MOTORSPORT

MaX5 RACING (BRANDS HATCH)

SUNDAY, AUGUST 27

■ ON the last weekend in August the Eastern Region headed down to Kent to the famous Brands Hatch race circuit to watch a day's motor racing.

Top of the bill for us was the MaX5 championship, rounds 13 and 14. Without doubt this was the best MaX5 racing we have ever seen. The last race saw the lead change several times and the eventual winner Paul Sheard (above left) got to the chequered flag by a nose cone, after a sprint to the finish.

Owners' Club members Bob and Ruth Marsh, who always become honorary Eastern Region members at MaX5 meetings, have attended every round of the championship this year and believe

the racing this season has been the best they have seen.

The rest of us certainly weren't disappointed by the thrills at Brands.

The other highlight of our day was when we all took to the track in our 5s for a parade lap of the circuit. Even at a stately 30 mph it's still a privilege to drive on such a famous circuit and our one lap was all too short for most of us. Contributions were taken from all those who did the parade lap and £190 was raised – to be split between the Race Circuit's Marshal's Benefit Fund and Cancer Research, which MaX5 is supporting this year. A huge thanks to the guys at MaX5 for making the parade lap happen again, and to Bob Marsh for helping out with arrangements on the day.

We will certainly aim to do another parade lap next year and I fancy trying Silverstone – it's a possibility!



■ Project Merlot gets it's first taste of the Brands Hatch tarmac on the Owners' Club parade lap. While there's action-a-plenty as MaX5 drivers (top) show what an exciting race car Mazda's baby roadster can be.

Hello, 'ello, 'ello... what's all this then?

ER EVENT

NORFOLK POLICE GALA

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 2

■ A NEW venture for us in 2007 was a stand at the Norfolk Police Gala day at the Norfolk Showground in Norwich.

14 Eastern Region cars attended the show that now attracts entries from many other cars clubs. The Gala Day features numerous other attractions apart from cars and a good day out was had by all ER members who attended.

Thanks to Jamie Tink for organising the stand and rest assured after the success of 2007 we will be asking you to do it again for 2008!

LOOKING AHEAD

TECH DAY 2

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 30

Once again this will be held at Steve Alleyne's house at Woolpit, Suffolk. Check e-mail and forum for all details.

AUTUMN RUN

OCTOBER 20 OR 21

Don't know where don't know when, so watch out for further details via e-mail or forum.

THE CHRISTMAS PARTY

SATURDAY, DECEMBER 1

After last year's very successful Christmas event we are going to return to the Ufford Park Hotel near Woodbridge this December.

Hopefully you should have booked and paid for your meal by now, which is booked for 7pm and will no doubt be followed by some more Eastern Region entertainment, so an evening not too be missed.

For accommodation, contact Ufford Park direct on 01394 383555.

WHERE AND WHEN WE MEET

■ SUFFOLK MEETING (THE MAIN EVENT) The Manger, Bradfield Combust, 8pm, first Wednesday of every month. Convoy run from The Beagle pub in Ipswich, leaving at 7.30pm. ■ FENLAND FIVES MONTHLY MEETING The Three Horseshoes, Abbots Ripton, second Tuesday of every month, 8pm ■ NORFOLK MEETING The Countryman, Tasburgh on the A140 south of Norwich, third Wednesday of every month, 8pm