

# TDC Turbine



*An intermittent missive of random rants, reports and reviews*

www.tdcireland.com

April 2009



## Chairman's Chatterings

Frank Fennell gets pride of place on this second issue of the TDC Turbine, courtesy of his successful running of the Irish Classic Retro 2009. The "13" at the bottom left of the photo was not unlucky and thirty crews enjoyed what turned out to be a very demanding event. The organising team could have coped with an extra twenty entries which would have made the whole enterprise more viable financially.

I referred in the last issue to our extended committee for 2009. They all, where possible, pulled their weight, and more, in connection with the event, whether it was competing, helping or, in some cases, both.

I must mention again Piers MacFheorais, who continues to make the website well worth a visit. To keep the website as vibrant as it is requires continuous input from Piers, for which I am very grateful. Don't forget that you can make your views known here. I would urge you to do so.

Now that the Retro is done and almost dusted it is time to concentrate on the James Pringle Memorial Autotest. I would appeal to you all to make yourself available for this event. I want to make the event one that James would have been proud of.

Joe

## From Bray it started ... ICR 2009

And so all the hard work having been completed, with most of the “i”s dotted and “t”s crossed, TDC’s Irish Classic Retro emerged from its chrysalis stage into the splendid butterfly that Frank Fennell and his team had hoped for.

The thirty crews started arriving at the Ramada Hotel in Bray after lunch on Friday, 3<sup>rd</sup> April. The cars were efficiently scrutineered by Arthur Walshe and Ciarán Nutty beforehand.



This was followed by the documentation gauntlet of Paul Phelan, Eamonn King, Tim Faulkner and Deirdre Gallagher.



The navigators then did some plotting while the drivers got in some posing practice before the action began.

Friday night consisted of just five tests to get everybody in the mood for what turned out to be a very demanding Saturday.



*Morning Coffee at Avondale on Saturday*



*John Farrell waits for the start of Holfelds 1 on Saturday*



### Plotting the Night Leg at the Supper Halt

Sunday's itinerary was more straightforward but no less enjoyable. The final test and refreshments at Joe Reynolds's house served as a fitting finale. The epilogue of the prize-giving dinner back at the Ramada provided the opportunity for backs to be slapped, egos to be massaged and gratitude to be expressed to everyone involved.

I likened the event to a butterfly above, so to persevere with the allusion it turned out to be a *brimstone* rather than a *cruiser*. (For those of you who are lepidopterally inclined, the former is a sulphur and the latter a fritillary!)

*TPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCT*

Following their disappointment last year of not getting going at all, Geoff Hall & Paul Bosdet more than made up for it with victory this year. I was not holding out much hope for their chances when they were unable to coordinate their sweatshirts on Friday and Saturday.



*Paul & Geoff*

However, the appearance of their matching yellow examples on Sunday was sufficient to secure the win. Probably more pertinent was their cleaning of the conventional navigation sections of the Saturday night leg – this section alone was arguably “worth the price of admission”. Their scariest moment was in Holfeld 1. Geoff refused to be intimidated by a ramp to the extent that the Mini’s airborne aerodynamics came into play. The wind tunnel work must have been skimmed on because they suffered a heavy landing on the offside rear wheel. This broke and a brake pipe suffered collateral damage which made their subsequent passage



to the end of the test even more entertaining than usual. Speaking of entertainment, Geoff's "enthusiastic" driving style enthralled the spectators at the first test. After the Saturday supper halt until the final pylon which, thanks to his approach speed of about 60 mph, saw them scatter in all directions. They followed up their broken wheel with a puncture on the first test on Sunday and then drama on the very last test when the diff. began to malfunction. Fortunately, they made it to the end of the test, after which the diff. disintegrated completely. What a difference a year makes.

In an unaccustomed second place (at least he didn't have to make a speech) was Eamonn Byrne accompanied by Anthony Preston.



*Eamonn's fan club*

Eamonn actually failed a test and Anthony had to make three attempts at the Camolin Park regularity – hence their lowly finishing position.

Incidentally, the winners and runners-up penalties of 447 and 473 respectively suggest that the event was rather demanding. It was. When guys as competent as Paul and

Anthony are accruing totals of this magnitude and when everyone from tenth place downwards is in the thousands, it would suggest that a more relaxed schedule be employed in future. It would be more encouraging for everyone, particularly those with limited experience.

In third place with the nicest car, a gorgeous Alfa Romeo Guilietta Sprint, were Dermot Carnegie & Kevin Savage.



It seemed a shame to be subjecting such a beautiful machine to some of the less than billiard-table smooth surfaces encountered en route. Robert Bolton (Midget) and Joe Reynolds (BGT) had been looking forward to a tight battle for the combined Classes 4/6 until the powers-that-be decided that Dermot's Alfa was a sports car and so should join them in the class.



With his Hornet still in hospital, Rob had been looking forward to a weekend away from a multiple Hewison Champion, only to be landed with another virtuoso of the pylons! Dermot & Kevin had a more or less

drama-free weekend, though the left-hand drive made the tests more of a challenge for Dermot.



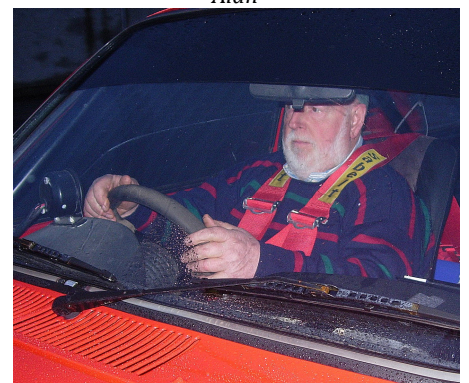
*Iris Carnegie and sundry grandchildren offer moral support*

Unfortunately for his rivals, it seemed to make little difference.

Steve Griffin & Alan Dorman in the Kadett were a fine fourth.



*Alan*



*Steve*



Such is the taciturnity of both of these gentlemen that, apart from one attempt by Steve to demolish a ban during an unscheduled reversing manoeuvre, their weekend proceeded relatively uneventfully.

Fifth were veterans Robert Ganly & Rory Dooley. Robert does have a bit of a reputation for failing a test from time to time but on this occasion he felt his couple of "fails" were undeserved.



Their diff. was making funny noises after Saturday's night leg but intervention from Kevin Savage, theoretical and applied, and Steve Griffin, theoretical on Sunday morning, allowed them to continue to the finish with no further mechanical drama.



Rory did not confess to any navigational transgressions but then I didn't actually ask him if he had slipped up at all!

Frank Lenehan & Cath Woodman were next, in the Cherry. Frank's body was in full working order (shoulder and back) for the weekend (Trish was to report to me on Monday if he had a relapse post-event – she didn't!). Cath got off to an unfortunate start. She inadvertently called the Test 6 directions on Test 5 – easily done as they were on the same page and were very similar. In the overall scheme of things this lapse became an ever-

decreasing percentage error as the event unfolded.



*The fingers are pointed at Cath – one is Frank's but whose is the other?*

Cath didn't enjoy the mixture of jogularity and normal regularity on the first run through Castle Howard. She had to resort to tables. This meant abandoning the cylindrical abacus-like device she normally uses to keep on schedule – this upset her. Frank doesn't normally need much encouragement to go quickly but from time to time Cath is moved to urge him with her catchphrase, "Move it on here, Frank".

In seventh in his father's immaculate Escort was Christopher Evans. While claiming to be a novice (I suppose he is at retros) he did manage to have the best aggregate on both "normal" tests and special tests.



Navigated by the competent Kathryn Millington he (and she) enjoyed their weekend. Kathryn's brother, Gavin,

was sitting with Mark Doran in another immaculate Escort, this one freshly rebuilt. They suffered no major incidents on their way to eighth and, most importantly, the car was unscathed.

Joe Reynolds & Vincent Fagan got around unremarkably. Joe is now driving the BGT more aggressively (I suppose some of Rocket Ron's genes became incorporated, inadvertently or otherwise, when the car was being built) and consequently it is behaving more impressively and efficaciously.



*Joe relaxes before the start*

Fortunately, the navigator's seat is well reclined. This allows Vincent to be as laid back physically as he is mentally! I did seek a quote from Vincent and he had this to say: "My driver was brilliant all weekend. Yes, I do hope to sit with him again. We were followed during the whole event by a little white Midget, but we managed to get rid of it on Sunday by loosening a couple of bolts."

Rounding off the top ten were Ernie Campbell & Davy Johnston in Ernie's very original Cooper S. They have been staunch supporters of retros since their inception so it was great to see them get into the top ten. A former smoker (the most odious), I feel it is my duty to urge one, or indeed the two, of them to attend to their nicotine addiction as they constitute the only crew both of whom are fully committed to smoking – not an image



---

*Davy & Ernie*

---

*JJ*

.....

## Watch what you say

They managed to make it to the

more more so when they were



malfunctioned. A fuel leak in the vicinity of the exhaust manifold was potentially more disruptive, so they decided to retire and conserve their energy for their next outing.

Warren & Jean Chmura did their exotically pink Citroen a mischief on Holfeld 2. Warren just clipped a sapling in a cautioned section. This caused the wing to attack the front wheel which in turn restricted forward motion and steering. Warren unbolted the wing but, despite some judicious application of a lump hammer, a sufficiently effective repair could not be made and they had to head for home.

Owen Whelan & Joanna Doran were discommoded by Joanna's bout of mal-de-navi which resulted in "breakfast, dinner, tea / road interfacing".



Joanna was sporting a very attractive new look at the weekend in the form of a remodelled hair configuration, complemented by a slight change in colour – she, and indeed Nikki, are fortunate to have inherited their mother's good looks. Nikki was sitting with Joe and they were delighted with their 13<sup>th</sup> overall, especially as Owen and Joanna were only 14<sup>th</sup>.

Another Starlet man, Liam Cashman, had come up from Cork to team up

with Eoin O'Curry. Eoin had more or less relinquished the organisational duties he has been responsible for since the event's inception and was navigating for the first time. He admitted to some mistakes but the main thing was that he got Liam around to all of the tests. There was some talk of a seat in the back on subsequent events for an interpreter but as this suggestion, or something similar, has been made many, many times in the past, please feel free to ignore it.

Noel Broderick and Mark McGuire offered some diversity in the Starlet class with their Golf. Unfortunately, the exhaust system suffered such derangement - a combination of noise and fumes - that they were forced to retire. (Noel's derangement is the way he always is and did not contribute at all to their demise.)

Colin Dwyer was at a conference in Galway so Blessington Tyre supremo, Martin Nugent, had Karen Gaffney on the maps in another nice Mk1 Escort. I didn't hear of anything strange or startling about their progress – they did make it to the finish.

Andy Hennessy and Peter Murphy were in Andy's purposeful looking Anglia. I sometimes wonder how Peter gets an opportunity to give directions, given Andy's non-stop garrulity. He must do, though, as they made it to the end. Andy told me that Peter was the best partner he has ever had. He was very impressed that he had found his way around despite a misbehaving Brantz. He admitted that he, himself, needed to improve, particularly by acquainting himself better with the effective deployment of his hydraulic handbrake. Incidentally, Andy is in ALMC and is involved in a membership recruitment drive. The club is putting on a Rally and Performance Car Show at The City North Hotel on Sunday 19<sup>th</sup> April. If you get this before then you might like to go along to see the more than 100 cars. They hope to persuade locals to

join ALMC which now holds monthly meetings in The City North Hotel.

Richard Pain & Richard Jackson were out in Richard P's recently deceased granny's 1980 Triumph Dolomite, adorned with original Maxwell Motors stickers and just "run in" on 25 000 miles.



*Richards, Jackson & Pain*

It did need some attention at the lunch halt on Saturday after a water pipe blew – the repair rendered the heater inoperable thereafter so they had to rely on each other's hot air to keep them warm for the remainder of the weekend. Having used the Dolomite to get out of the extremely competitive Starlet class they found themselves up against equally formidable Sunbeam/Manta/Escort etc. opposition. Richard J reckoned he deserved an award for the greatest number of penalties ever recorded on one time card. He managed to clock up 3250 on Card 7! What made this even more noteworthy was that it constituted only about half an hour of "action". Frank Fennell was sufficiently taken with the history of the car to present them with the Spirit of the Rally award.

John Byrne in the Sunbeam demonstrated his customary magic on the tests. He also worked some magic in his native Wexford with test venues and marshals. He was accompanied by John Ellison from Rathdrum. It was just John E's third outing. He reckons he is starting to get the hang of it. John B's moment of glory came in Castle Howard on Saturday night when a tulip diagram suggested that the road turned sharply right after passing through a gate. In reality it wasn't



John McAssey's Mini's brakes gave up the ghost on Saturday and he and Ben Deithrick had to throw in the towel.

Keith Slowey & Conor Battigan were in yet another Starlet. Despite Keith being more customarily known as Keith Slowly they did well and won the Novice award.

David Ronaldson and Cliff Auld were in David's lovely little turquoise Mini Cooper. On Saturday night they were delayed by locals who took umbrage at the passage of the event. Could the memory of an earlier turquoise Mini have had anything to do with their displeasure?!

pleased to have finished. I felt they deserved an award for being among the few northerners to stay for the prizegiving.

John Maher & Alan Coyle entered at the eleventh hour in yet another Starlet. Alan, who is a competent autotester, was in the hot seat for the first time. He knew it was not going to be easy but was surprised at how difficult it turned out to be. Despite this, they did well enough to win the Beginners' award.

So that's everybody accounted for, I hope. I have already mentioned a couple of the officials but at the risk of repetition Frank Fennell deserves great credit for his control of all the elements which go to make up an event like this – a big dining room table helps!



despite some last minute amendments, accurately for the most part. MI steward Michael Daly manned a couple of points, as well as attending to his primary duties. Club President, Joe Doran, also deserves a mention for taking on all of the printing associated with the event.



Rocket Ronnie Griffin was the quickest club steward in Leinster. Last, but certainly not least, is Fred Bent, whose fabulous route had something for everyone.



*Fred's remaining hair refuses to let go*



**P.S.** Peter Boyd was out and about taking photos (ca. 750 of them). You can find them at [www.peespeed.com](http://www.peespeed.com).



*TGCTGT*

I'm almost finished but there are a few miscellaneous bits and pieces which I felt ought to be brought to your attention.

- o Dermot Carnegie shared the driving with Iris on Sunday night. He drove to the prizegiving and she drove home.
- o Ronnie was going off in Joe Reynolds's jeep after the final test. Joe offered him a spare set of keys. Ronnie looked a little puzzled and wondered why – before the penny dropped. [Ronnie had locked a set of keys into the same jeep on a previous occasion and had to break a window to retrieve them].
- o Both Joe and Mark Doran were quicker than Ronnie in Joe Reynold's BGT on Test 20 despite Ronnie having a few "go"s.
- o Kathleen Reynolds was absent from the prizegiving as she was already busy, baking for next year.
- o Mickey Gabbett describes himself as an occasional member of TDC – he pays his membership subscription sporadically.
- o Ronnie Griffin had a special Brantz in the route setting BMW. This featured mileage on the top line and time on the bottom line. At least this is what FF took it to be when complaining that

Holfeld 2 was taking 85s to complete in response to 0.85 appearing on the bottom line. It sounds better when Ronnie tells it!

- o Despite attending to their needs outside, the fumes from the cigars of Gabbett and Savage managed to diffuse a considerable distance into the hotel at regular intervals during the prizegiving.
- o Somebody pointed out that Steve Griffin was Ronnie's uncle but that it wasn't Steve's fault.

[illegible]

*Some of the pictures I took didn't really fit into the text above so I have included them below.*



## Davy Johnston snubs Cliff Auld



*Clive Evans & FF look on helplessly*



MG corral at Avondale



### Vincent offers Kevin some advice



## Elderly Hooligans



*Geoff Hall, John Byrne and Owen Whelan  
enjoy the sunshine at Avondale*





*Eoin O'Curry and Karen Gaffney compare notes*



*Ernie and Joe chinwag*



*There were a few drops of rain on Friday evening*



*Doesn't Iris shop well for Dermot?*



*Fred Lewis at work*



*Doug Richardson officiating at Charlesland*



*Laura Fagan gazes fondly*



*Loads of cars in Holfelds*

***Thank you marshals and everybody else who helped to make the event the success that it was***



*TRCTDGTDRCTDGTDRCTDGTDRCTDGTDRCTDGTDRCTDGTDRCTDGT*

*TRCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCT*



[illegible][illegible]

*TPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCTPCT*





*This year's TDC International Autotest is its first running as the James Pringle International Trophy Autotest. Because James was such a loyal and helpful club member until his untimely demise last year, we want to make this event one to remember.*

*The venue is the Avonree Hotel in Blessington. Go through the town, if you are coming from Dublin and turn left into the Burgage past Declan Hendrick's place. Keep going – you can't miss it. (Even if you do, this is a cul-de-sac, so you will find it as you retrace your steps / wheeltracks.)*

*We hope to have drivers from Northern Ireland, the Republic of Munster, the rest of Ireland and the UK. The Hewison champion, for the fifth time in a row, Eddie Peterson, will be there, as well as a host of other handbrake heroes.*

*The event, the first of its kind this year, will be run over two days with the International Trophy being run on Saturday, 9th May and an Open Event on Sunday, 10th.*

*The International Trophy will be run to a format similar to that employed on the Ken Wharton. We are looking forward to beating Northern Ireland this time – revenge will be sweet. Those of you involved on Saturday will know who you are. All are welcome on Sunday and we would urge as many of you as possible to enter.*

*Full details, including regs. and timetable, are available on the TDC's website ([www.tdcireland.com](http://www.tdcireland.com)).*

*If you would like to help with the running of the event please contact Ronnie Griffin (0877877833). He would love to hear from you. Don't disappoint him.*