



Colne Valley Classic and Vintage Club Newsletter

The CVCVC was formed in 1989 to encourage interest in Historic, Vintage, Classic Cars and Motorcycles



June 2021



CVCVC 2012 Cento Miglia, Lunchtime Break at Ickworth House

In This Month's Newsletter

- Editor's Space Filler
- Lotus Elan Restoration, Tenth of a Series, part 1
- Guess the Car Answer
- Bits & Pieces
- Members Letters
- Gordon's Goings On

Editor's Intro

I hope you and your families are keeping safe and well. Further lockdown restrictions were lifted this month endorsing that normality is slowly returning. It looks promising that our CVCVC events could commence from June, providing that pubs are open and large gatherings permitted.

Only six-pages this month. In fact, the only full-length pieces are Roger Allen's article on his Elan restoration, Members Letters and Gordon's Goings On.

Apart from Roger Allen's future articles on his Elan, my "Future Copy" file is empty, so your articles for July's Newsletter will be most welcome. I know a few members drove their classics out on "Drive It Day,". There must be a story to tell.

The 2021 CVCVC Cento Miglia will take place on Sunday 11th July. Further information and booking details to follow



We offer a start venue providing a drink and bacon butty, and a chance for you to view all the cars taking part in the event – a route through the beautiful lanes of Suffolk and Essex – coffee and lunch break – and a spectacular finish at a well known beauty spot.

**Stay Safe
Chris Sharman**

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Coronavirus (COVID-19)

In line with our Government's lockdown restrictions, being reduced. The CVCVC have commenced monthly evening meetings and lunchtime gatherings as from June. However, the Committee are monitoring the Coronavirus situation and will keep members informed through the CVCVC Newsletter and Weekly Parish Notices if there are changes to the relaxations of Government restrictions.

Jun 24 Midweek Midday Meet Up – The Crown Hartest IP29 4DH.

Jul 11 CVCVC Cento Miglia – Further details to follow.

Jul 21 Club Evening – 7.30pm. CVCVC Classic Car & Motorcycle Show – The Thatcher's Mount Bures

Jul 28 Committee Meeting – Venue to be confirmed.

Jul 29 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Aug 18 Club Evening - 8pm. Michael Hipperson - Ferraris, Lambos and GT40s - Halstead Football Club.

Aug 26 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Sep 15 Club Evening - 8pm. Michael Hipperson - An Evening with Rosemary Smith - Halstead Football Club.

Sep 30 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Oct 20 Club Evening AGM – Venue TBC.

Oct 27 Committee Meeting – Venue to be confirmed.

Oct 28 Midweek Midday Meet Up - Venue TBC.

Club Information

The CVCVC is open to all enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorcycles

The CVCVC Committee

Chairman	John Goodman
Treasurer	Martin Brown
Secretary	Geoff Broad
Membership Sec.	Roger Martin
Newsletter Editor	Chris Sharman
Webmaster	David Singer
Events Co-ordinator	Stuart Black
Committee	Chris Harman
Members	Bob Chaplin

CVCVC Membership

Club Membership is open to enthusiasts with an interest in vintage and classic cars and motorbikes. Membership details can be obtained from Roger Martin.

The CVCVC and Electronic Media

eNewsletters

The majority of members now receive this newsletter, on a monthly basis, by email. If you receive the black and white copy by post and would like to receive the full colour edition by email, for home printing, then please contact Roger Martin.

Electronic mailings

Regular updates are sent out with reminders of lunch meetings and information on our evening speakers. Additionally, these include more details of forthcoming club events and activities. To receive these, please make sure Roger Martin has an up-to-date email address for you.

Club Articles

The Newsletter always requires articles, so please forward details to the editor on your vehicle's motoring experiences, event reviews, or restoration and technical stories. New feature ideas are always welcomed.

July Newsletter

Would you please forward articles by email or post before Monday 14th June.

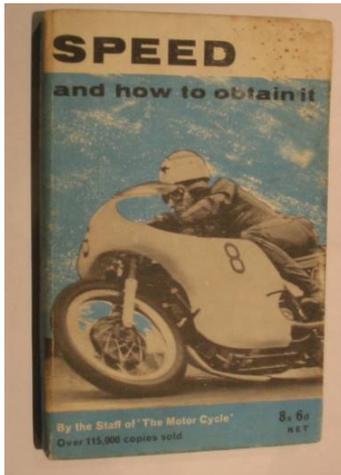
DISCLAIMER

The views, opinions and any technical advice printed in this Newsletter are not necessarily those of the Committee or Editor and should not be taken as such. The CVCVC accepts no responsibility for the results of following contributor's advice.

Editor's Lockdown Filler Piece

Classic Motoring Books

Speed and How to Obtain It



How many of our motoring cycling enthusiasts have or had a copy of the book "Speed and How to Obtain it," published by the Motor Cycle magazine, first published in 1925 and ultimately became one of the bestselling motorcycle 'tune up' books ever. The primary focus of this publication was on 1960's and earlier British motorcycles. My copy is the eight-edition published in 1962 and purchased for 8s/6d in 1965, when I was interested in obtaining a Greeves 250 East Coaster, but it wasn't to be.

However, this tuning book has always had a place in my motoring bookshelf. The book details all aspects of engine tuning, carburation, gearbox, clutch, chains, suspension and tyres. Although highly technical, the text is easy for the layman to read and absorb, assisted by fifty illustrations, produced in the period artist ink technical style.

I had no need to improve the performance of my Triumph Bonneville, but the book is a check list reference to ensure the machine is kept in top condition.

The book is still available as a re-print and a seventh edition hardback copy is offered on Amazon for £749!!.

The Golden Years of "Souped Up Cars"



The late 1950s, 1960s & early 1970s heralded a successful period for tuning companies and specialists, who could modify a standard car, or super tune high performance models to further levels. How many times did you hear

someone say their car had been "Crypton Tuned." However, by the start of the 1970s motor manufacturers had taken the hint and increased their model range to include performance versions, plus many offered their own range of tuning upgrades.

As a sixteen-year-old in 1965, I always assumed my future first car would be a "souped up Austin/Morris Mini, with the usual Stage One head, long centre branch, Peco exhaust etc. In fact, it turned out to be a rather tired Frog Eye Sprite. However, during my six years of ownership the Sprite was extensively modified.

Fortunately living in Ilford there were several local specialists available to modify and supply the tuning components.

How many members can remember the following local Essex companies –

Essex Speed Centre, Seven Kings

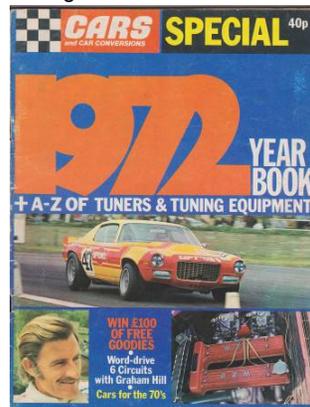
Gosnays, Romford

Wheeler & Sons, Goodmayes

Burton Engineering, Newbury Park

WJ Wells (Fargo), Woodford

In addition, there was a useful breakers yard at the end of Lodge Lane Collier Row.



One of the publications I often re-read is Cars & Car Conversions Special 1972 Yearbook, it's a "who's who" of tuners and tuning equipment: useful for the Sprite. As it happened, all my future cars were kept more or less standard due to the car manufacturers producing improved models. I know Burton Engineering and Gosnays have survived, I am not sure regarding the other companies though.

PBS America – TV Series - Plane Resurrection

Over the past months I've occasionally viewed a TV programme called Plane Resurrection – where expert presenters take you through a series of historic aircraft restorations. Interestingly Tony Ditheridge of Hawker Restorations is occasionally involved, the world's authority on restoring Hurricanes, amongst others his company also restored a 1910 Bleriot XI and Alex Henshaw's record-breaking pre-war Percival Mew Gull.

Many members may remember in January 2013, after lunch in the Lindsey Rose, we visited Tony Ditheridge's Hawker Restorations Company to view Hurricanes, plus classic cars in abundance. The TV series often features Old Warden Aerodrome as well, excellent viewing for aircraft enthusiasts.

Chris Sharman

1966 Lotus Elan Restoration - Tenth of a Series! April 2021

In prior issues of the CVCCC Newsletter I've been describing the story of my 1966 Lotus Elan which I bought in May 2017 and its restoration. The Elan contains more of my DNA than I'd realised and I've been relating a few associated experiences that might be of interest to fellow Classics enthusiasts as well as some technical articles about the restoration itself. This three-part article talks about the build of the Lotus Ford Twin Cam engine which is a classic in its own right.

Elan Engine Rebuild: Part 1

This was to be my first Lotus Twin Cam engine build since the early 70s at Ford Motorsport Boreham. Would I remember the subtleties? Maybe not but I'd got both the Lotus and Ford workshop manuals as well as buying Miles Wilkins' 'Lotus Twin Cam' book, so it was to be steady informed progress.

Many of you know how an engine goes together so I only plan to cover some of the issues, problems and solutions. In prior articles I've mentioned the poor technical efforts of the Elan's prior owners (aka 'Bill the Bodge') in servicing and repairing the car. Was the engine going to be the same jumble? Yes it was!



Pic 1: This is the engine in the car when I bought it in May 2017 - not very pretty. It turned over fine and the dealer told me that it had run. However, after inspection, it was plain that any further running was a dicey proposition, so it needed a full rebuild.



Pic 2: The engine out of the car mounted on the engine stand ready for its rebuild. I believe an engine stand is vital in a full rebuild. On the bench it's just too awkward which could lead to build problems.

The cam cover had been rubbing on the underside of the bonnet because the gearbox mount had collapsed allowing the front of the engine to rise and it all looked awful. In any case it was the wrong type for a Series 3 Elan and very prominent under the bonnet, so it had to be changed.



Pic3: The finished restored engine before testing. It's mounted on 'skis' which make it easy to move around and protect the sump and its gasket.



Pic 4: The engine installed in its new Lotus replacement chassis

The engine, despite some real issues was basically sound and did come back to 'as new' after quite a few hours of work and this is the story of some aspects of that work. The build principle was to replace any part that needed replacing and not to compromise. The engine build was to Lotus Special Equipment spec with a few reliability upgrades. Machining and dynamic balancing were all outsourced.



Pic 5: The engine block's Ford casting numbers identify it as an early crossflow with a four-bolt flywheel and rope crank seal.

I knew it was not the original engine, there were no Lotus numbers and it had the incorrect later cam cover but in all other respects it was of the period. I discovered it was to the Elan's Special Equipment spec. with a higher compression head, different cams and a tubular performance exhaust manifold.



Pic 6: The 'N' marking in the cylinder head's central well. This indicates a high compression head (10.3:1)

The alloy twin cam cylinder head had an 'N' marking indicating a higher compression ratio, but closer inspection revealed the head to be from a Lotus Europa. The identifier was the provision for a cam driven

alternator although the engine now uses a conventional crank pulley alternator drive. The head was certainly post 1968 which was when the 'N' marking was introduced and it would have originally had Dellorto carbs not the 40 DCOE Webers that it ended up with. No real big issue though because in all other respects it was the same as for the Elan. There was very little corrosion in the head and importantly no cracks so things looked hopeful that it would restore to A1 condition.

The only major problem with the head was serious valve seat recession evidenced by some very thin tappet shims. The head cleaned up well with a 0.010" skim. Then new seats, new valves, new springs and guides were fitted, all of which did bring it back to 'as new' condition. A combustion chamber volume



check indicated a 10.5:1 compression ratio, up slightly from the 10.3:1 spec for the Special Equipment (SE) engine.

Pic 7: This is the finished head after machining at Thornton Engineering.

I'm always a bit nervous having new valve seats put in. Any errors on the interference fit can lead to catastrophic engine failure. I worked with Thornton Engineering in

Stondon Massey near Ongar on all this and the other machining and they did a great job. Burton Power supplied the bulk of the engine parts. Both concerns are thoroughly recommended.

The thermostat cover sits on the head and is a regular Ford part, but it was corroded and cracked beyond easy repair. Amazingly, this proved difficult to source at a sensible price and a replacement 'billet' machined item in such a visible place would not be ideal. However, a good friend came to the rescue off an old Fiesta engine in the back of his garage! The moral of this tale is never throw anything away! I'm not sure Mrs Allen agrees with me though!!

The initial inspection of the twin cam installation in the head revealed that 'Bill the Bodge' had fitted the odd bolt instead of cam cap studs and huge washers which didn't seat square on the caps and one edge rested on the cam caps! Fortunately, the caps were OK but why oh why was this done? I can appreciate that cost can be an issue but nine times out of ten there is a satisfactory cost-effective way of doing a decent job. In this case it was sourcing a couple of new studs and a set of washers, hardly expensive! End of rant!! The cams were OK but not perfect for the new followers so my friends at Piper Cams in Folkestone undertook a regrind to Sprint spec. I always like installing new surfaces against new surfaces, never an old surface on a new if it can be avoided. I also use cam lube and Graphogen to help on initial start-up particularly, as in this case, start would be a bit later than build completion.

More to follow in Part 2 next time.....

Roger Allen

Guess the Car Answer – Cunningham C5-R



Photo from Chris Harman

Correct answers from Philip Frogg Ian Johnson, Richard Stanbridge and John Goodman.

American Briggs Cunningham constructed the 5C-R to race and win the 1953 Twenty-Four Hour Le Mans race. He had previous experience of building and racing Le Mans cars with reasonable success.

C5-R Specification – Steel frame tubular frame, aluminium bodyshell 2540mm wheelbase, 1370mm track. Weight 1150kg.

Chrysler 5425cc V8-hemi-head engine developing 310bhp, using 4-Solex carburettors, 5-speed gearbox.

Solid front axle and live rear axle, both with torsion bar suspension. 430mm dia. Alfin drum brakes, cast magnesium wheels.

For the 1953 Le Mans Race, Briggs Cunningham had calculated that his C5-R car producing over 300bhp would out-power the rival Ferraris, Jaguars and Mercedes. Experienced racers John Fitch/Phil Walters shared the C5-R averaging 104mph, far higher than the winning 1952 Le Mans Mercedes 300SL. However, the Jaguar C Types handicapped with 218bhp engines, had the advantage of Dunlop disc-brakes resulting in the C Type of Tony Rolt/Duncan Hamilton winning four-laps ahead of the C5-R, which finished third behind the second place C Type of Stirling Moss/Peter Walker.

Briggs Cunningham competed in future Le Mans races in his own racing cars, with considerable success, but never achieved a win.

Dinky Toys catalogued a Cunningham C5-R model for many years in the 1950s, a very popular choice.



*Chris Harman's well played with, Dinky Toy's C5-R model
Chris Sharman*

Bits & Pieces

How good is your vehicle recognition?
Guess the cars from the headlights –



A Citroen 2CV



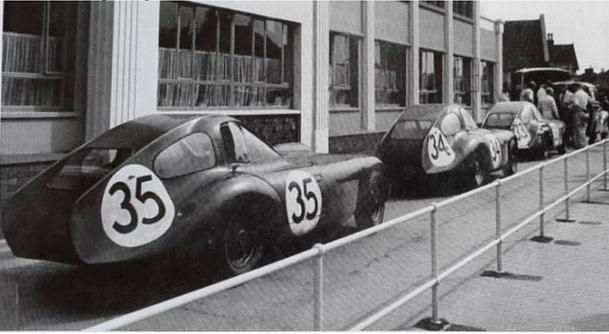
B MG F



Correct answers from Philip Frogg, Ian Johnson, Graham O'Conner & Richard Stanbridge.

With thanks to Chris Harman for supplying all the headlight photos

Unique photo of all three 1954 Bristol 450s



Following on from last month's article on the Bristol 450 sports racing coupes, Roger Martin has unearthed this rare photo of the three Bristol 450s that won their class and the team prize at Le Mans 1954

Members Letters

Dear Chris

The latest CVCVC Newsletter has provided yet another crop of memories, the first of which is Leigh Sebba's reference to his Ford Sabre 'special'.

As I have mentioned in the past, I had joined Thames Estuary Automobile Club (TEAC) in 1964 and was amongst the many members who, not necessarily being able to compete at the time, were active marshals within the club. However, in May 1966 five of us decided to form the Sceta Racing Partnership (the name derived from the initials of our middle names!!) with the intention of competing in autocross and to this end we acquired an EJS Special which was towed from Wembley Park to Southend! The three attached photographs not only depict this car soon after its acquisition but also my fellow 'partners in crime' and I make no apologies for their youthfulness or scruffiness. Believe it or not, with the exception of one who sadly passed away a few years ago, we, and our wives, still maintain contact. By the way, the third photograph also shows the Ford Anglia 105E into which we 'shoehorned' a 1340cc engine from a Ford Classic and in which I navigated on some "plot 'n' bash" rallies. Unfortunately, despite our best intentions, our foray in autocross never materialised, either with the EJS Special or the Bellamy-tuned upright Ford 'Pop' which followed.



EJS Special

One of the many specials marketed in the 1950s

Moving on, I also enjoyed the short 'snippet' on the Bristol 450 coupe and I, too, had the Dinky model. It's the old adage of "I wish I had kept that" although I thought Stuart has made a splendid job of the restoration of his model of the police-liveried Ford Zephyr Estate Mk.2. I do not recall this particular model so I guess that it must have been quite rare even in its time. Incidentally, and reverting to the Bristol 450, following the ongoing recreations of the BRM V-16 and Vanwall GP cars, already recorded in the motoring press, I read recently that somebody also has plans to build a recreation of the Bristol 450 with the intention of returning to Le Mans (presumably the Classic) but I am unable to recall as to exactly which magazine(s) carried this story.

Finally, and I'm afraid that we are back to aviation, the Rollason Condor in part 8 of Mike Crees's excellent history of Rolls-Royce was, of course, originally designed and built by Roger Druine of Turbulent fame. The first Condor flew in 1956 and Rollason Aircraft & Engines, based at Croydon, then took over the manufacture in, as Mike says, 1961. Rollasons had also cornered the market in redundant Tiger Moth airframes when they were no longer being used as training aircraft by the RAF and I fondly recall the photographs taken at Croydon Airport of the Rollasons hangar packed floor to ceiling with Tiger Moth fuselages stacked against the wall and wearing crudely painted civilian registrations applied over the military markings. Sadly, only a fraction of these aircraft ever made it to the sky with most being eventually scrapped or burned. The Condor in the photograph, G-ATVW, was an occasional visitor to Old Warden so it may well have been based in the South East at one time, but *Victor Whisky* now enjoys her exercise from a farm airstrip in East Yorkshire.

**With best regards
John Goodman**

A most comprehensive letter from John. It's amazing just how many "Special body, chassis and components were marketed in the 1950s for DIY sports car builders. The introduction of the Austin Healey Sprite and Austin/Morris Mini, more or less killed off the "special" manufacturers. A few companies did progress to producing complete cars – Buckler, Falcon, LMB, Rochdale, Tornado, but they too eventually ceased production.

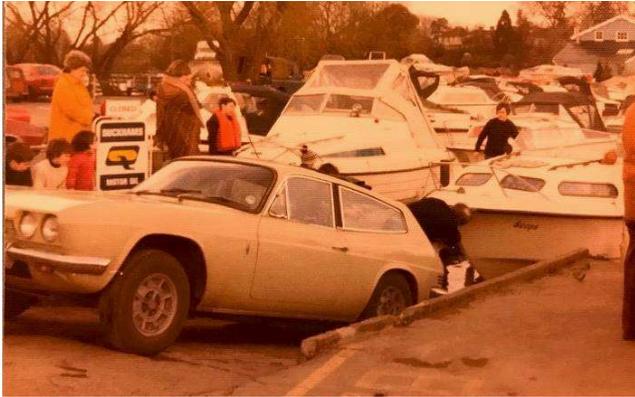
Just think, with endless hours, a bucketful of money, a fully equipped workshop, John's EJS Special could have turned out similar to the following model!



Race proven 1956 Coventry Climax powered EJS valued at over £180,000. An advanced special for the day, with a Coventry Climax motor, bespoke chassis, and Microplas Mistral bodysell. ED

Hello Chris.

Further to my Scimitar article, my sister found the attached picture.



Not a particularly good shot of my Dad's Scimitar but it does show how versatile the model was - in this instance launching my parent's boat on the River Thames at Walron Marina.

One day a fast and sporty grand tourer, next day a load-lugger!

*Kind regards
Roger Martin*

Chris

The "Guess the Car" is a Cunningham C-5R and amazingly I have had one in the garage awaiting a full restoration for many years.

See *attached Dinky photo*

Reliant Scimitar GTE

Also, in response to Roger Martin's article I had a really nice 1974 Scimitar in the late 1970's and 1980's as everyday transport too and it was used for towing my Austin Ulster around the country to compete at race circuits and Hill Climb venues. It seemed that half the VSCC paddock also used a Scimitar to tow their competition cars.

Roger mentioned how torquey they were and I have had a specific experience which illustrated that characteristic when I towed an Austin 7 Chummy on the trailer through London during a weekday morning (pre M25 completion) when the gearstick broke at the bottom, a common occurrence for the SE5a Scimitar, leaving a very small stub which I just managed to clamp some Molegrips onto. After causing traffic mayhem in Kensington High Street, I couldn't change gear but managed to snick it into 3rd and drove on to Aldershot using only 3rd and overdrive plus slipping the clutch from rest, the car seemed *reasonably* happy too.

It could achieve 29mpg on a run not towing and was extremely reliable. An excellent car.

I suppose a Ford 3 litre Capri would have similar performance but wouldn't break the gearstick!

*Regards
Richard Stanbridge*

Gordons Goings on May 2021

Once more its Gordons not much going on again. I did take the 911 for a ride around on the "Drive It Day," looking for the Porsche Club at Tiptree, only to find out later there are Tiptree Tea Tooms at Writtle! A solo motorcycle ride for the Air Ambulance is also scheduled.

Its looking like it will be June before clubs get a chance to socialise. Let's hope nothing derails the easing of restrictions

6

here. With all that is going on now, since the last relaxation, its not guaranteed that the situation here will carry on improving. Any idea that the virus has been controlled is a bit optimistic.

Ironic that some countries boycotted our vaccine when it could have been welcome elsewhere. Compared with our friends in Holland, Belgium and Spain, we have been treated well, despite all the governments shortcomings.

It's that time of the year when we all get our cherished vehicles out, and Essex County Council finds another batch of tar and chippings to coincide with it!

I saw that battery recycling is being raised as an issue, as they reach the end of their projected life in the electric and hybrid cars. It's difficult and dangerous, so it's bound to end up being done in similar places to the ship breaking activities far away from the shores of those producing them. The only plus for the UK, is that as we are almost devoid of the materials to make the batteries in the UK, dismantling the old ones would give us something to work with. Being held to ransom by the Arabs over oil for the last seventy years hasn't taught us a thing!

Tesla moving to China was a calculated move. The danger of vehicle collisions with batteries and worse still, tanks of liquid hydrogen, hasn't been addressed so far. The fire service have access to records of all current vehicles on each fire engine, so they don't put themselves in danger when cutting people out of crashed cars. You may have noticed the reluctance of marshals to rush to damaged hybrid cars at race meetings. You can't blame them!

It's a bit worrying that "driverless cars" are to be allowed onto our roads. That's really good news for us motorcyclists! Will they automatically say "smidsy"? And there have been accidents where drivers have decided to get out of the driving seat of these sort of vehicles for some reason best known to themselves. The mind boggles!

Burning wet wood is now a criminal offence. It's clear that the distinction between wet and unseasoned has become confused by experts, who probably can't strike a match! Anyone who manages to get a wood burner to deal with unseasoned wood is doing well. If you have a small one, like ours, anything remotely like that will put it out! If you have seasoned wood that has been dampened by rain or similar, it is easily dried by stacking it by the wood burner for an hour or two. If you do that with unseasoned wood, it's not going to solve the problem. It's not rocket science! Brought up in the sticks, every household in the village had a wood stack and a crosscut saw. I spent most winter Saturday afternoons on the end of ours! They all knew what needed to be done to keep the fires alight. No one tried to burn unseasoned wood. Our education system has clearly failed a lot of people.

I wonder what the next thing about our lifestyle will be eroded next? It's not as though we are not paying through the nose for every bit of energy we use, including paying plenty of tax, often out of already taxed income. One police chief recently mooted the idea of making motorcycles carry a tracker, so they could monitor speed and location. Fortunately, it was quickly withdrawn as the motor cycling lobby began to make a few noises. In my view, all police vehicles should be fitted with a black box! I guarantee that would curb some dangerous driving and cut down the number of people killed each year.

The Formula One season is settling into to a familiar pattern, and whether you are a Lewis fan or not, he is clearly the class of the field, and Red Bull getting closer to Mercedes seems to incentivise him even more. Moto Gp is a bit less predictable, with Quartaro having problems with his right arm, dropping him down the field at the last race. Marquez managed a 9th place at Jerez so let's hope he regains form. Rossi could only manage 17th. Moto 2 and Moto 3 are well worth watching as well.

World Super Bike is starting in May at Aragon. Just a couple of hours from our place in Spain, over a spectacular mountain range. Real 911 territory. Shame we can't get there to see it! Le Mans may be possible but September is bad timing for my boys so I might have to go on my own!

I hope to see you all at the June lunch meeting so you can all celebrate my birthday! Gordon

Gordon Levett