

# The **E-BLOWER** Vol. 33

**The un-official voice of the WPMC.**

**Managing Editor: IM Nobody. Chief Sub-editor: Roamin' Robin Emslie.**  
**(F)art Director J Colin Brown. Bike editor: Dave Abe Abrahams.**  
**International co-respondent: Cedric Selzer. War correspondent: Jo King**

## **Editorial:**

Greetings Guys 'n Gals – after our period in a near waterless wasteland, isn't it great to see our new rallycross banking now glowing in a shade of green, brighter than a R10 note.

OK, never mind the weather, let's discuss motorsport. Because firstly, Des Easom attended the South African Guild of Motoring Journalists, annual Motorsport Awards ceremony in Joey's recently, where he accepted the coveted Colin Watling Trophy on behalf of our club.



*Seen here with the trophy, Des is flanked by Colin Watling's mother Trish and Bernard Helberg Jnr. the chairman of the Guild.*

*Des and his wife Helga were accompanied to the Guild function by their daughter Kim (20), who had been suffering from cancer for some time. Sadly, she passed away shortly after their return (see the Obituaries on the last page of this e-Blower).*

-----

As far as the award is concerned, we were judged worthy recipients for our outstanding achievements behind the motorsport scenes. This included more than just a list of successful motor race meetings we promoted last year. Another prominent event, with Des at the helm, was the second Killarney Motor Show. This after the resounding triumph of our first showbiz venture a year earlier.

But we really nicked pole position when we staged the hugely successful final round of the world rallycross championship (WRX). Now we've already begun with the preparations for this year's follow-up. It's on the November 24 & 25 weekend, is again the final round of the title chase and from an international angle we're really in exalted company this time.

As far as other events at Killarney are concerned, while the crowds haven't reached the peaks of 2017, this is apparently a universal world situation. In fact, we're far better than most (see, "*Where Have all the People Gone?*").

But make no mistake, while we report here on what sometimes sounds like panic attempts by some promoters to lure the fans back, we're certainly not suggesting any similar measures should be attempted at Killarney.

However we do ponder about what went wrong in other areas -- and what can be done about it.

Closer to home, we have a short list of folk we think deserve mention, but not necessarily for winning – well in the case of Julian van der Watt, not yet anyway. There's even a restaurant review (of sorts), edited by Alain Menu.

And please don't forget our imminent **Annual General Meeting** at the Clubhouse at 20.00 on Thursday June 28.

Finally, the following **URGENT** message is the most important item in this edition.

---

# **URGENT! WE NEED YOUR HELP.**

Because, although our city council is publishing the way the water consumption has fallen dramatically in the drought stricken Western Cape – while claiming it is still far from sufficient -- the situation at here Killarney is quite the opposite.

Yes, although we keep removing taps, check for any leaks and close whatever non-essential means of liquid transmission we can, our figure remains in an upward spiral.



*This is our intrepid art director standing on the dry dam surface, at the foot of the seemingly unnecessarily high pump station at the Theewaterskloof dam.*

What makes it worse is the increased tariff introduced by the City to compensate for the lower volume they are having to charge other consumers. As far as we are concerned that's a double whammy – more water being used, at a higher price per litre!

Please bear that in mind when you're here.

Yes, we have had a few showers, but not nearly enough to make any reasonable difference. What's more, the far-lookers in our society are now claiming that next year is going to be even worse.

## **A warm welcome to our sponsors.**

Because, while it's great to retain the overall support of Wingfield Motors and Radio KFM, with continued support from Spirit Motorcycle Accessories, Jaguar N1 City and Rose Foundation, we're also extremely pleased to welcome several new circuit and category backers this year.

Specifically, they include Pirelli Tyres (Sports and GT cars), Mike's Place (Clubman Saloons), Suzuki South (Superbikes), RST Trac Mac (Clubman and Powersport motorcycles). Burly Pro (GTi Challenge) and Shatterfix (Fine Cars).

Then there's get/Worth, a group that came on board as the headline sponsor of our recent Extreme Festival. This, under the guidance of Ashley V8 Masters competitor Mark Ridgway.

The Cape Town Porsche Club have also moved in and taken the naming rights of the main straight and FASTRON has taken naming rights to Cape Town Corner.

So, as a small token of our appreciation of all the support and as some names may be new to you, we are going to be featuring one of them in each future issue.



## **And don't miss this one!**

Of course, the rallycross organising this year, should be a whole whack easier – with lower stress levels and less organising expense. After all, the circuit is in place and everyone involved knows what is expected of them. Yes, there are going to be changes and improvements. Hopefully it will have rained and the banking is then certain to be well grassed (well that's the theory anyway).

Then the list of what you can and can't bring in, will be more realistic. Folding chairs for instance, will be permitted. We now also have a clearer understanding of the working style of the IMG, the world series organisers.



*Our world rallycross meeting. Note the crowd.*



*Danie van Niekerk on a test run.*

It's interesting to note how quickly Killarney has emerged as an experienced and highly successful world championship promoter. The FIA rated our event fifth best, while the IMG, who control the series and are closer to the action, had us in second place, on the list of 12 international events.

By contrast, this year it's the turn of highly esteemed and well established F1 venues like Great Britain's Silverstone and the Circuit of the Americas in the USA, that are getting ready to start as the new kids on the block.

In fairness though, while we haven't heard much about the Texas venue's plans, the guys at Silverstone have the advantage of huge parking and camping areas, adjacent to the circuit. They staged a major 3-day festival during the recent British bank holiday weekend.

In addition to the racing, there was all the fun of the fair including concerts featuring the best in British live music. A variety of other entertainment included nonstop action from indoor rallycross simulators, with lucky contest winners being able to claim a passenger lap around the track in a real WRX car. They also claimed to have offered the best in Street Food from around the world.

Incidentally, although the "best in British live music" included the Ministry of Sound, Dizzee Rascal and Lethal Bizzie, I still prefer Tom Jones.

But it's a long way from Table Mountain and you have to get there first. After that, a single adult ticket cost about R2050. You were allowed to camp, but that was another cost.

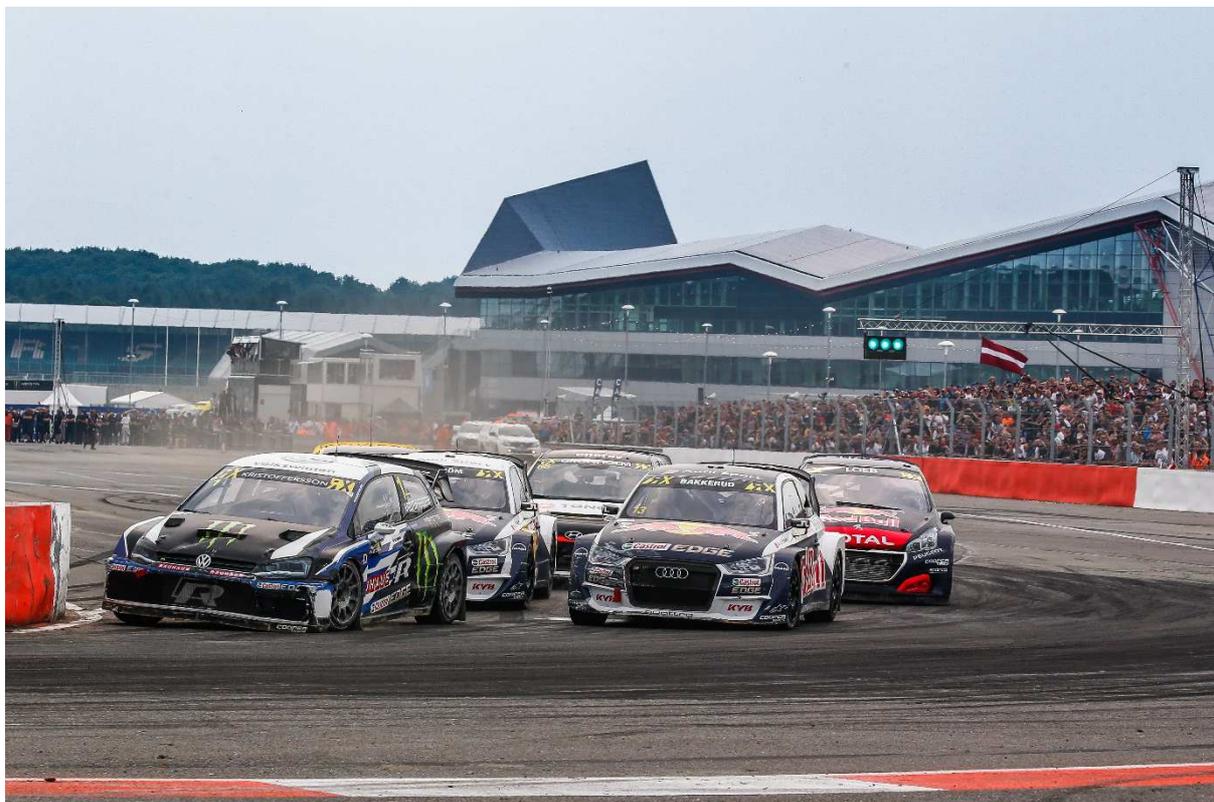
---

## **Silverstone's WRX was a Winner.**

As we go to press comes the news that the inaugural British Speedmachine Rallycross GP at Silverstone was a winner. And good luck to the guys involved, who worked their butts off to ensure it's success.

Of course (and quite rightly), they took advantage of the circumstances. It was a genuine festival, held during a rare three-day bank holiday weekend, and they laid on a far greater variety of entertainment than is available during the F1 grand prix at the same venue.

That apart, the permanent facilities there are magnificent, with the unique and prestigious clubhouse that borders the RMX track, a standout feature. About the size of the new PnP hypermarket in Table View, it has lifts to all the floors. Outside there is no shortage of parking in close proximity.



*The magnificent Silverstone Clubhouse, seen here in the background during the British round of the World Rallycross Championship.*

But while its restaurants offer 5-star catering, visitors have to adhere to a strict dress code. Among the no-no items are shorts, T-shirts, short playsuits, caps, frayed or dirty jeans / trousers, slip slops and sandals.

And with top British drivers in action among the international front runners, the event appealed to the Union Jack waving patriotism of every true Brit.

Finally though, I'm one-eyed and I can't help (proudly), figuring that their claimed attendance of 27,250 over 3 days, was about on a par with the more than 27,000 we had here at little old Killarney over 2 days, for our championship round last year.

## **Where Have all the People Gone?**

Despite the success of the WRX events, sporting crowds generally, seem to be falling away big time. The opening day of the 1<sup>st</sup> **cricket** test in Durbs, between our Proteas and the ball scratchers from Oz (remember, they're rated the second and third best cricketing countries in the world), only attracting 3,700 spectators.

**Rugby's** Super 15 competition that features the Stormers and other top teams from five countries, has problems that are emphasised by the few BOS (bums on seats), we see in the stadiums. It also resulted in headlines like this, in the Canberra Times:

*"Australian rugby has shown how far it has fallen, with a shocker crowd in Canberra on Saturday."*

And they didn't have to contend with a drought – or a gang of Gupta's.

While the United States has the same problem, at least the NFL controllers can claim that despite a 10% drop in viewership, **gridiron football** remains the best game in town. **Baseball** on the other hand, peaked in 2007, then had a dramatic decline in 2009 from which it has still not recovered. While reasons offered for this include the exorbitant cost of

admission tickets, the organisers in one red-neck area are also claiming that the fact that fans who do attend, are predominantly – **old, male and white** -- makes it even worse.

But it's the formerly invincible NASCAR guys who are really accelerating downhill, with a recent banner headline in the SBRforum.com, claiming that: "**NASCAR is Dying.**" The opening para then continued:

*"NASCAR is in the middle of a slow death roll. The races are no longer exciting. Nobody shows up. At best the seats are half empty, whereas just 5 years ago they were routinely sold out."*



*Empty grandstands at NASCAR's Indy, Brickyard 400 meeting.*

Things have become so bad over there, that the famed Charlotte Motor Speedway has demolished one of the main grandstands. Last year, the gate takings at the Texas Motor Speedway dropped by more than half -- from \$188,000m. to a worrying \$90,6m.

Of course F1 is also beset with dwindling TV viewership, as well as poor live attendances. Fernando Alonso was quoted as saying that F1 has taken a wrong turn. Jenson Button ruefully recalls the days in the early 2000's when

F1 cars were powered by 3-litre V10 engines that produced 900 bhp and revved to 21,000 rpm -- and cites that as one of the reasons for the downturn.

Although the Chinese GP was one of the better F1 events, the swathes of advertising cover failed to hide the empty grandstands. The more recent Azerbaijan GP street race (which is another of Bernie's con tricks), was even worse, with what appeared to be very little in the way of spectator facilities..

-----

## **So what can be done about it?**

Well, the Americans have always considered themselves the great showmen and they've been shooting the lights out in their attempts to up the ante. These include thoughts about whether:

- \* 4-hour NASCAR races are too long and are contributing to the boredom.
- \* Considering ideas about splitting them into two or even 3 separate events.
- \* At some venues, if a given percentage of tickets are not sold 2 days before a race meeting, admission prices are reduced.
- \* Other circuits have added sushi and a variety of exotic international snack food to their traditional hot dog and burger offerings

So far, none of them seem to be having much effect.

NASCAR fans still reminisce about greats like Richard Petty, Dale Earnhardt and Junior Johnson. And with "wonder-woman" Danica Patrick and Dale Earnhardt Jnr both retiring this year, the lack of star quality becomes even more sombre.

F1 would also benefit were a popular hero to emerge – someone with the charisma of the exuberant Fernando Rossi, rather than cardboard characters like Hamilton and Vettel. In fairness though, Lewis is on record as saying today's drivers are boxed in by Big Business, team managers and the restrictions set by the advertising agencies.

---

## **And how about here in the Cape of Good Hope (and good wine)?**

Yes, we also have problems. But although not nearly as bad as those described above, we are having to deal the fact that from an original stand-alone location in Port Jackson bushland, Killarney is now surrounded by the urban sprawl. And there's no shortage of takers for a piece (as large as possible), of what we've worked more than 70 years for.

But we're still here, and the guys in control aim to ensure that this is where we stay. For a start Cape Town, in the shadow of Table Mountain (a world heritage site), is a hugely popular tourist attraction. The annual, World 7's rugby show is now established in Green Point, where the guys play in front of sell-out crowds of around the 50,000 mark. The recent Stormers / Bulls knockout at Newlands scored 30,883 fans, easily the biggest Super 15 tally in this season's competition.

Our recent Extreme Festival at Killarney (OK, don't compare it with Green Point or Newlands), but it was also a biggie with a near record motorsport crowd. Then main circuit racing apart, we're getting increased support for the events (many of them organised for charity), that we promote and that appeal to other elements of the public.

These have included opening the complex to accommodate events like the Toy Run, the Bandana Run and of course our now popular Wednesday evening Robot Racing. Our first Adventure Bike meeting that was opened by Cape Town Mayco committee member JP Smith (who's also a bike fan}, took place at the end of last month.

Pedal cyclists are welcome on



*Cape Town Mayco member JP Smith (far left), cuts the tape to open our club's first Adventure Bike meeting*

Sundays when our self-imposed noise restrictions -- in the public interest -- prohibit the use of the track by competitive, mechanically powered wheels. We're also currently working in conjunction with the Blouberg Rotary club, on the staging of a major all-terrain family mountain bike meeting later in the year. Here the family angle will be emphasised by having classes for everyone from just mobile little *ankle-biters*, to creaky old "*do-you-remember-when's*".

Finally, the Winter Family Market including a boot sale is now-now on July 1. This one's also strictly an INDOOR FAMILY show, where you'll be able to dispose of any surplus household goods. Of course we're also expecting to see a volume of mechanical parts -- even second-hand cars and bikes. There'll be vendors, the circuit will be open to cyclists and joggers, passenger rides on a trailer pulled by a vintage tractor and everything else needed to keep the whole family entertained.

Sounds like a winner!

One of our members, who is now approaching senility, has promised to bring a Ford Model T spare wheel -- that may be more than a century old -- to the first of these. It's been lying in his garage for about 50 years. Not in great condition, but what offers?

-----

**Confidentially,** we hear through the exhaust pipe, that after the huge success of our rallycross meeting, the first world championship motorsport event ever staged in the Cape, our club is now in a far more positive position with the City of Cape Town councillors, the circuit's leaseholder.

And of course, with no prospects of anything even approaching that status, being staged anywhere in South Africa in the foreseeable future, our situation becomes even stronger.

# Now here are a few who certainly deserve an honorary mention:

Like superannuated Mikes-Place Clubman driver **Willie Gouws**, who was in breath-taking form when he snatched a hard fought victory in class F in his VW Polo, during round 3 of the Power Series. And at the age of 78, he must now hold the Killarney record for being the most mature driver to have ever managed that feat.

---



And our very sincerely good wishes go to **Terri** and **Alton Philander** who finally tied the knot on April 14. They then apparently spent an enjoyable few days at Langebaan. It would probably have been longer but there were strict instructions from SportCom, to ensure they rushed back in time to help out (yes, both of them), at our Extreme Festival.

So, thanks to both of you!

---

Ladies first! **Ciara van Niekerk** (on the left of the picture), the 15 year old daughter of Wingfield Motors prime mover John van Niekerk, clinched the Mini title for the second time, during the final meeting of the CHD stock



car summer season last month. We now hear she is planning a move upstream to compete on the main circuit, in the near future.

Then there's **Rhonette Rossouw**, vendor of the silky voice that greets landline callers when they contact our club. She placed fourth in the Pink Rods class.

---

Home town hotshot, reigning national Investchem F1600 champ **Julian van der Watt** has landed a drive in the United States. He is based in Indianapolis where he is contesting the USF2000 championship with Team Pelfrey, one of the leading outfits over there. The ultimate prize is a drive in the Indy 500 – and that's worth fighting for. And as we go to press he has just moved up to sixth in the title chase. We wish him well.

---



And sympathy to **Craig Jarvis** who, after an unfortunate incident with his Ferrari at Kyalami, replaced it with a new Dodge Viper for our Extreme Festival. Unfortunately the V10 powerplant developed a

terminal malfunction before the start and has now been shipped back to the family home for dodgy Dodges, in the States. However it all turned out well in the end when Craig was offered a loan car by the guys from the Ashley's V8 Masters stable. He then did bloody well to finish third overall in a vehicle he had never driven before.

---

Also to young **Louis de Jager** who did his best to avoid a section of the circuit barrier with his Lola T212, during the 3<sup>rd</sup> round of the Power Series. Although it certainly looked like a major "off," and he had to complete the

lap in the back of an ambulance, there were no serious injuries. And we're all very thankful about that.

---

So who remembers this **Colin Watling** guy anyway? Well he was a great character – totally wacky but hugely popular in motorsport circles. A resident from north of the muddy Vaalrivier, we knew him at Killarney as a photographer during national events, very often shooting from the top of a stepladder. He was also a bike nut who died in strange circumstances when his body was found next to his bike one morning, near the entrance to the Kyalami circuit. Everyone was shattered and hence the Colin Watling award in his memory, that went to our club at the SAGMJ annual motorsport awards ceremony last month.

---

And why (see article below), was **Alain Menu** chosen to edit the Blower's Restaurant Review in 1996? Well, although born and schooled in Switzerland, much of Alain's motorsport career was spent circulating in the UK, where he won the British Touring Car Championship and finished second in the World Touring Car title chase, during a distinguished racing career. So we thought with a name like that, he obviously knew what he was eating.

---

## **There's been some changes made!**

After hearing about the changes to our Clubhouse menu, we just happened to come across the Aug. 1996 issue of The Blower (no, not the E-Blower, this was before electricity).

And by coincidence, it contained a restaurant review of the same Killarney eatery, edited by Alain Menu. His test team included Boerewors Bert, our grounds manager in those days, who reported he had to queue for some time before being served at the extremely well patronised, lower floor Killarney Takeaway.

There, in the era of ridiculously low prices, he had the choice of a hamburger (R4.50), or eggburger (R5.00), while hot dogs were R3.00 for a single or R4.50



a double. He claimed an Abie Special at R7.50 was a jawbreaker that had absolutely nothing to do with nouvelle cuisine. He eventually finished contentedly, with apple pie and cream (R2.00) and coffee (R2.00).

Although B Bert led the test team courageously, the committee thought it would be safer if he was accompanied by Dr Harry Wade, the club's long-serving and extremely able, medical practitioner.

And bearing in mind that Doc Harry specialised in gastro-enteritis and other disabilities from the oesophagus to the exhaust, this was regarded as a wise decision. But there were no problems. Senior members will recall, Bert had a reputation as a gourmet who operated like a threshing machine. He had been awarded a diploma by the SPCA Dog Pound and was an honorary lance-corporal in the Salvation Army, where he served with distinction in their Soup Kitchen.

Incidentally, we've already had some glowing reports about the new menu. Well done guys.

-----

# Obituaries.

**Kimberley Jayd Easom (20)**, passed away on the 1st of June.



**In loving memory of Kim Easom**

**26.02.1998 – 01.06.2018**

*“Those we love don’t go away. They walk beside us every day.*

*Unseen, unheard, but always near. Still loved, still missed and very dear”*

On Friday, 1 June, a very special daughter, sister, colleague and friend lost her battle against cancer. Although she was still young, only twenty years of age, her strength, kindness and uplifting spirit will always be remembered.

Kim was part of the Killarney team. Over the past two and a half years, she assisted with the documentation at Drags, Robot Racing and Streetcar events and, on main circuit events, she was the hostess of the members boma. She touched the hearts of everyone with that big beautiful smile and warm loving heart. Although Kim was in pain, she would make sure that she would be on time and assisted where needed. Kim never complained and despite suffering so much pain, she always worried more about the people around her and was more concerned about their welfare than her own.

To Des & Helga Easom and all the Easom family, our deepest condolences for your loss.

*A further tribute to Kim was paid at the Killarney Power Series meeting on Saturday, 9 June.*

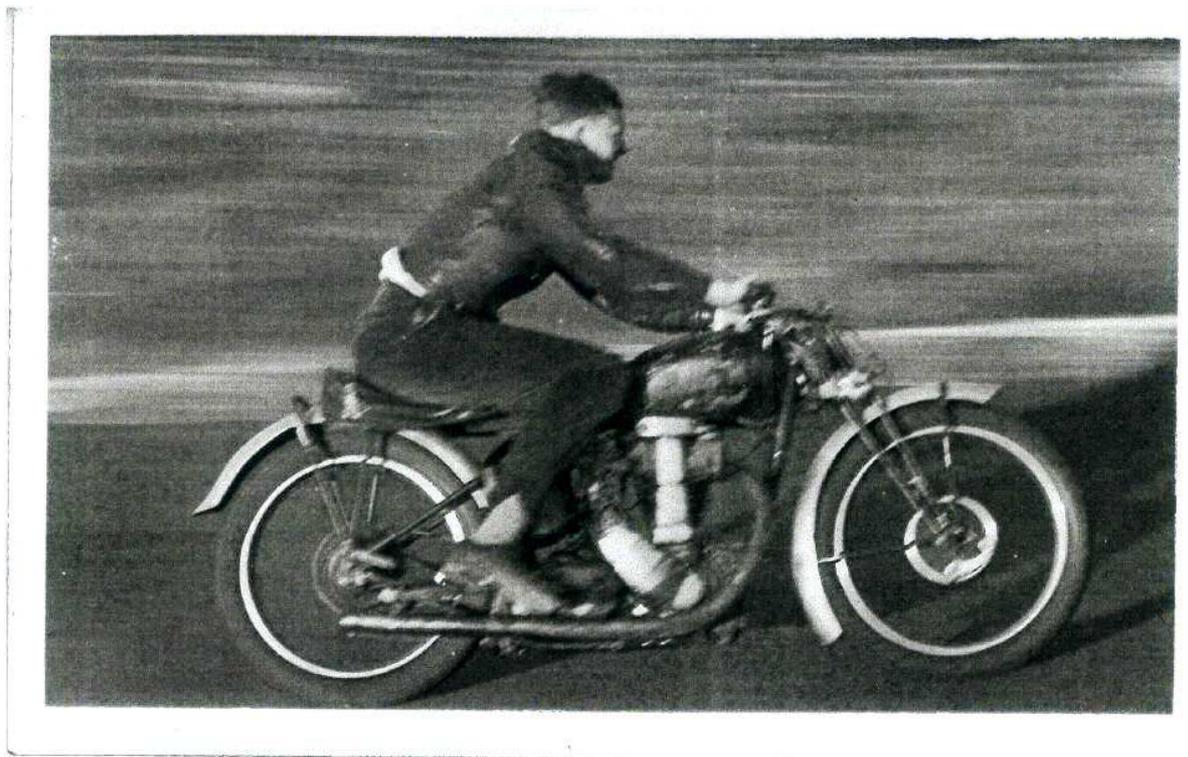
-----

**Allan Flack (80)**, was a teenager when he had his first competitive ride at Killarney in 1956, on a borrowed 350 Ariel. He later acquired a Jawa 2-stroke, before making a sensible decision and switching to a 350 AJS 7R. This classic bike can still be seen today in the hands of Tony Tilling.

After racing at all the major venues in South Africa, he acquired the emigration itch and moved to the UK with his family and the AJS. There he competed on many famous circuits including the ultimate – the Isle of Man. While he was certainly not the fastest, it took a particularly strong nerve to compete on the Island’s incredibly dangerous 61 km. public road circuit that included (a claimed), 264 corners and sweeps.

After another couple of years of European action, Allan returned to South Africa – again with his family and the AJS.

He died earlier this month after a short illness, surrounded by his wife, children and grandchildren. Deepest condolences to his family.



*Allan is seen here on a BSA at Killarney during the early days when it was not a requirement to wear leathers or a helmet, during practice sessions.*

-----

**Rory Brown (78)**, began as a sports reporter with the old Rand Daily Mail up in Joeys, where he covered motorsport and boxing. However, he became better known in these parts during the 1970's when he had a huge fallout with a hack here in the Cape (who is still hobbling around the Killarney area), and whose articles were highly critical of the way the sport was (not), being controlled by the guys up there in Mine Dump Country.

Armed with loaded typewriters (in a pre-computer age), they eventually faced each other at point blank range when the gang Rory worked for, came to light with grandiose plans for motorsport, that included a takeover (by them), of the Killarney complex. Of course, unlike the helicopter they arrived in for the Sunday meeting at our clubhouse, that scheme never got off the ground.

**Fortunately, a later change in management restored the equilibrium, and Rory eventually became a very welcome working guest at Killarney national meetings. He really was a great guy and we'll miss him down here.**

**=====**