

Would you like to try your hand at motorsport, but don't know where to begin? Heard about sprinting and hillclimbing, but not sure what they are? **Adrian Williams** gives a brief overview and announces a forthcoming event just for you, where you can find out all the stuff you wanted to know but were afraid to ask!

# MOTORSPORT FOR BEGINNERS

## What is a speed event?

A speed event is either a 'Hillclimb' or a 'Sprint', and is one of the safest forms of competitive motor sport. Cars set off at intervals so that drivers are on their own and it's entirely up to each individual how fast or slowly they want to drive. This year's provisional Club Championship calendar contains five hillclimbs and ten sprints. The best seven scores count towards the final overall championship positions, with the Ladies and Novices having additional competitions where only the best five scores count. This gives plenty of choice in terms of variety and location without having to attend all the rounds.

All events contained within the Lotus Seven Club Speed Championship are run under the British Motor Sports Association (MSA) rules. Representatives of the MSA are on hand to oversee the running of the event: this ensures that the organisers, timekeepers, marshals and other safety personnel are all in place and properly equipped to conduct the meeting.

## Hillclimbs

Hillclimbing doesn't involve muddy boots, or even two hardy souls bouncing around in a minimalist machine in an attempt to drive as far as possible up a section of rugged countryside; those events are called *Sporting Trials*, a different discipline altogether.

Speed hillclimbing is all about driving along what amounts to a well-surfaced country lane from A to B as fast as possible, from a standing-start, against the clock. A typical event will take place on private land, which is used for this purpose regularly throughout the year, with competitors starting from the bottom of the 'hill' and driving to the top. The paddock will normally be found at the bottom of the hill and will be home, for the event, to a variety of machinery ranging from standard saloons to purpose-built single seaters. Cars are released one at a time up the hill with a suitable gap in between them to allow plenty of time for a car to be stopped by the marshals should the one in front have a problem.

The five events that our Club is invited to are normally well supported by members of the public who pay an entrance fee to come and watch from various vantage points along the course.

## Sprints

Sprinting is a similar discipline except the course is a purpose-built race circuit. This can be a large well-known venue such as Goodwood or Pembrey—or a scaled-down version such as Curborough or Llandow where the course might comprise more than one lap.

The Lotus Seven Club Speed Championship accommodates six classes, so whatever Seven you have, be it a basic 'Classic' or a full-on race car there is a class for you, where you will be grouped with others in similar machinery. A typical event will be on a course that takes about a minute to complete and is measured—to the nearest hundredth of a second—by electronic timing.

## An introduction to sprinting

Our championship is run by the Club for members to contest in their Sevens. Over the years this championship has allowed members to take part in events at the country's leading venues and this could easily include you too!

We are planning an 'Introduction to Sprinting' event in early April, prior to the start of our 2008 season; the event will be completely free of charge and open to all novices who enter this year's championship (so yes, the information is pertinent to the hillclimb events too!). The day's activities will cover all you need to know to get started, including:

- Driver equipment required
- Car preparation and scrutineering
- A chance to drive the course in your own car
- What to expect, and how to make the most of your first competitive event
- There will also be an opportunity to take passenger rides with some of the more experienced competitors

There'll be more details of this introductory event and information on how to enter the championship in February's Lowflying.

## 2008 Championship calendar

*the provisional dates for this season are*

1	SAT 26th APRIL	<b>Goodwood</b> <i>sprint</i>
2	SAT 10th MAY	<b>Llandow</b> <i>sprint</i>
3	SUN 11th MAY	<b>Llys y fran</b> <i>hillclimb</i>
4	SAT 17th MAY	<b>Curborough 1</b> <i>sprint</i>
5	SAT 31st MAY	<b>Pembrey 1</b> <i>sprint</i>
6	SUN 1st JUNE	<b>Pembrey 2</b> <i>sprint</i>
7	SAT 14th JUNE	<b>MIRA</b> <i>sprint</i>
8	SAT 5th JULY	<b>Shelsley Walsh</b> <i>hillclimb</i>
9	SAT 26th JULY	<b>Loton Park</b> <i>hillclimb</i>
10	SUN 3rd AUGUST	<b>Harewood</b> <i>hillclimb</i>
11	SUN 24th AUGUST	<b>Curborough 2</b> <i>sprint</i>
12	SAT 6th SEPTEMBER	<b>Aintree</b> <i>sprint</i>
13	SAT 13th SEPTEMBER	<b>Wiscombe</b> <i>hillclimb</i>
14	SAT 4th OCTOBER	<b>Anglesey 1</b> <i>sprint</i>
15	SUN 5th OCTOBER	<b>Anglesey 2</b> <i>sprint</i>