

## WHAT IS AUTOTESTING?

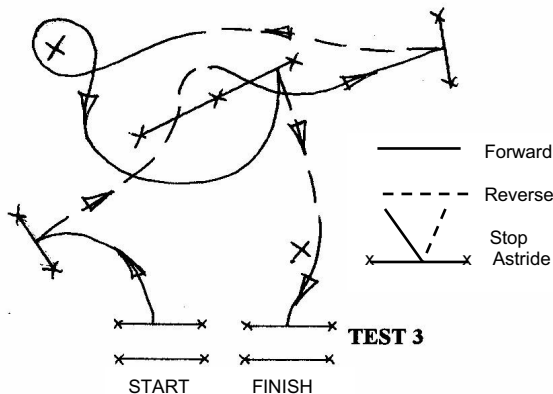
### THE OBJECTIVE

Is simply to drive a car on a series of short *TESTS* which are all about precision manoeuvring, against the clock. Pitting your skill to control the car while negotiating a defined route around markers, stopping astride lines interspersed with changes of direction, necessitating driving in forward and reverse direction. The skill is to maintain momentum and minimise the time lost while stationary astride lines. The winner is the person with the lowest time at the end of the event.

### THE TESTS

A typical evening event will consist of six different *tests* set out in a grass field. Speeds are not high, as cars rarely get out of first or reverse gear, however it can be very exhilarating negotiating a specific course at 30mph.....in reverse! Not to mention putting the handbrake on when travelling at speed on slippery grass. Drivers get two runs at each test, with only their best run at each to count. Practising is not allowed!

At the start of the event each competitor is given a set of *TEST DIAGRAMS* to show the mandatory route and direction of travel for each *test*. A typical *test* from one of last years events is illustrated below.



The *tests* are set out using coloured poles (like broom handles) hammered into the ground. It is essential that you memorise the course. Before the competition starts, drivers are allowed to 'walk' each test a couple of times to familiarise themselves with the exact route they have to follow.

Walking backwards and forwards to mimic their planned drive, as well as deciding where and how they intend to carry out turns and changes of direction.

### TIMING and PENALTIES

There is only ever one car at a time on a test. Once the car moves from the start line the stop watch is started. It is then up to the driver, by using swift gear changes, tight turns with the handbrake and accurately positioning the car ready for the next manoeuvre, to complete the test in the shortest possible time. Each test will only take about 45 seconds or so to complete and is timed to a tenth of a second. Penalty time (10 seconds) is added for touching a pole or 'pylon', or failing to stop astride lines with both leading wheels. As the car crosses the finish line the watch is stopped, if the driver fails to 'stop astride' the finish line and 'overshoots' a penalty is also applied.

### THE CARS

Any type of car can compete in an *autotest* and for grass events you do not need any modifications to be competitive, standard diesel hatchbacks seem to be ideal! It is not necessary for cars to be licensed or tested but they do have to comply with Motor Sports Association Regulations. The events are divided into four classes; Minis, Small saloons, Large saloons, and Sports/Kit cars & Specials. This gives everyone a chance to compete against similar machinery.

### THE DRIVERS

Anybody can compete on one of these 'CLUB' Autotests, you don't need any special licence, just to be a member of **Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club**, (or one of the invited clubs) but don't be surprised to come across one or two 'Experts' more used to competing on tarmac in the National Championships.

### JUNIOR DRIVERS

There is also a class for **Junior Drivers** aged 14-17 without a full RTA licence. They have to carry an adult passenger who has Autotested before (they can assist with instructions). All cars in this class must be by definition a **saloon car**, they do not have to be 'driven' to the event, but must comply with MSA Vehicle Regulations. ....**Why not have a go!**

## GRASS SERIES 2008

**Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club** will be running its usual series of Grass Autotests, with nine events at **Headcorn Aerodrome** throughout the summer. All the events are on **Wednesday evenings**, starting at about **6.30 pm** and finishing with a prizegiving in the Wings Bar on site. You will find the organisers and fellow competitors very friendly and willing to offer help to those new to the sport.

### THE SERIES CALENDAR

May 7th	June 11th	July 23rd
May 14th	June 25th	August 6th
May 28th	July 9th	August 27th

### TRAINING DAY

There is also a **TRAINING DAY** at the same venue on **Sunday 11th May**. This follows our successful format of a short talk, with the help of a flip chart and some videos, by one of our 'Expert' Autotesters in the morning, followed by a chance to practice on some tests in the afternoon. All under the guidance of our 'Expert', and without the pressure of competition. **Come along.....you don't know what your missing!**

## SOUTHERN GRASS CHAMPIONSHIP

We are also running the **WINGS AUTOTEST** a round of the popular **Southern Grass Championship**. At the same venue, on **Sunday 6th July**, it will follow a similar format to the evening events, but with one set of tests in the morning and a different set after lunch. The tests will also have a few more manoeuvres, but there will be separate classes for those not doing the Championship and Junior Drivers. **Change up a gear.....have a go at the next level!**

## KENT DRIVER AUTOTEST 2008

We also run a tarmac autotest on **Saturday 31st May** in **Sittingbourne, Kent**. It's a round of both the '**demon tweaks Direct BTRDA**' National and the '**Link-Up Ltd MSA British**' championships and is for the real Experts in their highly modified cars! **Why not come along to marshal.....and be amazed at what they can do!**

**For more info on any of the above events....  
...contact: Dave or Ann Cook 01634 364021**

## MAIDSTONE & MID MOTOR CLUB Ltd.

### A Brief History

### IN THE BEGINING

The club was formed in July 1935 at The New Inn, Maidstone. Some 35 motoring enthusiasts attended the formation and within a month the membership had passed the 60 mark and continued to grow. In May 1938 the Club became a Limited Company.

### THE EARLY YEARS

From its formation until the outbreak of the Second World War the Club organised monthly social evenings and many visits and tours. Events included sporting trials in the winter months, a hill climb and rallies.

The Club continued throughout the war period and once hostilities had finished the Club sporting calendar was re-instated. In 1948 the first race meeting at Silverstone was organised and was to become a regular event which was joined in 1954 by sprint meetings at Brands Hatch. The mid 1950's saw, in addition to the speed events, an emphasis on road rallies with the club organising no less than 6 major rallies a year.

### MORE RECENTLY

The 1960's saw a reduction in road rallies in the South, but the club continued to run race meetings at Brands Hatch and Lydden circuit. The 1970's saw a move back to 'off road' events with autocross, sporting and production car trials, special stage rallies and race meetings filling the club calendar. During the 1980's the 500+ membership began to dwindle due to the ever increasing costs of motorsport to the amateur club competitor.

### AND NOW IN 2008

There is a full competition calendar with the club organising its regular series of evening autotests together with a round of the Southern Grass Championship and an autotest training day. There are also scatter rallies, production car trials, the Kent Stages Rally and the Kent Driver National Autotest.

[www.mmkmc.co.uk](http://www.mmkmc.co.uk) - CHECK IT OUT !

## HOW TO GET STARTED

First you need to join a motor club that is affiliated to the Motor Sports Association (MSA), which is the main governing body of motorsport in the UK. **Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club** is one of the top *autotest* clubs around. Annual membership costs just **£15** or **£7 for junior drivers**, with other 'family' membership packages available.

A club membership card will permit you to enter any of the 'CLUB' *autotests*, organised by us or to which our club members are invited.

The entry fee for our grass *autotests* series is **£12** or **£6** for junior drivers, for each event and you can.....

**JUST TURN UP..... JOIN THE CLUB..**

**.....AND ENTER ON THE DAY.**

## VEHICLE REGULATIONS

MSA rules say that all vehicles must comply with certain criteria regarding safety and permitted modifications. You do not need a roll-cage but you do need to make sure that everything is securely fixed, bolted down and roadworthy. **WE ARE HAPPY TO PROVIDE INFORMATION.**

## MMKMC CONTACTS

For more information on membership, how to get started, or **autotesting** in general come along to one of the events or contact :-

**Dave and Ann Cook** Tel: **01634 364021**

## LINKS TO AUTOTEST SITES

[www.btrda.com](http://www.btrda.com)      [www.msa-autotest.org.uk](http://www.msa-autotest.org.uk)  
[www.msauk.org](http://www.msauk.org)      [www.paulswift.co.uk](http://www.paulswift.co.uk)  
[www.mmkmc.co.uk](http://www.mmkmc.co.uk)      [www.acsmc.org.uk](http://www.acsmc.org.uk)



# MAIDSTONE & MID KENT MOTOR CLUB Ltd



# AUTOTEST SERIES 2008



**A GUIDE TO THE SERIES**  
**All you need to know about**  
**AUTOTESTING**  
**and.....**  
**HOW TO GET STARTED**