



ME & MY CAR



Mixing business with pleasure can be a good idea when it involves racing a souped-up Mini driven by our very own Stig in an exciting championship, says Sheila Jannels

Someone once advised me never to mix business with pleasure but this stock piece of advice, albeit sensible, has never sounded much fun to me. Where's the fun in being sensible? Deliberately not heeding such wise counsel, I have taken my passion for cars to the extreme and finally persuaded my company to sponsor our very own Mini.

And this is no ordinary Mini – it is a natty little sporty type specially designed for competing and driven by our own Stig, Steve Miles.

Recently, we entered it in the first race of the Mighty Mini Championship at Mallory Park in Leicestershire. This is a fun and competitive championship which guarantees exciting racing.

There are three classes in the championship – Standard, Super and Extreme. The Standards have various limitations on engine development while the Supers allow further modifications and the Extremes cater for any modifications.

The Standards attract up to 30 cars competing bumper-to-

bumper on track and, as the championship has proved so popular, the starting grid is full for every race. This only serves to heighten the anticipation for those of us milling around on the sidelines.

Our race turned out to be what can only be described as thrilling, thanks to some fearless competition in battling it out for pole position throughout the race.

It was exciting to see the leader's position being continuously usurped by an underdog who would in turn be overtaken by a surreptitious challenger who up to that point had been concealed in a blind spot.

Somebody had to win but alas, it was not us. Of the 27 competitors, our Mini came in a respectable seventh.

We were delighted with the outcome of the race and still buoyed with adrenaline, we cracked open the champagne anyway.

Mixing business with pleasure may not always be sensible but I think we can allow a passion for cars as a worthy exception.

After all, it's never been so much fun before.



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