

# ***PANTS & BARKS***

June '89



**Journal of the HANTS & BERKS ROVER OWNERS**

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Note:- \* denotes committee member.

"Hants & Berks Rover Owners" is a member of the ARC (Association of Rover Clubs), the RACMSA (RAC Motor Sports Association) and the Association of Central Southern Motor Clubs.

## CHAIRMAN'S PAGE

The EGM is now behind us, and the issue of the future competitive nature of the HBRO has been decided. The meeting was well attended, the debate interesting (if a little one sided), and the magnificent efforts of the ARC Chairman Tony Holder to answer all of your questions should be greatly appreciated by the HBRO. The outcome of the vote for which we had a 51% turnout is shown below:

- 2 Abstentions
- 3 Spoiled Voting Slips
- 24 Against the Resolution
- 30 For the Resolution.

As a result the HBRO will henceforth be adopting the ARC competition rules and regulations IN FULL, and any vehicle which does not comply with them shall not be allowed to compete. (A transcript of the minutes of the meeting is available from the Secretary, Gary Hodgson, for those who are interested.)

Over the past seven weeks of the EGM campaign I have tried to remain impartial, as I believe a Chairman is supposed to be, whilst at the same time deciding my own response to the resolution. However with the decision made I feel that a few words of explanation are called for before I announce my decision.

As I hope you all realised, and as was thoroughly discussed at the EGM, the underlying factor in the argument was 'should the HBRO be allowed to run its OWN "Closed" events as it wished, with certain non ARC approved vehicles taking part'. I personally feel very strongly that if the ARC allows 80" coil sprung "things" to compete, then there is no reason why a Range Rover pickup (with shortened rear overhang) or a 100" Land Rover should not take part in our own "closed" club events. Unfortunately I accept that the democratic processes within the ARC, and now the HBRO, are preventing this policy from being continued. Whilst I agree that it should be possible, by democratic means, to lobby the ARC to allow such vehicles to compete (and after this EGM it means first lobbying to modify the newly adopted HBRO policy); I feel that such action is akin to asking the leopard to change his spots, and would take as long as painting the Forth Bridge. My involvement in Club matters already takes up a considerable amount of my free time, and I

am not prepared to devote all of my hobby time to trying to change ARC policy. For once I intend to take an active part in competing, not organising. Consequently I am taking the course of action mentioned by Tony Holder at the EGM, namely joining a club which allows my favoured vehicles to take part in competitions. (Actually I am only switching my allegiance since I am already a member of several clubs.) Having been an active HBRO member for several years, it is thus with some regret that I announce my resignation as Chairman and Competition Secretary of the HBRO.

I personally feel that the EGM marked the end of the HBRO, a small and youthful club which was interested in allowing vehicles of any Rover origin to compete, and the start of the Hants & Berks subordinate branch of the Association of Rover Clubs Ltd. Ironically the words of a song playing on the radio as I drove home from the EGM seem to sum up the situation:

I quit,

I give up,

Nothing's good enough for anybody else; it seems.

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## EDITORIAL . . . . .

Well, all I can really say to that is to thank Colin for all the tremendous hard work he has done for the HBRO over the years. He has really been a driving force (pun intended) in getting the HBRO's competition side off the ground. I only hope we can find others to keep up the good work he started.

What a bumper issue that was last month! 28 pages plus the cover. I still had some more in abeyance too but decided to keep it for this month. Part Two of Richard's Hybrid article should be in this issue somewhere along with an article from our Rover Rescue Co-ordinator John Dowdeswell. Also held over from last month is the list of known adopted roads for Hampshire and Berkshire. Hmmm! As I write this, I think this month's edition is going to be as big again! My attempts to get the issue out in plenty of time for the EGM was thwarted again by printing problems! Tom's so fed up with his printer that he's moving away from it! Seriously though, Tom really is moving his business as will soon be reflected on the back cover.

## SECRETARY'S SCRAWL

I have been on the committee for a year now so I thought it was about time I put pen to paper and let you know about one aspect of the secretary's job; junk mail!

This month's special offer is for Warn Winches from Ryder's International. They are offering 12½% discount to members. Prices start at £225 and go up to £875+VAT and carriage plus about £75 for a fitting kit. (Roll on Christmas!)

Looking ahead to August sees the B.F. Goodrich and Off Road & Four Wheel Drive Magazine Show at Trentham Gardens, Staffs. Sounds like big "do" with all leading 4x4 manufacturers represented and plenty of trade stands.

I have finally found a pub with a room to use for a Southern Meeting. It's the White Swan in the centre of Bishop's Waltham. The parking at the pub is a bit tight but there is a big public car park only 50 yards away. The first meet will be the last Wednesday of May (the 31st) and every last Wednesday of the month thereafter. The White Swan is in Bank Street and the car park is off Basingwell Street.

That's enough for my first time, so back to planning the rally!

Gary Hodgson, Hon. Sec.

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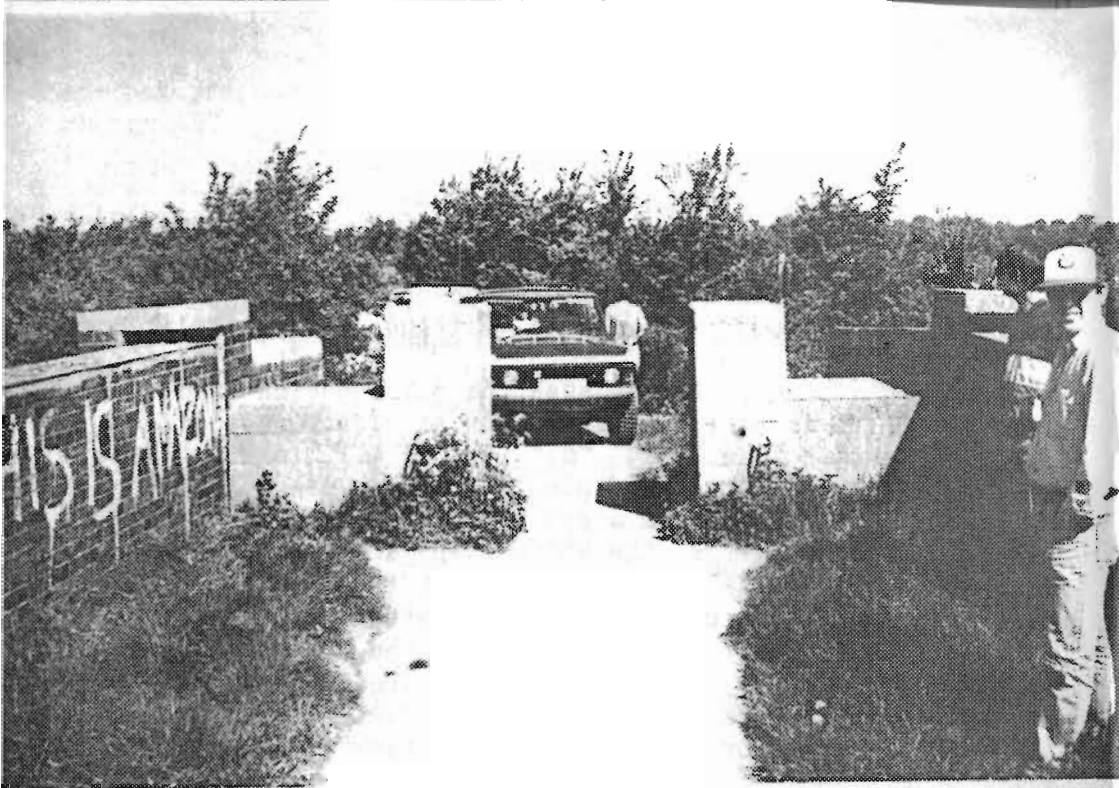
## THANK YOU, HUGH.

After the vote to stay in the ARC, Hugh Glossop felt that he could no longer be Chief Scrutineer for the HBRO as he objects to the imposition and interpretation of the ARC Vehicle Regulations.

The HBRO would like to thank Hugh for all the hard work he has put in not only leading the scrutineering team at every event and dealing with enquiries from club members about various problems, but with laying out trials courses and acting as marshal and steward at those events.

Hugh's most well known vehicle, the red comp-safari racer is not ARC legal, but is now reaching a stage in its development where it is winning races and he wants to be in a club where he can race it! His other vehicle, a V8 auto Land Rover, is ARC legal but has been rejected by ARC scrutineers who don't (or won't) understand the ARC rules. It is for this reason he feels he must stand down.

Steve Kirby.



The recent ARC debate has brought in a flood of letter, here it are!

Basingstoke,  
HANTS.

Dear Steve,

After reading the article on "ARC or not ARC" I have come to this conclusion: when I bought my SWB Land Rover, I decided to join the All Wheel Drive Club because I wanted to learn all about Rovers and their capabilities and meet other owners and talk "Land Rover"

Then I realised it was just as the club logo said, All Wheel Drive Club; Jap, Russian, Austrian etc. etc. but while being a first rate club and hopefully always will be! But I wanted to see a club and belong to a family of people who had a love of the all British vehicle Land/Range, Saloon, Rover cars. All due respect to the boys who race "Rover" vehicles, they should only use Rover and accept ARC rulings, if not, I can't see why you should call yourself H&B Rover Owners, you should be known as "Anything Go's Club". I'm sorry if I upset people who use Foreign Parts in their Rover cars, it's just like putting a Japanese engine in a Rolls Royce and calling it Rolls Royce; it's just an insult to England.

Michael Clark.

Well, the decision has now been made, regarding ARC membership, but if you have any further comments, please let me know. Ed.

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The photos opposite are from the green lane trip reported elsewhere in this issue:-

TOP: A couple of little concrete blocks get in the way!

BOTTOM: Mark Benger negotiates "Tim's" ford.



by Steve Kirby, Rights of Way.

This group is a sub-committee of Berkshire County Council and comprises members of Berks CC, district councils, land owner's associations, National Farmer's Union and various user groups such as the Ramblers Association, British Horse Society, AWDC, HBRO, Trail Rider's Fellowship and others. The HBRO has had a 'seat' right from the start; Dave Cuthbert being the first from this club to attend and I have followed on from him.

Because of the numerical superiority of footpaths, most of the problems centre around these. You'd be amazed what farmers/landowners get up to with obstructing, building over and ploughing of footpaths. Farmers are allowed to plough footpaths where they cross a field so long as they reinstate it within two weeks. Needless to say, they often don't! Headland paths (those round the edges of fields) may not be ploughed but often are! I think that because RUPPs and Byways can be useful to farmers, they don't plough or obstruct them so often.

One subject discussed was the possibility of making a wide but messed-up RUPP in the Knowle Hill area into two lanes, one for vehicles and the other for horses/walkers. This is difficult to do legally and some voluntary system was proposed by the council officials. Legally, this is unenforceable but I informed them that LARA had been organising voluntary restraint conditions on various RUPPs around the country for months. I was amazed when they said they hadn't heard of LARA so I handed over a copy of the new Code of Conduct (you all got one in April). They were very impressed with this, particularly as it shows on the back a photo of a restraint notice on a lane.

I volunteered to contact LARA to suggest trying this idea of laning and this was agreed. I have subsequently written to LARA about this matter and will let you know the outcome. What do you think about this?

Steve Kirby.

## LEAD FREE PETROL

There are increasing incentives, both environmental and financial, to using unleaded petrol. There appear to be two problems.

Firstly, getting the motor to run. Lead was put in originally to raise the octane rating of petrol. Refining techniques have since greatly increased this, but removing the lead will obviously reduce this slightly. Fortunately more and more cars nowadays run on 2star petrol, largely in readiness to going lead free, so these will run on unleaded with little problem, sometimes a slight tweak on the timing, often not even that. Many vehicles that run on 4star will also only need an adjustment of timing, this is why many vehicles can be converted very cheaply, and if during a normal tune up, should not add to the cost at all.

Beware though, lead has another role, it cushions the exhaust valves, so switching some engines to lead free can result in serious premature engine failure, in other words, you'll clap it. Obviously I have neither the space nor knowledge to give specific advice on all vehicles, so you must get reliable advice. If you don't want a hefty engine rebuild bill, don't take the word of a man in the pub! One point though, apart from the odd rare vehicle with a catalytic converter, there's only a couple in UK, a car retuned to run on lead free will still run on leaded petrol, so you're still OK if you can't find any unleaded, although it is becoming increasingly common.

But what about our vehicles? All V8s are OK, most without adjustment (the low compression ones). 2½ litre 4 cylinders are ready for you to just pour it in, the 2¼ litres however are in the danger area, they will run on lead free, but not for long! They can be modified however, either by fitting exhaust valve seats from a 2½ (ETC 6278), note that as they do not have separate seats, you will have to bore the head out to fit them, or by fitting a 2½ head, apparently it's a straight swap. Whether you feel either course is worth it unless leaded disappears completely is up to you to decide. Ser is, and here I include all 6 cyls, as it is basically the same engine, I haven't a clue, as it is too old for the manufacturers to worry about it. However they do have separate exhaust valve seats, so if you try it and knock them out they can be replaced. Beware, it is not as easy job as the experts would have you believe however (voice of experience speaking!).

It is possible to buy an additive to use with unleaded fuel, but it is expensive. It depends how much you care about the environment I suppose, but if supply of leaded gets difficult, it may come into its own.

Are there any snags to going lead free? To be honest, it depends who you believe. It would seem that there is a slight drop in power, particularly at the top end, but few would notice it without a stop watch, especially in a Land Rover, and that's assuming the vehicle was in perfect tune to start with!

There is one other alternative, go diesel. It may be a bit horrifying for an LR or RR, but in modern cars they're not bad. Mine would cruise along motorways all day at over the limit if I let it, and I seldom get left behind elsewhere.

Dave Cuthbert

## FAREWELL FWD MOTORS.....

Over the past two years the trials organised by the HBRO have often received sponsorship, in the form of trophies etc., from FWD Motors, of Hampton Wick. This company has been in the Land Rover business supplying parts, and vehicles, for longer than I can remember and the HBRO were looking forward to continued co-operation with them. Sadly that is not to be since FWD Motors have ceased dealing in Land Rover products. The reason given for this termination of a successful business is that Land Rover refused FWD Motors a continued franchise, because they did not have showroom facilities.

To me, as a member of the public, it looks as if Land Rover are determined to persuade me to buy a foreign vehicle. True that I can buy a new Land or Range Rover from a pretty showroom in my area of West London, but ask the spares department for a collection of shims for a Series II swivel housing, or even for a Range Rover propshaft, and the response is 'Not in Stock'. OK, with the good services of Land Rover Parts Ltd. they will probably have the part within twenty four hours, but the now vanished specialists normally held the parts in stock. Within four years the number of franchised Land Rover parts suppliers within a 15 mile radius of home has been shrunk from 5 to 1, and it is now easier to get parts for a Suzuki, Toyota, or Isuzu than for Solihull products.

Selling new vehicles may be profitable (?) but the 'Grass Roots' support and future customer base often comes from the spares market (which I believe generates more profit according to many dealers). Why should Land Rover see a need to close down a successful and popular franchise just because it didn't have a showroom. If the after sales service is poor the customer will cease to buy the new product, surely a compelling reason for the continued existence of companies with special expertise like FWD Motors.

All we can do now is thank them for their support in the past.

Colin Gross.

## SAFARI DOUBLE

by Colin Gross.

Early morning on Monday May the 1st found Hugh Glossop and I walking around a gravel pit at Gerrards Cross. Not quite such a strange occupation when you realise that Hugh was entered for the day's Safari and I was to be his navigator, switch operator, passenger, or ballast depending upon your point of view. The course was to be 1.7 miles in length, and each competitor had to complete eight laps in the five hours that the course was open. The problem was that safaris are timed, and the quickest overall time naturally wins. Hence our exploratory walk to find the fastest route.

Hugh's vehicle, along with most other entries, competes in the "A" Class for 3500cc coil sprung vehicles. For the first lap the vehicles were started at one minute intervals, and Hugh was fourth to start. An access road provided the start straight, and Hugh quickly had the *Mud Monster* flat out in third high range; indeed for a few yards he got into fourth gear. We remembered that you had to start braking before the blind brow of the hill if you wanted to survive the twisty descent into the gravel pit. The course then became bumpy, before smoothing out on the sandy pit floor. A few corners and some deep ruts later brought the *MM* into some very deep and loose gravel on a tight left hander. This, despite the tuned engine's torque, dragged the speed right down but just as it appeared that first might be needed the *MM* surged forwards. A bone jarring bump later and we were flying along a deeply rutted straight, akin to driving along the furrows of a ploughed field. Things often got exciting here as the vehicle tended to swap ruts, or travel sideways, whilst flat out in third high. Another bump (or jump) which Hugh seemed to relish and we were into a U turn through the first of the deep water. This gave me something to do; namely operate the wipers and washers to leave Hugh free to concentrate on driving. Another fast section over loose sand, and into the first of the really rough sections. First high pulled the *MM* through, and then we stopped. The marshals explained that the course was blocked by a Series One with a blown differential. Scratch lap one, back for a rerun.

Lap two, and all went well. From the blocked section there was a fast run, straddling a small ditch, to the next rough section. This has previously been used as a tough RTV trials section, and now that it has filled with water and is being driven uphill it made for interesting driving.

Following a few more bends, and loose sand, the route rejoined one of the pit "roads". Although it is firm underneath the track was covered in loose slime which restricted traction. For good measure the ground on either side of the road was about twenty feet down. The second deep lake soon appeared, but Hugh used the steep side slope to skirt the deepest water. Past the next rough section and we entered the finishing rectangle. Here the course covered three sides of the rectangle on a bumpy, but very fast track. It was still no place for error however, due to the track being raised twenty feet above the surrounding pit floor. The first complete lap time was just under six minutes. A quick service break, to replenish the screen wash, clean the windscreen (inside and out) and we were back out for the next lap. Whilst other vehicles broke down, or retired, the *MM* raced on. Hugh even offered me a drive, but I declined since I felt that not having driven a safari before my times would be too slow, ruining his chances. Due to another rerun the *Mud Monster* eventually covered ten laps of the course. Hughs times were fast enough to beat some of the 'unlimited engine' class, eventually giving him second overall.

For me the best was still to come. The course was still open for a further two hours, and Hugh again offered me the chance to drive. With his finish assured I didn't refuse. Having paid the entry fee, and strapped Malcolm Whitbread into the passenger seat, I was soon on the start line. The intention was to do two or three laps. At the end of lap two Hugh was waiting on the finishing line. Having pointed out that my times were quite good, he suggested that I kept going. Despite trying to drive the water too fast, (resulting in a very slow lap with a wet engine) within seventy minutes of starting I had completed my eight laps. To say that driving is tiring is an understatement. After each of the rough sections it was all I could do to negotiate the next bend, and this was with power steering. The *MM* ran perfectly despite my treatment, and my lap times gradually dropped. Indeed one lap was faster than Hugh's fastest, probably because the course had smoothed out a bit during the day, and I even managed to catch and pass another vehicle.

This day must rate as one of my most memorable thanks to Hugh. However the real hero must be the *Mud Monster*, who despite our treatment kept running all day without a problem on a course that claimed several retirements; eventually completing two safaris.

PS. I finished second in Class A, a prize in my first safari.

In a recent letter, Michael Clark raises an important issue regarding insurance:-

Basingstoke,  
HANTS

Dear Steve,

About eighteen months ago I went to a well known Land Rover dealer and bought an ex MoD SWB. I said I wanted to convert it to a "County" which Brookland Engineering did and did well. A lot of work went into it. New panels, roof, doors, tyres, you name it, my Rover had it including stripes. But while I had to pay a lot for it with all new parts etc. it was more valuable than the "book" price, so instead of getting approx £5000 in the event of an RTA, I would only get a fraction of it from the insurance brokers, so this year I have gone to an insurance company who understand Land Rovers, "Snowball"! Brookland supplied the information on what they had done to the car, so getting it properly insured. So other owners out there who have done what I did, check your insurance before it's too late.

Michael Clark.

P.S. If you have got the same problems, contact "Snowball" on 0283-31391, and if you need a new Land Rover, try Brookland Engineering in Southampton on 0703-252281.

Thank you for that, Mike. I hope you get a discount next year for the free Snowball and Brookland Engineering adverts! (By the way, RTA means Road Traffic Accident in Police parlance.)

As insurance matters in general are so important, do we have an "insurance man" in the club who can answer specific questions? The ARC intend to have an insurance consultant at the next meeting in Solihull on June 24th to answer insurance queries. Questions in advance please to Dickie Day, Hon. Sec. of the ARC. (His address is in your ARC yearbook.)

# GREEN-ROADING NEWS

Steve Kirby, Rights of Way Officer  
(Member of The Byways & Bridleways Trust)

## On The Beach.

No, this isn't a review of Neville Shute's book, it's a comment on the continuing saga of adverts showing vehicles where they shouldn't be. The Independent's weekend supplement of 22/4/89 contains two such adverts. The Daihatsu Sportrak advert inside shows the usual "driving through the surf" rubbish. This picture may well have been taken on a private beach or perhaps not in this country at all. It does however clearly encourage purchasers to drive on the beaches as well, but, as I have said before, there aren't many beaches in Britain you can legally drive on. On the back of the same magazine is a picture of a car in a Gore-Tex clothing advert, being pushed uphill over a presumably slippery grassy surface "...way off the beaten track.....", unquote. The twit pushing the car isn't even looking where he's going and the car is totally unsuited to the surface it's on anyway. Doesn't surprise me!

How long have we to put up with this kind of advert inciting people to break the law?

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## Roads Survey.

I have recently been supplied with a copy of a survey on the roads of England and Wales. I have extracted the following interesting information on the roads of 'our' two counties. In Berkshire there are 320km of green lanes whilst Hants has a generous 774. Dorset, Essex and Dyfed have more than Hampshire (821, 800 & 924km respectively) with Mid Glamorgan boasting a massive 2000km. There is a total of 13,172km of green lanes in England and Wales. Staffordshire and South Glamorgan claim to have none at all! Can anyone with knowledge of those areas confirm? West Glamorgan declined to declare a figure. Scotland uses a different method of classifying it's roads and are not included in the survey. (In the context of this article, a green lane has rights of passage for vehicles. Figures are as of 1987)

## ROVER RESCUE NEWS

John R Dowdeswell

Long, long ago, back in the darkest depths of what used to be known as winter, a group of six assorted Range-Rovers and Land-Rovers could have been seen rampaging the areas around Bournemouth. If you could have looked closely, you may have noticed several with a funny little windscreen sticker proclaiming membership to some club with the initials HBRO.

So what were these four wheeled monsters, most dressed for some serious action up to? And why was it that only the small village petrol station attendant was pleased to see them?

Well, to find the answer, we need to see two of the vehicles at about 7:00 am sitting on a freezing Bournemouth Promenade in gale force winds. Looking around, we see that it is the start of the "MAZDA WINTER RALLY". This was the Rover Rescue groups first real task. We had been asked to provide recovery on three of the 24 special stages in the rally, and we had some cracking good runs as the saying goes.

Since Neil and myself were staying in Bournemouth for the night before the rally, we agreed that we would cover stage one, with no real problems being anticipated here, as it was a tarmac stage down the promenade. This meant that those coming down on the day could have a nice leisurely start, coming straight to stage 12 for 12:15 pm.

About 11:45am myself and Neil rolled into Puddletown from stage 1, and decided to fill up with fuel now, as we had got to cover Stage 23 in the dark, and may need to run the engines for the lights, and there wouldn't be a lot of time later. Now; there is one petrol station in Puddletown, with two pumps. When we arrived, about four



Range-Rovers had already been in, and so you can imagine the mans face when all of a sudden Alan, Alex, and Gary also turn up, I think he thought Christmas was coming all over again!

We all proceeded to stage 12 in convoy, where we signed on, met up with Nick (who had been playing rally drivers since about 10:30), and entered the stage to our allocated locations. A nice little stage this one; being best described as like a small Welsh forest stage, with lots of little hills through coniferous plantations behind Thomas Hardy's cottage. Add to this some brilliant sunshine and pleasant temperatures, and it all adds up to a recipe for some excellent rallying.

With about an hour to wait before car 'O' was due, Alex decided that the cooling fan on his Range-Rover was in need of attention, so decided upon a major engine dismantling session in the middle of nowhere - I'm just glad that all our CB's seemed to be totally useless in this forest, and that I didn't find out! Apparently somebody also thought that they should try some Comp' Safari style recoveries of rally cars during this stage. I won't mention any names, since it wasn't really his fault that he didn't know the correct procedure. (Which is incidently that all assistance to competitors should be on foot by themselves or by generous spectators. If the stage is actually blocked by a car then the Stage Commander will suspend the stage, and only after you have received his authority should the recovery vehicle go onto the stage to either move the obstruction to a safe location, or out of the stage.)

At the close of stage 12, we all re-grouped after a bit more rally driving, and headed for stage 23; the one I for one was looking forward to the most. The second longest stage on the rally, in potentially the most challenging forest, and in the DARK!

A quick rape and pillage session in Bere Regis meant that food stocks were replenished and Gary's other half found something a bit more civilised than a tree to hide behind.

Onwards we went, until approaching the start of stage 23, we encountered rally car after rally car coming the opposite way down a single track road! "Darren!", shouts me, "I thought you knew where we were". A quick look at the rally safety plan showed that in fact the start of stage 23 was also the finish of stage 15, which was still running - phew, panic over! By the time we entered the stage, it was already getting dark, and suddenly there was nobody about any more. All the spectators, marshalls, and even the stage Doctors had gone home. I think that had not been for the fact that most of us had CB's and could fill in the gaps in the RAC radios, the stage could have been a potential disaster.

In fact, everything went smoothly, and little drama was encountered, except for the ice crystals forming in my apple juice (it was minus 5 degrees in the forest that night!), until we re-grouped at the stage finish, where we had to wait for Gary, who claimed he was being gentle to his old yellow thing - now there's something new! Whilst waiting, a certain individual from Central Sussex Motor Club approached one of the gang, and rather appologetically asked if we could assist them in getting back home! Their coach (52 seats and BIG) was stuck with a flat battery on the other side of the forest. Anybody with a 24 volt Land-Rover? No; "Oh well, we'll have to tow it" says Alan, and disappears off into the forest (after trying to separate my nudge bar from its mounts with his Range-Rover), never to be seen again that night (was this all a clever ploy?). Well, about 30 marshalls were ferried across the forest in the other Rovers, to their coach, which had now disappeared - "How can it disappear with a flat battery?" said somebody. Oh well, we despatched the stage commander to find the coach, while we

went to the pub. About 10:30pm Gary, Alex, and myself emerged from the pub after everybody else had gone off home (Yes, they did eventually find the coach), and think to ourselves that Alan hadn't turned up yet - maybe he had tried driving the Range-Rover up a tree again; so off we went in search of a possibly missing Range-Rover. We then drove round and round the forest until midnight, covering every single track in the forest with no sign of him, so we assume that he must have gone home, so we do likewise, with Alex following Gary in view of a possible battery charging problem and shortage of "go-juice".

So thats how it was for this years "Mazda", I think everyone enjoyed themselves, although Alan was heard to remark that the stages weren't bumpy enough! You should try it on leaf springs then Alan!

I think I can safely speak for the organisers of the rally as well as myself when I thank all of you who attended for your assistance. Rallies would not be possible without the recovery vehicles.

Those present were:

Myself and Darren Gay  
Nick Jennings  
Alex Waugh  
Gary Hodgson and wife  
Alan Tew and brother-in-law (I think)  
Neil Atkinson and Martin Miller

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Rover Rescue registration forms are available from me if you want to help us!

I have several more rallies lined up for the year, and hopefully shall try and organise some training and practice exercises during the summer, perhaps with some demonstrations by various organisations.

## DRAGON'S DRIVE

*News from the Hants & Berks Rover Owners' North Wales Correspondent*

Spring has arrived, or at least the Spring Equinox. On that night the North Wales Land Rover Club was to hold its AGM at the *Sportsman's Arms*, a pub about 1500ft asl, in the middle of the Denbigh Moors. You've guested it, it snowed! It wasn't too bad, but enough to put several cars in the ditch earlier, although it did not affect NWLRC members, even those who came by car.

Four days later saw the start of our Easter camping weekend in the mountains above Bala. By now the snow had gone, to be replaced by strong winds, even by N Wales standards. This wasn't helped by the campsite being about 1300ft up (the mountain behind is about 2800). To add the the problems the actual site is in a disused quarry, not too bad for caravans, but impossible for tents. They have to move out onto the mountain, and so into the wind, but even here there are problems getting pegs in. Eventually I had to admit defeat when the tent began to tear, luckily Colin Gross came to my rescue, with a spare berth in his caravan.

Colin was meant to be leading a small group from the Hants & Berks Rover Owners, where were the rest of you? That evening the wind dropped a bit, allowing a couple of people to get tents up, but the evenings activities, a barbecue with a few drinks, still finished early, as most people were so — cold! Standing by a barby in a hailstorm was an interesting experience.

The site at Arenig is a huge expanse of mountain side, I'm told it is 500 acres, but such figures are meaningless to me, but much of it is difficult to get too. For this reason the plan was that Saturday would be a working day, primarily to improve access. Much valuable work was done, but it was evident that with the main task of improving the way across the bog, we weren't even scratching the surface. This meant that Colin & I didn't feel so guilty when we sneaked off in the afternoon. It started raining as soon as we left the site anyway, so we didn't miss much.

We went to visit the Llechwedd Slate Caverns at Blaenau Ffestiniog. Older members may remember that the Hants & Berks have visited these before on an earlier camping trip, but Colin wasn't on that one, and I felt that it could stand a second visit. You are able to go down into the caverns to see how

## Diff-Lockitis.

slate was mined, in horrific conditions, until comparatively recently. Although it is now a major tourist attraction, it is still a working quarry, as they are coming in from the top, using open cast methods, to get the slate originally left in the support columns.

We got back just as scrutineering started. One of the advantages of combining a trial with a camping weekend is that many of the vehicles can be scrutineered the previous evening, saving valuable time in the morning. Another barbecue, this time a little bit warmer, when we were joined by the land owner and his family. After enjoying our hospitality, he left, much later, after announcing that we must be mad, he doesn't even leave his sheep there during the winter, it's too cold for them!

During the night the wind picked up again, causing problems for the tent occupants (one group had to take theirs down, finishing an uncomfortable night in the Land Rover) but Sunday dawned a beautiful still morning, and soon the sun was shining.

I won't go into details of the sections, as expected the hardest part was getting across the bog after lunch to the upper sections, involving much pushing, pulling and winching. Your correspondent (is that better Steve?) had his worst day ever (I seem to be getting worse each time I compete) whilst your Chairman now has another club's trophy to grace his mantle piece. A well deserved third place that brought admiration all day of the way he handled a 'W' reg. Range Rover, even if it did confirm the view of many that southerners must be overpaid!

With a warmer night, and the trial behind us, the evening was more in the North Wales Land Rover Club tradition, with Cliff Hulley, unofficial Club Entertainments Officer, in top form, and going on well into the night. Rumour has it the the NWLRC's newsletter editor was not looking at his best the following morning, but I can't remember much of it, so I can't comment.

The morning was spent as practise for the War of the Roses. I think the safest thing to say is that once the team is selected, they had better have another practise before heading for Cumbria, but I hope we shall see some of you there.

The weekend ended with a visit from the National Park Warden, following up reports that a group of gipsies had set up in an old quarry!.

Most of our events are held under an ARC permit, so you will always be welcome. It is a long way, but you will find the trials sites different from those in Hampshire. Red Leader

The diff-lock on my Range Rover has been taking longer and longer to engage over the past few weeks. The light has always been a bit erratic anyway so I jacked up a wheel to cycle the system and check that it really was locking. It wasn't. Fortunately, there aren't many parts to the system, but why Rover chose to use a pneumatic system when the control knob is less than a foot from the diff-lock itself is beyond me!

I disconnected the pipe from the engine and heard a reassuring hiss, proving that the "suck" was there. I then swapped the pipes to the diff-lock, thus reversing the operation of the switch, and found that it engaged without trouble but that it would not disengage until I swapped the pipes back. One line clearly wasn't working. I decided to take the valve apart to see how it worked and to see if it could be fixed. The valve assembly is crimped together and took some persuading to get apart. It's works would look familiar to someone well versed in steam engine practice. There are three pipes in a row, let's call them "A", "B" and "C". Pipe "A" is the engage line, "B" is the suction from the engine and "C" is the disengage line. The valve, a rubber block with a recess in it, slides along to join either "A" and "B", leaving "C" open to atmosphere; or "B" and "C", leaving "A" open to atmosphere, depending on whether the lock is to be engaged or disengaged. The mechanism was very dry and the rubber block was 'dragging' on it's working face and distorting such that "B" to "C" were working OK but in the "A" to "B" position, "A" remained closed. A little Vaseline on the working face restored operation satisfactorily so I reassembled and refitted the whole lot and tested it again. It functions OK except that the light doesn't work at all now! The reassuring hiss from the valve has returned.

If you get slow operation of the system, you can get lubricant to the valve face simply by disconnecting a pipe from the diff-lock and letting the suction draw some suitable lubricant through the plumbing. This will get on the valve face and eventually into the engine but a few drops of oil shouldn't do any harm there.

Steve Kirby.

## SAFETY CHECK - UPDATE,

Having written the original article about the Range Rover steering drop arm problem it became apparent, as the article circulated in various club magazines, that the fault occurred relatively frequently. So once again I started writing to Land Rover Parts Ltd. ( LRP Ltd. ) to try to find out if they knew why the arm did not fit correctly. When they had failed to reply in a reasonable time, I wrote to Land Rover Ltd., and within two days I received a phone call from LRP Ltd. The story goes as follows.

Land Rover Ltd. build Range Rovers with power steering boxes supplied by two manufacturers. Everyone at LRP Ltd. thought that they were identical and so only one drop arm was offered as a spare. In practice the two steering boxes are slightly different, and on November the 23rd 1988 LRP Ltd. issued a Parts Bulletin Update which listed two steering drop arm types. If you have a steering box manufactured by ADWEST then for a right hand drive Range Rover according to Land Rover Ltd. you need steering drop arm RTC 6396. For steering boxes by GEMMER you need drop arm RTC 6398. I believe that left hand drive vehicles use drop arms RTC 6397 and RTC 6399 respectively but check with your dealer. It would also seem likely that the problem would apply to Land Rover 90s and 110s.

The obvious question to ask is 'How do I tell which type of steering box I have?'. Don't bother looking at the vehicle, the steering box doesn't carry a maker's name. Another call to LRP Ltd. was required to solve the puzzle. Look at the steering box top cover plate (this is directly above the output shaft that carries the drop arm) and count how many bolts hold it to the main body. Three or four bolts (depending on the cover shape) indicates an ADWEST box, six bolts indicates a GEMMER box. Simple when you know how, but even LRP Ltd. took an hour to find the answer.

If, like me, you purchased your drop arm before November 1988 it is pure luck as to whether or not it is the correct type for your steering box. Currently I am trying to get a refund for the two incorrect drop arms, as so far as I am concerned they were unfit for the purpose for which they were sold.

Colin Gross.

Green Lane Trip, 7/5/89

Some time ago, a meeting place in Maidenhead thicket, near Pinkney's Green, was pointed out by Colin Gross, so I decided to use it as a start point for the outing on the 7th. Mark Benger, a Southampton University student, arrived shortly after me in a Series III ragtop followed by Chris Noel and Georgina in a rare six cylinder LWB Safari. Finally, Gary Green and Alan Byrne arrived in Gary's 88" shortly followed by Ashley Pocock and Jackie in a V8 lightweight.

The first lane we tried was blocked by rather official looking huge concrete blocks, so we turned back. The route I had chosen for the day was to swing round in a wide arc and end up near the start point, but this problem caused me to reverse the direction. The next few lanes were fine but we did find a rather sticky one where some towing had to be done. At the end of this lane, a property owner asked us if we couldn't find anything better to do! We weren't even on his land; it's amazing how intolerant people can be. The next lane was approached but careful examination of the 1:25000 Pathfinder map showed ponds and mud-flats right beside the road across low-lying land. Having been stuck already, I decided we should give that lane a miss until I had a chance to inspect it on foot.

We stopped for lunch in Holyport. It was such a beautiful day, we could have laid on the grass of Holyport green, beside the pub, all day!

The first post prandial (look it up!) lane was blocked by a parked horse box so we went elsewhere. That unfortunately involved another rather muddy lane. There had been a long dry period prior to this outing and I was surprised to find so much mud about. One vehicle (I cannot tell a lie, it was Gary!) had to be winched back out of a ditch. To be fair, he had seen me collect some body damage on a tree and tried to give it a wide berth. Too wide! My Tirfor winch is a bit of a fiddle to use, but I'm sure Gary will agree it was worth it! The last lane for me ended in a ford beside which was a notice telling horse riders of the safe route through the water. The notice was signed by Tim Moore, an HBRO member but clearly wearing his British Horse Society hat at the time! I had to go home to an HBRO committee meeting leaving the others to more lanes.

The two problems mentioned have been brought to the attention of the County Council. I'll let you know what happens.

Steve Kirby.



## Birth of a Hybrid. Part 2.

by Richard Stewart.

Well, about an hour later the two drowned rats had managed to get both axles fixed in position, all that was needed now was the engine and gearbox unit. This would have to wait till another day, but meanwhile Pete had a few adjectives to describe what he thought of both me and the weather, and fulfilling experience was not one of them!!!

Before bolting in the engine and gearbox I had to decide on the exhaust system, and I elected to keep it bog standard up to the rear bracket, where it was chopped off. The thinking behind this being that the more standard parts that could be retained, the better would be the eventual reliability.

So in went the revised exhaust, and then the engine/gearbox unit. It was at this time that I decided to purchase a house, so my road going Range Rover had to be sold, and some radical thinking had to be put into the racer.

At the time of purchase the vehicle was registered, and as I had the logbook in my possession, it was decided to put the vehicle back on the road. Not only did I want to use the vehicle for daily transport, but I also wished to use it in trial's etc. hence the "Birth of a Hybrid"!

First I had to source some parts, and Roy Michael supplied me with a bulkhead, windscreen unit and two front wing's for a very reasonable price. This gave me something to be going on with, so I offered up the bulkhead and wing's and clamped them into place.

Next part of the process concerns the positioning of the Land Rover outrigger's. Now, I must emphasise that this is the most crucial part of the whole operation, get this wrong and you will find out the hard way, that the rear body will not line up with the front!

The outrigger's must be positioned high enough up on the chassis rails to allow the rear body to clear the rear middle crossmember. As I said, get this wrong and you will have to cut them back off. Once I was satisfied with their position, all that remained was to weld them on.

The bulkhead then had to be bolted into place, previous to which I had already cleaned it up and sprayed it in it's final colour. This job being a lot easier to do now than later!. Following on with the wing's and a 110. front grill panel, which in turn was topped off with a 110. style bonnet.

Secondhand lower door panel's, and new door top's were sourced from John Craddock's as were a multitude of bit's and bob's. These were fitted, followed by the seat box.

The seat box requires some surgery to clear both the gearbox and lever's. It was at this point that I had to decide how to modify the handbrake, as in it's original position it comes up under the seat box. After much head scratching, I decided to use the existing lever, by lengthening the operating rod by five inches. To achieve this I cut the rod by the rear of the threaded portion and welded in a new section.

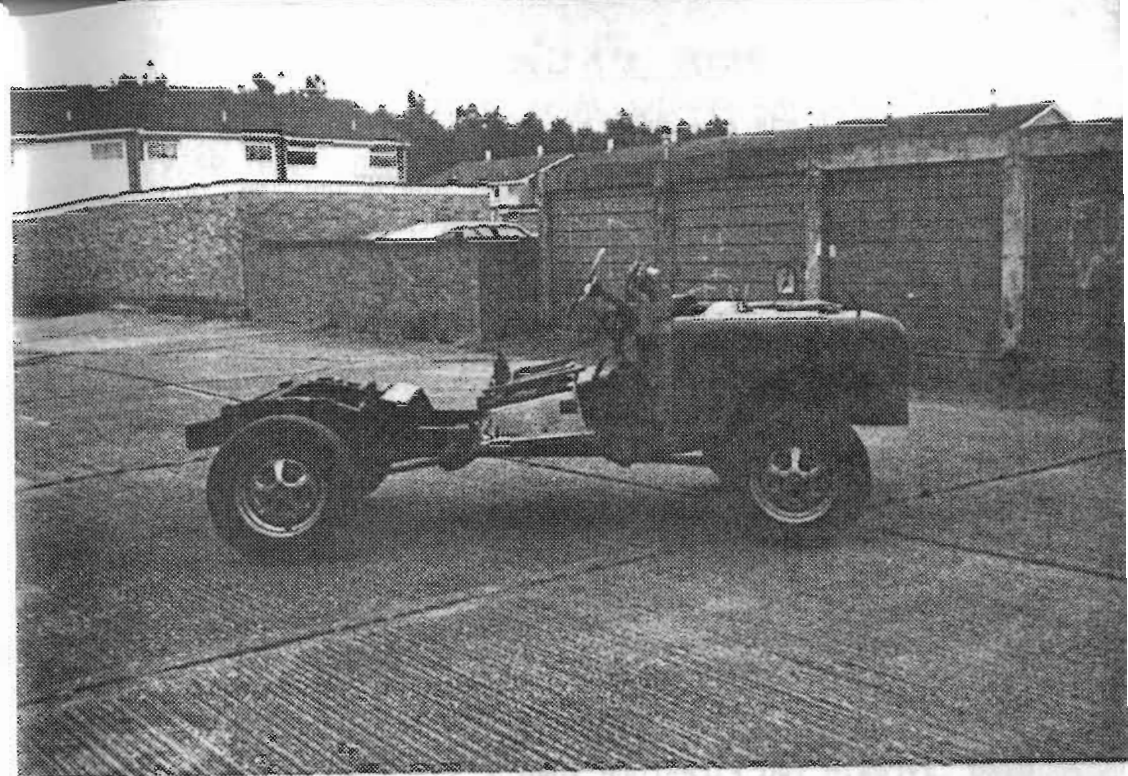
I then moved the whole lever forward on it's triangular mounting plate by one bolt hole. This meant that the bracket was only held on by one bolt, so an angled bracket had to be fabricated, to locate the top bolt hole back to the old rear hole. With care this bracket then determines the final position of the handbrake lever. I made mine so that the lever was in an upright position, when off. This worked out well as this put the handbrake lever, next to and in line with the high/low selection lever.

Following on from this, was the job of converting the diff/lock from vacuum operation to manual control. To do this I cut away the canister housing of the actuator, and removed the bolt holding the diaphragm in place. Onto this I welded a short threaded rod and replaced it back in the end of the selector rod. Now all that remained was to fabricate another lever and bracket's, Phew!! This new lever came up next to the main gearlever and fit's in quite neatly. This was all then clothed in a new gearbox tunnel, which then led on to the rear body.

The rear body I obtained from Keith Gott, and it was in such a straight condition that it seemed a shame to cut it up. But it had to be done, and I chose to remove both the wing panels by cutting, behind the door shuts, and then drilling out the rivets and spot welds. Next I removed the rear light panels together, complete with the underfloor crossmember. This made for easier rebuilding when the time came.

When all the panels were removed I then went about cutting approx. twenty inches from the inside floor, remembering of course to allow for the angles that needed reforming, to take the rear panels. It is surprising how flexible the rear assembly is, when no panels are in place, so I had to be extremely careful to ensure that it was square before I riveted the panels back on. One thing that I found, that if you put the tailgate in place, before riveting, it makes the rear square and rigid.

Altogether I removed approx. twenty nine inches from the length of the wing panels, before riveting back on, and used approx. 250 rivets. That makes your hands sore!! The actual construction of the rear body was undertaken on my parent's driveway, due to, the previously mentioned space problem. This was then whisked of to the lock up and offered up to vehicle, making sure all the door shut spacings were equal, and that it sat squarely on the chassis support pads.



Birth of a hybrid concludes next month.  
(This article is copyright Richard Stewart, 1989)

## FOR SALE

Note that small ads are free but please let me know when a sale is complete so I don't keep printing an out of date ad each month. Please help potential customers by quoting location and dialling code in your adverts. Thanx.

Commercial Adverts:- £1 per 1/4 page per issue or £10 per 12 issues. Due to layout considerations, consecutive publication cannot be guaranteed. (Add 50% if continuity is essential.)  
\*\*\* Free advertising if you sponsor a competition event! \*\*\*

\* Firestone Super All-Traction (SAT) Tyres.  
7:50 x 16, 6 or 8 ply. £45+ VAT. Delivery can be arranged at extra cost. Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871 for more information.

\* Land Rover Bits.... Hard top (c/w safari rear door) for LWB, £175. 4 LWB rims with tyres, £15ea. Bonnet, £10. Roof rack with ladder for LWB, £60. Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871

\* Used Tyres:- Two Firestone Town & Country M+S Radials, slightly worn. One Avon Ranger II crossply, half worn. Phone Jeff on 01-898-2120.

\* Range Rover Clutch Bits. Disc and pressure plate, new. £90 Phone Mike Cunningham on 0252 (Fleet) 626693.

\* Bolt on Roll Bar for Truck Cab Land Rover, complete with 4 Cibies and 2 Halogen spot lights. Two rotating orange beacons for cab roof, plus 1000lb electric winch. Contact Mr. Perry at home on Romsey 884237 or at work on Southampton 824802.

\* Land Rover IIa bits. LWB axles with good chrome, steering box, two 7:50x16 tyres, two 6:00x16 tyres on wheels, front wings. Plus Srs.III bonnet and loads of odds and ends. Phone John on 0895-33568

\* Mobelec Magnum contactless electronic ignition unit for Rover V8, £25 Phone Steve on 01-894-3961. (W. London)

\* Canvas top for 82" for sale or exchange for an 88" one. Phone Gerard Morris in Lyminster, (Near Southampton) Hants on 0590-72614

## FOR SALE

\* Range Rover Bits:- Pair front springs £5. Dog guard VGC £30, several 50mm ball hitches, £2 each, Set rear light protectors 90% complete, £20. Contact Nick Jennings on 0734-471258 (home) or 0734-471528 (business). Caversham, near Reading, Berkshire.

\* Alex's June-bug Sale.....

Austin Allegro, 'S' Reg. Body still sound, engine no longer smokey now it's run out of oil!, new cylinder head included in sale (it's the best bit!), still no MOT, tax or log book, still only whatever price you want to offer. Delivery service of remains is available. Do not miss this exciting(?) offer!

New Land Rover door handle and lock assemblies complete with two keys. (driver's side) Genuine parts. Series II or III. Surplus stock. 50% off list.

TYRES:- One Goodyear Super Hi-Miler 750x16. Five various 185R14 (Suit Transit, etc.). Two various 560x13. One 'Remould' 520x13. Four various 155R13.

Any offers? All very cheap as I need the Garage space. Phone Alex Waugh on ODIHAM 704872.

\* Four used Tyres on White SWB rims. Two Avon Traction Mileage 600x16. Two Firestone Town & Country 600x16. All with loadsa tread. Offers to Dave Catlin on 0329-46235 (Fareham)

\* Set of Five Tyres on LWB Rims. Michelin 205x16 M+S Radials seen about 7500 miles. Rims VGC. £120. Phone Gary Green on Eversley (0734) 733414. (Near Wokingham, Berks.)

\* TOW ROPES 12-ton, standard length, made of Nylon, £25. 7.6-ton standard length, made of Polypropylene, £18. Phone Gary Green on Eversley (0734) 733414. (Near Wokingham, Berks.)

\* Rover 90 Parts:- Engine, good chassis, good rear springs, excellent fuel tank, prop-shafts, full front suspension unit, steering box, full dashboard, Smith's heater, radiator and good front grille. Plus full aluminium body kit comprising boot, bonnet, doors and other odd items. No reasonable offer refused. Contact Dylan Smith on 0732-822236. Sevenoaks, Kent.

\* Truck Cab, very good condition for SrsII/III Land Rover. Phone Mark Jones at Gerrards Cross on 0753-887871

## VEHICLES FOR SALE

\* Series One 88" Comp Safari Racer. Full roll cage and crash bars all round. Radiator in the back. Engine has recently been reworked but has no clutch and still needs to be refitted. Gearbox OK. Needs work on brakes. Meets ARC specs. Has been raced successfully by another HBRO member but now offered for sale at a giveaway £300 by Hugh Glossop, in Mortimer, Berkshire. Tel: 0734-333409. Also available, one 6:00 size Firestone SAT as new. Offers?

\* Rare 1955 Series One Station Wagon. Good chassis, body a bit tatty. Yellow. Series II running gear throughout (2 1/4 petrol engine, gearbox, axles etc.) Good solid workhorse or restoration project. Contact Gary Hodgson in Petersfield, Hants on 0730-67146.

## WANTED

\* Tailgate gas struts for Range Rover. Mine have gone droopy! Please phone Steve Kirby on 01-894-3961 before he bangs his head again.

\* PHOTO'S of my Land Rovers in action:- WOW 293 (later ACC 445A), OEY 366S and KOM 682, "TOBY". Phone Dave Cuthbert on Colwyn Bay 0482-534417.

\* Truck Cab & Windscreen frame & Tailgate for 88".  
Phone John on 0895-33568.

\* Canvas top for 88" Or exchange for an 80" one. Phone Gerard Morris in Lymington, (Near Southampton) Hants on 0590-72614

## "ALTERNATOR CONVERSION MADE EASY"

A step by step guide to convert from dynamo to alternator. £2.95 post paid. (Parts required are available) Please send cheque/postal order to:-

K. Wiggins, 9 Cae Garw, Dinas Powys, South Glamorgan, CF6 4UG, WALES.

## *EVENTS FOR YOUR DIARY*

\* Green-lane trips will be as shown below. (Usually the second Sunday of the month). The rights of way officer will usually be present to indicate rights of way on the maps. It is recommended that those involved obtain current maps of Hampshire and Berkshire.

\* Second Wednesday each month, Noggin & Natter at the Hind's Head, Aldermaston. (From 7:30 p.m.)

\* Last Wednesday each month, Noggin & Natter at the White Swan, Bank Street, Bishop's Waltham, Hants. (From 7:30 pm). See OS sheet 185, SU555175 approx.

May 31st First meeting at the "new" pub, the White Swan.  
See above for location. Start at 7:30 pm.

June 11th Green lane trip. Phone Steve or Gary.

June 14th "Noggin & Natter" at the Hind's Head in  
Aldermaston, Hants. Opens at 7:30 p.m.

June 24th. ARC meeting at the Land Rover Solihull factory.

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## ROVER RESCUE NEWS

Date: Sunday 25th June 1989  
Event: The "Sort Out Stages" Rally.  
Location: Bramshill Forest complex, OS map 186.  
Organisers: Farnborough & District Motor Club.

Following the "Dimanche Tour" Rally in March in the same area, we have been asked again to provide recovery on this rally. Last time, I felt the stages could have done with some more cover, so I would like to take a few more vehicles this time.

If you are interested, please let me know.

John Dowdeswell. (Tel: 0705-581970)

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