

## An introduction to sportscar events organised by the Guild of Motor Endurance

Driving a sportscar at an eager pace on quiet winding roads in a foreign country takes some beating. Touring events with exciting destinations continue to inspire sportscar enthusiasts to get behind the wheel and take up the next challenge. Keeping up a 30mph (50kph) average on some roads, especially if they are demanding back roads, or in the mountains, can be quite difficult, even more so over many days. Guild of Motor Endurance events have always been a test of car and crew. The fact that you are driving a hand built sportscar adds to the challenge. Whether you built your sportscar, or prepared it yourself, or just sit in and turn the key, you will still have to keep it going should anything go wrong.

Touring in a sportscar with spectacular scenery and on great roads is just the start. If you wish to take it more seriously then there other objectives to aim for. The all important 'being a Finisher' is the **first**, this is accomplished by reaching all the main Controls (morning start, lunch, and evening finish controls). **Secondly**, there is attaining a Gold, Silver or Bronze Standard. This is more difficult and involves trying to visit as many controls as possible, on the route, while they are open (for 15 minutes for each car).

So keeping going steadily without being delayed is the key, it shouldn't be that difficult if all goes well. Just refuelling in amongst other sportscars can consume valuable minutes, the minutes that you would have taken to travel so many kilometres down the road. Taking a wrong turn and having to recover the route is another time consumer. Then there are the possible problems with the car, and although most can be put right, reliability is all important. A well designed car built carefully and prepared methodically has the most going for it.

Then, for the crews who enjoy something slightly more competitive, and have their eye on a trophy, endurance has a **third** and more difficult objective. One of arriving at each control at your due time. A navigator who can control the pace as well as giving correct and precise directions are a valuable commodity. It's satisfying to stop at a control on time, though keeping it up day after day is where the pressure builds up. Crews should aim to enter a control as soon after their due 'in time' in order to keep a clean sheet. It's not about speeding and the penalties for early arrival are harsh.

You will soon become accustomed to the Road Book 'Tulip' navigation with it's straight forward junction diagrams and distances showing the route very clearly. Road Books are handed out at the Start, and can also be backed up by cross referencing the map of the country. This is not just in case you get lost, diversions may be necessary if roads are blocked. And if a marshal is not there to re-direct you, it will be down to each crew to find their way back to the route and reach the next possible control on time.

Each marshall uses a rally 'time of day' clock, pressing a button and then recording the time as you stop at the red board. 'Standard time' is the due arrival / departure time of an imaginary 'car 0'. Adding your morning start minute to this time (written at the top of your Route Card) will give you your due arrival and departure time at each control. You will be given a new Route Card each morning. Each day, car 'one' will start at 08:01. If your Start minute is 15 (\*Standard Time + 15 minutes) you will move off at 08:15. It really is as simple as that.

Being a member of a three car team adds another dimension to endurance, and it's intriguing keeping up with how your team is doing overall. A team also has the added advantage of sharing equipment and knowledge. It is a real accomplishment to have all three cars finish in the lead and take the team awards. If you would like to contact other entrants to form a team please contact the organisers. Teams can be formed right up to the Start.

Brantz manufacture a simple, easy to use trip meter (available at discount to competitors), their contact number is tel: +44 (0)1943 880499. Their web site is [www.brantz.co.uk](http://www.brantz.co.uk) Also useful if you are having a problem fitting or setting up your trip meter.