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Fas **TF**orward



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SHOWCASE!

On Sunday 7th May MGF Register members took part in the Showcase Classic & Sports Car Gala charity fundraising event, in the grounds of Lord Cowdray's estate, at Midhurst, in West Sussex www.cowdray.co.uk.

A great selection of Fs and TFs were on show, both taking part in the "Showcase Run" road run, and also displaying on the showground with the many MGCC SE centre members present.

As the event was organised by MGCC and MGOC members it was no surprise that MG was by far the most popular marque among the 300 cars entered, with Triumph and Morgan clubs also well represented on the day, along with an Aston Martin DB5 formerly owned by Sir Paul McCartney, and some very nice examples of Panther, Lotus, Bentley, Jensen, and Alvis, to name just a few.

Guest star of the event was double Olympic gold medallist (London and Rio) Joanna Rowsell Shand MBE, representing the charity Alopecia UK, for which the event raised just over £3,000. Joanna wore her Olympic gold medals for all to see, and made herself available to just about all of the many people who wanted "selfies" with her and the Olympic medals.

And so, after enjoying cooked breakfasts, served from a traditional shepherd's hut on a slightly chilly morning, drivers taking part in the Showcase Run part of the event clambered back into their cars, and set off at 09:30 when Joanna cut the ribbon at the starting line.

The route took cars east along the edge of Burton Mill Pond, across the picturesque Greatham Bridge over the river Arun, down the leafy lanes between Pulborough Brooks and the Parham estate, and then westbound back over the Arun again at Amberley. The hill climb part of the route at Houghton provided views over the South Downs, before the cars then wound their way through the pretty National Trust village of Slindon, and out through some tight bends at Eartham Wood towards the Goodwood race circuit. A steep descent down the winding road into South Harting village finally led drivers back along the leafy lanes of Elsted, and through the gates of the Cowdray estate to the finish line where each driver was greeted by Joanna, and presented with a souvenir of the day.

Unscheduled road works that popped up overnight in the middle of Midhurst caused a minor diversion, but most drivers soon found themselves back on track, albeit with some returning back onto the estate through a totally different gate! Nevertheless, everyone seemed to enjoy the run, and the smiling faces in all the photos of the cars out on the route seemed to tell their own story.

Those who chose the more relaxed option of remaining on the showground for the morning were treated to "Jazz on the lawn" by the FB Pocket Orchestra, and then around lunch time the party really got underway with live music from 1940s vocal harmony group The Cadettes, who had some of our attendees up on their feet and dancing. Many an F or TF driver was seen tucking into the vintage style afternoon teas, which proved very popular indeed! There was also plenty to see among the stalls, with everything from antiques, to toy cars, car polish, cakes, and autojumble on offer. By mid afternoon, with the sun finally warming our backs, attendees relaxed on rugs and chairs admiring the views over the nearby hills, while everyone enjoyed lunch to the sound of a great performance from the Petworth Town Brass Band.

Choosing winners amongst so many fabulous cars was a tough job for classic car expert Jamie Cripps, from Milestone Classics, who did a great job selecting finalists, with the MG marque faring very well against the Aston Martins, Bentleys and Jensens.



Amy Johnson & Jen Chambers from Alopecia UK, in the charity's branded MG TF LE500.



The shepherd's hut serving cooked breakfasts was very welcome on a chilly morning



Malcolm & Janine Le Grys on Greatham Bridge



Malcolm Lowe's 1999 MGF at the finish line with Jo Rowsell Shand MBE

Sadly no MGF Register cars won prizes, though we did for a moment think we might have been in with a chance when Joanna was asked to choose the "Star's Favourite Car". The Alopecia charity's use of a branded TF as their publicity vehicle might, after all, have brought a bit of positive bias our way (!) from the charity's ambassador, but in the end the trophy went to a green duo tone 1958 Austin A55 Mk1.

There were also some fantastic prizes won in the raffle, including a day at the races, dinner for two, and a t-shirt signed by several of Joanna's Olympic medal winning team mates. A memorable day for all was brought to a close by a fabulous performance from folk pop group Fred's House.

The whole event was covered by a film crew, and a team of photographers out on the route, who captured some excellent images of all the Fs and TFs, as they made their way over bridges, around bends, and down leafy lanes. So, whether you were there on the day or not, just go to www.showcase-classic-cars.events to watch the official event video, and download some lovely images, or order prints (from which 50% of the proceeds will go to Alopecia UK).

A special mention should go to Mike Stafford from www.mjsautoandmarine.co.uk for providing the event roadside recovery, and for displaying his turbocharged TF on the showground. Special thanks are also due to Tony and Jamie from www.milestoneclassics.co.uk for competition judging and commentary.

The next Showcase is already being planned, and promises to be even bigger and better, with the MGF Register invited to take a leading role. Details will be announced in these pages in due course.

Richard Telling in a Cool Blue TF
being pursued by a Kougar Jaguar on
the Showcase Run.

Pic : Mark Galbraith



www.mgfgregister.org