



KEITH HARRIS visited the Cornish venue on his way to the runner-up spot in last year's Aldon/HSA Speed Championship in his Formula Ford Jamun M90. To mark the return of our Drive it! series, Keith gives a driver's-eye view of Werrington on the run-up to this year's HSA visit on May 2.

Werrington Park Hillclimb is located to the north of Launceston, in Cornwall. Access from the Midlands - despite living in Worcestershire, I felt that the 400 mile round trip was well worth the effort and expense - is by way of the M5 to Exeter and then the A30 via Okehampton to Launceston, although Launceston town centre is no place to be with a racecar and trailer as access is restricted.

The Hillclimb is situated in a private country estate, and is similar to Wiscombe Park in its style and setting. The event organisers, Plymouth Motor Club, have the use of the site once a year and are very friendly to competitors and assistants. The Club's main sporting focus is in the Rally field and running their popular Hillclimb is an annual diversion that has been established for many years. With the second day of their weekend double-header

forming a round of our own Aldon/HSA Speed Championship, members should not miss the opportunity offered to them to compete at Werrington.

As is the norm at most country estate venues, facilities are basic with portable toilets and no fixed buildings. Alongside the startline, the paddock area is grass and reasonably level. The road itself is approximately twelve feet wide and has a smooth, grippy surface - except, that is, for the cattle grid!

This is covered with steel plate and crossed at 100mph in my Formula Ford Jamun - very exciting!

The feed to the start line is through the paddock, turning left to line up with the start. Tyre warming, by the way, was not allowed on the day of my visit.

From the startline, the road curves away out of sight to the right, with the large tree to the left appearing closer to the road than it actually is. Good grip levels mean a brisk launch into this first section. Alongside the tree is the first right-hander, but it's

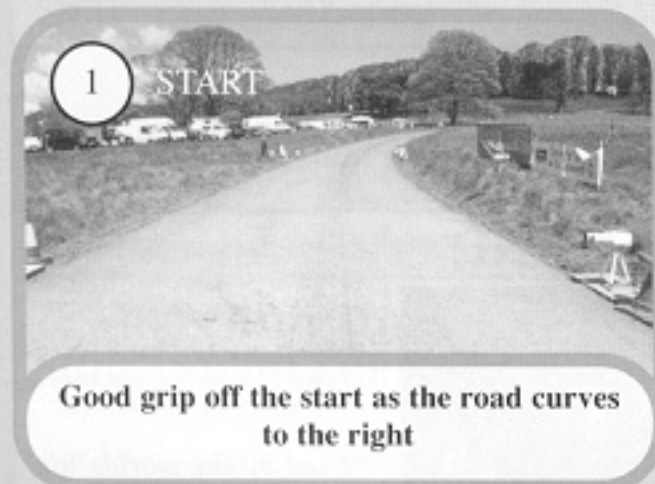
not quite as sharp as it looks, so keep full throttle and hang on as you approach. After the cones the corner tightens, common sense dictating a settling lift, but then the corner opens out encouraging an enthusiastic approach to the next section. Now the road climbs across open country, both gradient and adrenaline flow increasing. In the Jamun, we're in top gear and approaching 90mph. As the horizon approaches, the road direction becomes something of a mystery, but in fact it bears left, so hang on and keep the boot in!

Now the road levels a bit and multi-coloured tyre barriers suggest an obstacle approaching. The obstacle is confirmed as the famous cattle grid with its steel plate covering for the event. The road narrows, too. Could be fun in the wet! Once through here there are more tyres ahead, but don't be tempted to brake too soon. Keep going until you're over the crest and into the shade of the trees. A white gate in a garden wall is ahead, which indicates the direction of the road - sharp left. Time for much braking and downshifting - look for tyre marks on the road. Most cars will take this tight left-hander in second gear. It can be slippery, so a cautious approach is needed to maintain the best momentum.

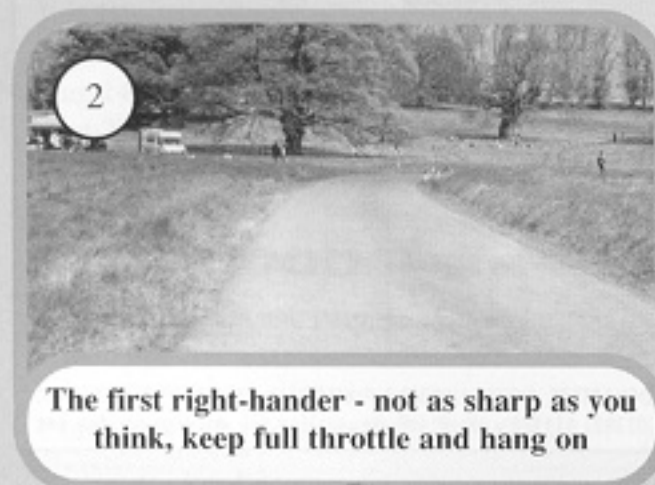
Now comes a 60-yard sprint to the next set of tyre barriers and a 90 degree right-hander. The end of the tyres indicates the apex of the corner, which is very narrow through a gateway although it opens on the exit. There's a short run to the next bend left, but the off-camber approach is tricky so great care is needed. The camber improves but still needs treating with caution as the hedge on the right conceals a stone wall - very damaging to cars!

Hard acceleration now as the slight left/right Ess bend can be taken flat. The bollard on the left is to discourage the use of the narrow grass verge and adjacent stone wall. Keep accelerating over the brow as the road remains straight even though it's out of sight and now you'll see the tyre barriers marking the finish line. There is a long slowing down stretch before the parking area and the adjacent public highway. Marshals will direct competitors where to park, and cars return to the start down the course in batches.

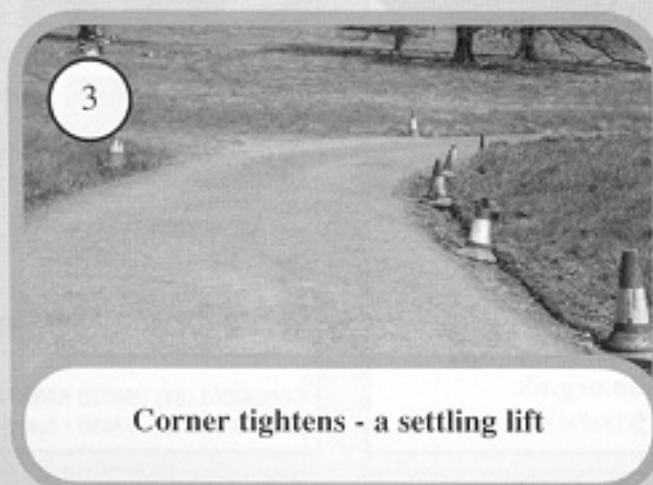
Werrington Park is great fun. It's well worth a visit, and is the only event I've ever been to where the local vicar blessed the day's event!



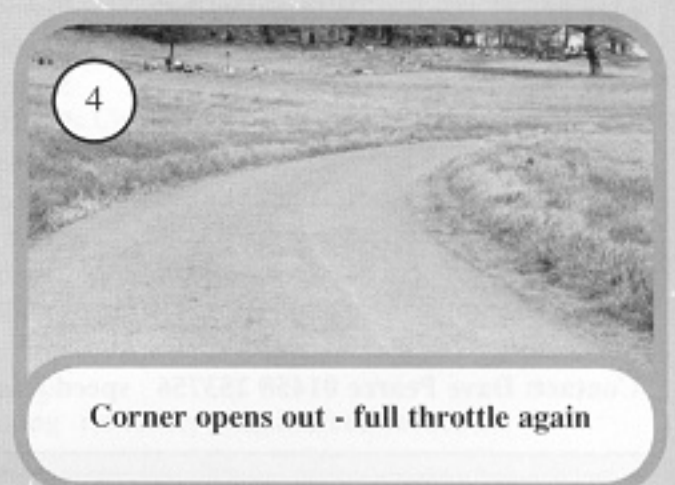
Good grip off the start as the road curves to the right



The first right-hander - not as sharp as you think, keep full throttle and hang on



Corner tightens - a settling lift



Corner opens out - full throttle again



5

Gradient, adrenaline and speed all increase. Top gear now



6

Where does it go now? Prepare for left hand curve



7

Keep it flat through slight left



8

Multi-coloured tyre barriers indicate an obstacle



9

Hang on in top over cattle grid - watch steel plate surface if it's wet



10

Keep up speed until you are over the crest and the shaded area approaches



11

Watch for white gate - sharp left - watch for tyre marks on the road!



12

Second gear, cautious approach as it can be slippery



13

60 - yard sprint leads to 90 right



14

End of tyres indicates apex of corner. Very narrow through gateway, but road opens on exit



15

Short run to next left, care needed due to off-camber approach



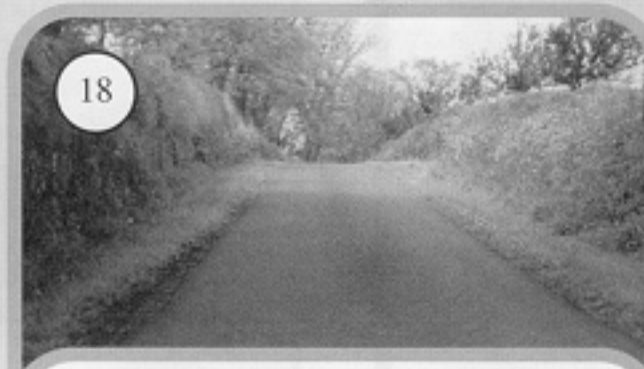
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Camber improves but caution still needed - hedge on right hides stone wall!



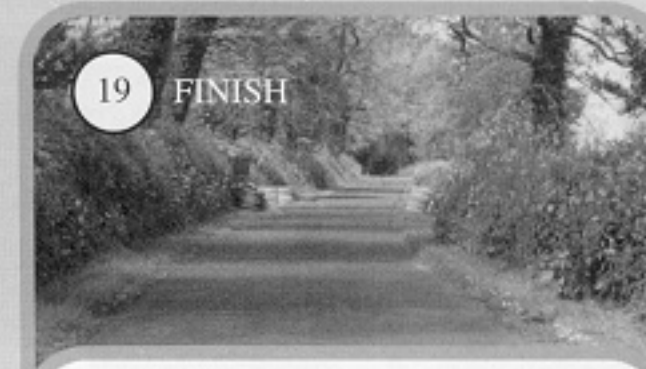
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Hard acceleration needed here - Ess bend can be taken flat, through bollard protects wall on left



18

Keep it flat - it's straight!



19

FINISH

Tyre barriers indicate finish. Plenty of room to slow