

Transfer machines are essentially tools for mass production. It is a prerequisite that the end product shall be standardised and in such demand as to permit reasonably continuous employment of the plant. If the concern has been able to set up and maintain an efficient flow production line - that line is ripe for automation. Therefore it is understandable why the automobile industry have been the leaders in the employment of transfer machines.

To be concluded next month.

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### THE NIGHT NAVIGATION RALLY - JUNE 23/24

The 7th Midsummer Night Trial certainly lived up to its reputation of providing a really brisk night's driving, free from the perils of 4-wheeled strollers, if not from the 4 wheeled drifts of other competitors.

At first glance, the route card to Time Control 1 appeared to be pure nonsense, until I realised it was in reverse; then the fun began, particularly for my navigator. Like the bird that flies backwards because its not interested where its going, but is keen to know where its come from, he was dead set on turning his seat round, and sitting with his back to the engine. However, by dint of covering about twice the necessary mileage, we clocked in 11 minutes late. Incidentally I learn that one competitor who had quite recently acquired a rally-worthy car, and should know this part of the country much better, belted off for the Babraham cross-road a mere half-mile from the start, and was disappointed not to read "Cowlinge 1 $\frac{1}{4}$ " on the sign-post.

The second section started disastrously. In our attempts at fathoming out the first two route checks, we passed the much interested crowd at Time Control 1 no less than four times, and I was really hurt when someone yelled out there was only one more lap to do. The next few route checks, alternately on one map, and then

on the other, gave my navigator the opportunity for putting on his celebrated "Novice papering the small bedroom" act. However, pressing on, we routed out the remaining route checks, some easy, some difficult. Needless to say, the easy ones proved to be decoys set to trap the navigationally uncertain. Ignoring Time Control 2, we set off for various out of the way villages to record their telephone box numbers. To my disgust, my navigator here took the opportunity of gauging the local humour by stopping to study the doodling usually found in telephone boxes. Refreshed at having accused the organiser of being related to a whole barrow-load of monkeys, we blithely set about collecting the letters and numbers to enable us to get to Time Control 4. After searching one lonely spot, we had the bright idea of examining two huge but friendly Suffolk horses who were interested spectators of our activities. We were convinced it wasn't beyond the organiser to have stuck a number on one of their rumps! Later being barred by a river bridge under repair, my game navigator set off Piric fashion for the check point half a mile up the road. Returning with a brilliant finishing spurt, I gently pointed out to him that he'd gone to the wrong map reference, and no amount of persuasion would make him repeat the performance. Still pressing on, pausing only for a word with the sick and wounded, particularly the sick, we succeeded in meeting another competitor in a lane comfortably wide enough for a perambulator, but fixing him with a gimlet eye, he promptly and politely backed into a field, wherein five strong men were needed to lift him out again. Realising we were again too late for the Time Control, we took to plotting the remaining checks obtained by cross bearings, and as a refreshing mental exercise at 5 in the morning, I can recommend this. This finish at last after a nightmare drive, and cunningly noticing just which nettle was the requisite 16 ft. from the rear of the organiser's car, we relaxed and reflected over breakfast.