

ship carrying their cars would dock in time for practice. Spice had a particular problem. His 1300 Mini had engine problems and needed to be repaired before it could run; a task eventually carried out on the trailer during the Saturday practice session. From Atlanta, Georgia, came Richard Longman with another 1300 Mini (Spice's was also a Longman prepared car) to meet up with his business partner George Toth who had travelled out from England on the same International Caribbean flight as us.

With Gordon Spice and Alec Poole came Kaye Griffiths and Derek MacMahon. One time Formula 5000 driver Kaye was hoping for a run in one of Gordon's cars and MacMahon, part owner of the Alec Poole Escort BDA, was ready to run the ex-Poole, Bill Shaw prepared, Rover V8, that raced in England a few years back and now lives on Barbados.

By mid week the island was getting quite full. Guyanians (Terrapin driver Eric Vieira in

timekeepers box (each time you pass the timekeepers box in fact) and that determines your grid position for your first race of the day. From then on your next grid position (everyone races at least three times) is determined by the time in the previous race.

All very confusing to the visitor but very essential to the Bajan organiser and spectator. Which is why even for the unpublicised practice day people start to appear in the spectator enclosure or sitting on the high corrugated iron fence that separates the circuit from the sugar cane on two sides of the track.

Which is also why the organisers take the precaution of spraying the enclosure fence and nearby grass with tar. 'To prevent them getting over excited and trying to climb over onto the track', explains one official.

Practice is exciting, even for a good, solid, Englishman brought up on very orderly timed sessions where everyone's trying to beat the clock not the guy in front. These

And for the first time for a week it's raining. John Crowson has intermediate tyres which he decides to fit to his only set of wide wheels (Goodyear man gets busy) but Dave Gould has a problem: stay off slicks and hope it dries or change to full wets (again only one set of wheels) and be completely uncompetitive if it dries. Dave decided to stay on the dry tyres — which is the right decision, as is John's move to intermediates as they are softer than the slicks and drop his lap times by at least a second in the dry.

Still no roll cage in the Rosemary Smith car but then another Datsun appears, fully prepared and with the twin carb GX engine. A few laps before racing starts prove it works well but a class of three is hardly what the Irish driver expected.

The racing itself need not be detailed. In a way it was an anti climax to the preparations and the practice. All the drivers line up on the grid for presentation to Senator Dennis Hunte of the Barbados government who



You don't see this in England: Escort leads Holden Torana XU-1, Mini, Datsun 1600 SSS and Vauxhall Ventura. Bajan racing is variety

particular), Bermudans and Trinidadians. Signing on took place mid week at the Barbados Rally Club's club house which is also the main grandstand for the race track. During one of the unofficial Terrapin practice sessions Mike Crabtree appears. On holiday but no mean driver in his own right Mike is helping another of the Bajan 'characters' Andrew Phillips sort his triple carburetted Vauxhall Ventura which is no way as slow as you would imagine a triple carb Vauxhall Ventura racer should be. Then The Monkey arrives.

Yes, folks. Tony 'Monkey' Brown. Star of many a Gerry Marshall column (remember the man who swapped an Alfa Romeo for seven petrol pumps and a caravan and, more seriously, financed Damien McGee's activities). The Monkey was also on holiday, but looking for a Kart ride as several races for this class were listed in the 23 race programme for the coming Sunday.

Come Saturday and it's practice. Not as you would think a case of circulating and putting up a good lap time. Oh no. That's too boring for the Bajans. Practice means races. All the classes line up on the grid and belt away for a short race. If you want to be timed you raise your hand as you pass the

West Indians can't pass over a chance to have a go at each other. Surprisingly it passes without incident, except that Gordon Spice manages to crunch the front of the Wisharts Gp One Capri (Group Two in Barbados because of its power output) and the Spice racing mechanics are still working on the beleaguered Mini.

Meanwhile a bit of drama begins to reach its head in the English (sorry Irish) camp. Rosemary came out with a promise of two cars and a kart to drive. She's asked about their whereabouts all week and got the usual Bajan reply: 'No problem'. Come practice and only a Group One Datsun 1200 with no roll cage and indeterminate steering has appeared. The man from International Caribbean Airways — who sponsor the meeting as well as the British team — is annoyed, so is the rest of the 'Team Terrapin' contingent who are, by now, all in love with Rosemary because she cooks their breakfast every morning. And, understandably, so is Rosemary.

In fact Miss Smith is getting a trifle fed up with the whole affair. But, there's a promise of something for race day and there'll be 'No problem'!

Race day starts at 7.30 am for drivers.

then takes a drive round the narrow, twisty, track in a superb 1930's replica made by the Classic Car Company of USA, whoever they may be. The antics on the track are little different from those anywhere else. The curious Bajan classes allow keen competition. MGB's race a Mexico in Group One, Minis mix it with Sprites in Group Two and such varied machinery as a Holden Torana and the Vauxhall Ventura do battle with Poole's Escort in the big class. Several HB Vivas go quickly, and the prize (if there was one) for most immaculate car at the meeting looks certain to be carried off by the DTV prepared Fireza of Brian Ibrahim from Trinidad, who has a really terrific girl friend. And to add to the miscellany of makes there's the V8 Rover/Escort, a rapid Datsun 1600SSS and a two litre, highly tweaked, VW from Trinidad that keeps opening its left door as it goes round a right hand bend.

Alec Poole is smooth and fast, too fast for the locals, and only Brian Ibrahim can get anywhere near him although, even so, the experienced in the pits reckon Alec was holding back to play to the crowd.

Playing to the crowd is important. Longman and Spice put on a demonstration of