

Life in the *EASTLANE*...

Becoming something of a tradition in the *Surrey Life* calendar, once again this summer we fielded a team for Damon Hill's charity go-karting challenge at Daytona Sandown in Esher. Here, our man at the wheel, motoring maestro **Ade Holder**, reports on a memorable day...

PHOTOGRAPHY: MARK LEWIS PHOTOGRAPHY

When the lovely people at MPA Creative dropped me a line, inviting us once again to field a team for the Damon Hill go-karting challenge in aid of Guildford's halow project, my first thoughts were, "wow, has it really been a year already?" The answer was, of course, yes! So it was time once more to dust off my second-hand racing suit and pit myself, on behalf of *Surrey Life*, against some of the UK's best racing drivers and keen amateur karting folk from various local businesses - all in aid of a wonderful charity; happy days!

Regular readers may recall hearing about team *Surrey Life*'s endeavours last year

and how we came 17th out of some 30 teams; not bad at all, we felt, for our hastily assembled motley crew! You may also remember reading about how intense karting can be: hot, loud and, above all, absolutely brilliant (for the full article, pay a visit to the *Surrey Life* website at surreylife.co.uk). So, taking that as read, what did this year's event have to offer?

Well, once again, there was the two-and-a-half hour team race, a number of high profile racing people, great weather, a barbecue and an amazing charity auction. But in addition this year, there were also more teams, Formula 1 legend Damon Hill took to the track himself and we were all allowed to use brand-new karts that had arrived from



France only days before. What more could anyone ask for?

Suffice to say, the competition was intense, and clearly the teams that had bid donations to the halow project to have a pro on their side did rather well, but the racing was top-notch throughout the field and *Surrey Life* came in a satisfactory 14th place out of 35 teams. There were some spills as you might expect, with one racer being temporarily parted with his kart during one incident, but everyone was intact when the chequered flag was waved, so well done to the Daytona team for keeping everyone on the straight and narrow. The biggest news of the night was probably Josh Hill taking the fastest lap title for the event, beating his Formula 1 champion father Damon - that and the fact that the event raised an amazing total of over £20,000 for the halow project.

A great cause

Indeed, although the event is clearly great fun, it also has a serious side in that it aims to raise funds and awareness for this wonderful local charity, which supports



ABOVE: The *Surrey Life* team with Ade Holder, right; Matt Steele, left; Pete Young, front; and Rob Farquhar, back



ABOVE: Racing legend Damon Hill takes a moment's breather at Daytona Sandown in Esher

Damon Hill's top 5 reasons to help the halow project

By getting involved and supporting halow you will be...

- 1 Breaking down social barriers to help young people live a full and active life in the community
- 2 Making sure they have a great range of social activities to take part in, so they can make friends, build confidence and have fun
- 3 Helping them to develop their talents and skills as well as to learn new ones too
- 4 Supporting them to think about and plan what an independent life might look like
- 5 Working with other businesses and organisations in the area that want to make sure there are opportunities out there for young people with a learning disability to live the life they choose

• Check out halow-project.org.uk for more information on the charity

young people with learning disabilities across Surrey. And as the patron of the halow project, who better than Damon Hill to sum up why we should be supporting this great charity?

“When we set up the charity eight years ago, we wanted to make sure that young people with a learning disability have the support they need to live the life they choose as independently as possible,” says Damon. “Today, halow helps almost 170 young people across Surrey to do just that, with everything from trips and outings to living in their own home and many things in between. However, they need our support, time, skills and money to help maintain this kind of service.”

Of course, Damon’s other great passion in life remains motor racing and although, unusually, he started out on motorbikes, he has a great deal of enthusiasm for the entry level motorsport of go-karting. The former world champion is keen to point out that not only is it where most modern F1 drivers started out, but that it’s also a great way to get kids active and involved in something rather than being stuck inside

DAMON HILL'S TOP 5 REASONS TO TRY GO-KARTING...

- 1) It's where everyone starts
- 2) It's a fantastic outdoor activity
- 3) It's open to everyone
- 4) It's proper racing
- 5) It's awesome fun



all day. “The fact is, it doesn’t matter if you win or aren’t really very good at it,” he says. “Either way, every time you go out you have fun and create hours of talking points with your fellow drivers. It’s fantastic fun, great exercise, low cost and always leaves you with a smile.”

So if you only do two things this year you have not done before, make sure they are getting involved or donating to the halow project and also heading down to Daytona Esher for a little slice of motor racing action! ■

• To learn more about go-karting and also read our exclusive interview with racing legend Damon Hill, pay a visit to the Surrey Life website at surreylife.co.uk

• For more information on getting involved with the halow project, which is located at Carroll House, 11 Quarry Street, Guildford GU1 3UY, call 01483 447960 or check out their website at halowproject.org.uk

Reader offer...

Surrey Life has teamed up with Daytona to offer readers a 20% discount on junior and senior Arrive&Drive karting sessions at Sandown Park in Esher (valid until October 31, 2014). To take advantage of this fantastic

offer, simply quote 'Surrey Life' when booking on 0845 644 5502. Cannot be used in conjunction with any other offer.

• Daytona Sandown Park, More Lane, Esher KT10 8AN. For more information, call 0845 644 5502 or visit the website: daytona.co.uk