

## TAXI AND PRIVATE HIRE SHOW *BY John Pace*

The Taxi and Private Hire Show held at the RICOH Arena in Coventry is the UK's premier taxi trade exhibition and attracts the great and the good of the taxi and private hire industry. This year's show, which was spread over the 27th and 28th May, could have fallen victim to the recession that is hitting the taxi trade harder than most trades, but Liza Lipson, the organiser, was determined that the show must go on. Apart from the notable exceptions of LTI and Mike Holland's Jubilee Automobile Group, who were not present at this year's event, the exhibition hall was buzzing with visitors looking to do deals with exhibitors eager to shake hands despite the 'eye of the storm' mood that now prevails in the trade.

LTI decided not to take part in the Private Hire and Taxi Show this year. The company decided instead to continue its drive to offer customers fantastic deals on new TX4s. "It was not an easy decision to pull out of this year's Show but we think our strategy of creating unbeatable offers for our customers to buy a new TX4 is the right thing to do in the current economy," said Rob Laidler, Sales Director for LTI. We are heavily supporting our dealers to take the TX4 out onto the ranks, offering test drives and doing deals including the Government's £2000 Scrappage deal for older part exchanges."

This year the show included the Limousine industry who exhibited their plush land cruisers packed with bling and dancing lights but at £85,000 only the rich and brave took serious interest while the rest of us just viewed them in awe. The star exhibit stands were Taxifix of Liverpool who seemed to be doing good business with the Mercedes Vito Taxi and Cab Direct and the E7 taxi that appears to be the choice of the provinces. The ancillary stands were being kept busy, along with all the services side of the trade. CabAid and Swinton Insurance attracted many visitors and gave away money in prizes which is always a winner while Taxi and Private Hire Magazine gave every visitor the chance to win a shiny black Mercedes Saloon car in a free draw, so one lucky visitor drove home in style but alas not me. This year's show was a success and helped to lift the doom and gloom hovering over the industry and hopefully next year's show will be bigger and better in a new financial climate.



## POLICE APPEAL

Police from the Laindon Road Policing Unit are looking for anyone who may have seen a hit and run accident involving a black cab. Luckily the driver concerned, David Jones is making a recovery from the crash on the A13. He was shunted off the road near Sadlers Farm roundabout, spinning into trees and bushes above a 6ft drop. As the driver made his way home, the taxi was hit by a silver Mercedes CLK Kompressor with blacked out windows. It is thought the Mercedes driver saw him career off the Southend-bound track at about 11.15pm on Thursday, 28th May, but failed to stop at the scene.

Mr Jones, from Leigh, walked away from the crash with badly bruised ribs. He said: "I was going through the undergrowth and trees and if the vehicle hadn't gone in backwards I probably wouldn't be here at all." A motorcyclist who narrowly avoided the crash rushed to help a shaken Mr Jones along with other passing drivers.

PC Alistair Simms, of the Laindon road unit, said the Mercedes would have suffered severe front-end damage, and appealed to anyone who sees the car to come forward. He added: "The driver would have been aware of the collision, and I would appeal for that person to contact police as soon as possible.

"The speeds the vehicles were travelling at could easily have caused very serious injuries."

Anyone with information is asked to call Laindon Road Policing Unit on 0300 3334444.