

MSCC Speed Championship 2008

Event Report

Venue: Goodwood

Date: 2nd August 2008

Weather: Wet practice, dry timed runs

Goodwood, a cool dry morning with a gentle breeze, a perfect chance to walk the track and take a more leisurely look at the 2 ¼ miles of tarmac that form the fastest track on the calendar. Back in the paddock now to make a few final adjustments and, would you believe it, rain! As practice is in no particular order, everyone is finding things to do rather than go out, on the hope that this is just a passing cloud. As the weather appears to set in for the day, practice eventually gets underway.

Rainmeister John Stephens is soon into his stride, managing to get 3 goes as he twice catches the car in front on his 1st lap, others are not so lucky. Dave Leach spins twice on one lap, Andy Miller has an excursion into the cornfield at St Mary's, whilst Peter Savage in his upgraded 5 litre monster, is wheelspinning in every gear away from the start line. Tim Ayres, double driving "Dangerous Dave" Simpson's Class 10 car has only the distance from the paddock garage to the start line to familiarise himself with the additional 60 or so horsepower and admits on his return "it's a bit tricky". Slick shod Roger Shadbolt decides practice is not a good move so sits out the morning's action. Due to a number of "offs" Anne Benischek and Paul Bennett are some of the last to practice and have to make do with a convoy run as practice time is running out.

Over lunch and a glimmer of hope with the weather. The 1st timed run is soon under way and for many, a tentative run as the track is still damp in several places. Peter Turner unfortunately spins at Lavant although others are more fortunate. Newcomer Graham Watts posts a very impressive time to be quickest of the "8's" with John Stephens quickest of the "4's", although with a drying track, Anne Benischek records a very impressive time to put her 2nd quickest against bogey, and that after only a convoy run – definitely one to watch! Meanwhile cries of "I need more power" can be heard from the Mountain garage as he adjusts to his recently acquired 4/4.

Now under clear skies and a warm breeze, the track is dry and ready for the 2nd and final runs. John Stephens unfortunately selects 5th gear rather than 3rd away from the start, and still breaks the bogey! Tim and Dangerous Dave decide to bolt on the Kumho's for the final run for the extra grip and Tim's time improves considerably. Other double drivers Andy Miller and Anne Benischek are enjoying their own private contest and the worthy winner by less the 0.4 seconds is Anne.

Eventual winner of the day is yours truly at what I openly admit is my favourite venue, very closely followed by John Stephens with Joe Phillips in 3rd. Other impressive performances include rookie Graham Watts in 4th, Clive Hall – still getting used to his Kumho's in 5th place, and Peter Savage - adjusting to nearly double the horsepower that he used to have - in 6th place.

Simon Baines