

MSCC Techniques Speed championship 2010

Event Report

Venue: Croft Darlington
Date: 5th April 2010
Weather: Cold & wet am, still cold but dry pm.

First Round of the 2010 championship kicked off at Croft on bank holiday Monday where last year we were spoilt with warm sunshine, however two years in a row was a bit too much to ask, this is the North East remember. As I headed off to Croft on a cold, raining morning (on my own I must add) it's only a short while ago I would have had two lads kicking and screaming at the front door as to who was going in the Mog, how things change.

On route I asked myself two questions: - 1st why did I not bring the hood, and 2nd there must be something better I could be doing on a bank holiday. However after arriving at the circuit and meeting up with fellow speedmoggers, preparing the car, walking the track, signing on, passing scrutineering the adrenalin soon kicks in and we can't wait to get out there.

13 attendees represented the Morgan crew, first timers at Croft we had, Jonathan Baines, Maurice Dempsey, and Gavin Rintoul, we also welcome back the legend himself "Green Grass" for his first real shake down of the rebuilt Mog which had a fight with the dry stone wall last year. Steve Macdonald true to form arrived just in time although he said he broke down on the way, we've all tried that one.

I had the pleasure of walking the circuit with Brian Lee who had been given a hand written set of instructions from a friend who used to race there, it stated where and when to brake and turn in etc, which seemed to work fine at walking pace but you can guarantee all of this goes out of the window when we start doing it for real.

Croft is 2.1 miles in length with a mixture of long straights, fast and slow corners, taking the curves of the Jim Clarke Esses and Barcroft flat out in a Mog is a white knuckle, hold your breath challenge.

First practice was damp and wet in places but there was a glimmer of sunshine above which prompted some to get down to the aero screens from the off, while others were a little cautious and the hoods stayed put, In fact both Brian and Richard were playing a cat and mouse game to see who would remove the hood first which meant the hoods stayed up all day. We all took it very cautiously getting a feel for the track and conditions which is a polite way of saying we were all miles off bogey.

Second practice I soon realised in the paddock I had lost 1st gear, so it would be 2nd gear off the line for me which proved to be interesting and sometimes embarrassing, the good news was we were all quicker in fact Chris Bailey was just under 2secs off bogey, while both Tim Harris and Jonathon Baines both knocked off over 5 secs from first practice, all returned with no major incidents ready for the timed runs after lunch.

Lunch break which brought out the delicious cakes kindly provided by Michele Bailey and Richard Smith, if this keeps up we'll all need larger overalls before the season ends.

First timed runs with a dry track, class 6 headed by Chris Bailey now only 0.64 off bogey, Maurice making steady progress while both Michele and Gavin were having a challenge of their own within 0.32 of each other. Class 10 young Jonathan beat Dad by 12 secs did Simon have an off? He kept that one quiet. Class 9 was the battle of Steve Macdonald on 1b tyres with Clive Glass on 1a's all of which made big improvements from their practice runs. Class 2 of Brian and Richard both still refusing to drop the hoods were very closely matched. Tim Harrison class 7 coming in slightly slower and yours truly class 5 knocking off another 1.7secs, but still no one under bogey at this point.

Second timed runs still with a dry track would see the majority of people record their best time of the day, while both myself and Steve Mac finally break bogey -0.44 and -0.13 respectively meanwhile Chris Bailey is hot on our heels with another good run. Gavin unfortunately spun at (Sunny In) but kept it together with no damage, Richard Smith also had a moment at the complex on the final corner which led to the first retirement of the day, as Richard heard a noise from the rear axle at this point which was diagnosed by the Mog crew as possible pinion damage most likely a few teeth had broken off, now! was this the cause of Richard to spin or a result of the spin I wonder, good job he brought the trailer, a quick call to fellow competitor Tim Ayres and its booked in for repair so he will be back with us soon. Good timing for Richards one and only ice cream of the day.

We are soon informed of a third run after the top 10 shoot out which for some reason seemed to go on for a long time. Just as we line up on the grid one of the Porsches wipes out the timing gear which took 30 mins to repair, we just get going again only for a Westfield to go into the gravel at Hawthorn bend and another delay. Finally we get the all clear and we're off all trying hard on the last run, Brian has a spin at (Sunny Out) while the rest of us come though unscathed but only 3 drivers manage to improve their times, Simon, Jonathan and drive of the day from Chris Bailey who came in -0.46 under bogey to pip me by 2 hundredths well done Chris, one to watch this season folks, I hope the first prize soap dish comes in handy.

What started off wet and miserable turned out to be another great days motor sport, well done to Chris and the first timers at Croft, a fantastic circuit which I hope remains on the calendar for next year, I know Darlington Motor Club appreciated the Morgan support, also thanks to Mary and Tony Oliver, friends and family who braved the cold to support us all day.

Final Results of the day:-

First: Chris Bailey

Second: Dave Gibson

Third: Steve Macdonald

See you all soon

David & Joanna Gibson.