

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Debden: Sunday 9th May

A report of a grand day out by DifflessDick

This was the third visit the MSCC Speedmonkeys had made to this fast, twisty, airfield course, set deep in the heart of Essex, close to Stansted Airport. So close in fact, that Brian Lee, following his satnav, thought he had better burn off fuel by stacking on the M11, just like the jumbo jets flying inches over our heads. Tom(tom) told him to exit at Junction 9, but I, following him with my trusty google map had told me exit J8. Tom(tom) wrongly thought there was an exit at J9, but J7 being just 15 miles further, Brian lightened his fuel load sufficiently for him to burn excess ballast. Having said that, we were in plenty of time, but beaten to the pit area by Ian Hargrave, who had already been there a good half hour. Eager, or what Ian? At least we all got the date right, unlike Clive Glass who turned up to the April's Curborough event **a whole day early**. Yes, it's been mentioned before, but it's still worth a snigger.

Others in the field - *should I say that?* - were Trevor Firmin and Paul Bryan. Greg Parnell had to scratch from the sprint, his car still suffering from impetigo, or some other itchy rash of the wiring loom. So, just the 5 of us then. I have to say at this juncture, that only two days before, I had collected my Mog from Tim Ayres garage, where The Mog Whisperer has been performing his magic fingers on my diff that'd failed at Croft on Easter Monday. *Keeping my fingers crossed here.*

A damp start to the day meant that times would be slower than hoped, not a bad thing, as the slower pace would hint at the slippier parts of the circuit, and the reduced speed would help us remember the circuit. All back safely, and soon out for the second practice. Times tumbled, Ian 6 seconds quicker, Brian lost 8 seconds, Trevor almost 4, Paul minus 7. Only I was slower, but taking into consideration coming to a stop, reversing and setting off again to circle the roundabout clockwise, and a severe fuel surge at a later bend added 6 seconds to my time. And, staying on the tarmac! Having said that, my car was on top form: remember I had most of last season watching you lot from the sidelines, but Mog Whisperer Darren Bunn had worked miracles on my chassis and suspension, and the car felt and handled superbly.

The first timed run before lunch witnessed the times plummet again! Ian now 10 seconds faster than his first run, Trevor 3 secs quicker than his second run, Paul lost another second, though Brian musta had a picnic halfway round, and added 3 seconds to his quickest time.

Lunchtime: apparently, the ice cream van was involved in an accident on its way to Debden, and the Essex police were putting the cones out. The driver topped himself.

Run two, after lunch: Brian had a blistering run, three seconds off bogey. *Note that his bogey was set last year by Andrew Miller, so three seconds off was commendable.* Ian ended six seconds over bogey, Trevor nine, but Paul Bryan charged again, to finish his timed run just 1.8 seconds over target, putting him in first place. Brian took second, Ian third, with Trevor in fourth.

Me: sadly, the car lost its ability to drive when the lights turned green on the first timed run. Nil Pwang. And no cornettos for comfort. But we will be back, stronger, faster, mightier... maybe even to earn the name Richard **Bloody** Smith from my fellow competitors.