

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue: Loton Park
Date: 11th July 2010
Weather: Hot and dry

Eleven Morgans and thirteen drivers assembled for the second longest hillclimb in the country, the beautiful Loton Park, set in the gorgeous rolling Shropshire hills. Several of the usual competitors were away at Classic Le Mans, although suspiciously a certain Mr Richard Smith was entered in the motorcycle class. Those of us who had camped overnight the night before experienced light rain, but a brisk breeze in the morning soon left the track dry.

First practice went smoothly, with Chris Bailey off to a scorching start, matching his bogey time. Simon Baines was also off to a quick start, less than a second off his target. The rest of us were still trying to remember which way the course went, although many of the Morgan drivers posted faster times than the assorted Ferraris parked opposite us in the paddock!

With the sun now fully out and the track starting to heat up nicely we prepared for our second practice run. Almost everyone announced themselves well satisfied, with the majority taking time off their first attempt. Nigel Housley knocked over 3 seconds off his time as did Martyn Whaley. Meanwhile, Chris "New John Stephens" Bailey knocked over a second off his first time to sail smoothly under bogey.

With practice completed and lunch over Chris tried to have a powernap, but luckily the single seater driver we had paid to rev his engine up to 14000 revs kept his side of the bargain and kept Chris awake. Opposite us the Ferrari drivers were now posing by their cars with their helmets lined up across the cars roofs. Could they draw more attention to themselves? Yes they could.....now they were practicing Le Mans style starts across the paddock.

In the timed runs after lunch Jeremy Lewis in his Tomcat Turbo powered 4/4 set a very quick time of 64.15 seconds, and deciding that he would not better this set off home. Michele Bailey was pushing hard, knocking almost 2 seconds off her best practice time. Meanwhile in Class 7 Paul Bryan set a cracking 65.99 which Messrs Moore, Bevan and Whaley were struggling to catch. Simon Baines was now down to 60.99, with son Jonathan chasing hard on 64.80, not bad for his first drive at Loton.

We now had a longish break to consider how we could get quicker. Chris decided the answer was to polish his helmet to reduce drag. Simon Baines went to sleep, and Michele Bailey was furiously knitting something to cover her eyes so that she couldn't see the antics of the Ferrari drivers. Ian Hargrave, John Bevan and Michele now realised that they were all battling for the prestigious position of 9th place....the competition was on.

Now fairly late in the day we were on to our second runs. Chris's polishing had actually made him slightly slower, but this didn't stop him from taking a well deserved first place, 0.89 seconds under bogey. Simon Baines was just a hundredth of a second under 61 seconds, taking second place and Baines minor in 3rd place. Paul

Bryan was now 4th, also winning class 25a with a fast 65.31 seconds. Ian Hargrave had an exciting second run when his throttle pedal stuck, but luckily was able to abort his run without injury to himself or car. Oh- and Richard Smith on his motorbike was third in the bike class, although I don't think these points will count in the MSCC championship.

With the afternoon cooling it was now time to throw everything into the back of the Mog ready for a fast run home to Gloucestershire. Another perfect day at Loton Park.

John Bevan