

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue	Harewood
Date	5 June 2011
Weather	Dry and warm

Despite Clive and Judy Glass staying with us Saturday night, we were still at Harewood for probably our earliest ever arrival at 0740. Not bad we thought until we noticed that most of the pack were already making their competition preparations. The Martins had even signed on and, fresh from his Curborough Taster experience, Barry Bartlett was off walking the course with Brian Lee. Other new boy Mark Roberts and then Richard Smith, Nigel Ledger-Lomas and Paul Clarke made their usual slightly later arrivals but all 19 drivers were in time for first practice.

Fist practice over and an unusually relaxed Chris Martin lead the group, 1.4 seconds over target. Barry was desperate to run again and Mark was searching for more power!

Second practice saw Paul Clarke running wide at the final right hander to rearrange the bollards (so far off line in fact that they struck his off-side wing!). Just about everyone else lowered their times, Chris Martin improving to within 0.27, Simon Baines to 1.12, John Stephens 1.27, Granville Martin 1.33, Richard Smith 1.87. It was obviously going to be a close day.

But forget all those. The real competition was in Class 6 where Chris Bailey had let a first practice 0.15 advantage over Ray Eatock fall to a 0.68 disadvantage. Time for an extra choc chip and blackcurrant cookie from the wife before the first run!

I've no idea what she puts in (eggs, sugar, flour, chocolate, blackcurrants?) but it certainly did the trick, a full 1.2 seconds quicker than Ray who was the only driver who didn't record their fastest run of the day so far. They obviously work well on all Chris', as younger Martin (now with increased tyre pressures making the Khumos work properly) had his best run of the day to go 1.02 under target. Barry Bartlett recorded a 4.55 improvement and Richard Smith was spitting plastic after he ran wide at the last bend and despite travelling further than John B Stephens, was quicker than him, although he officially recorded a "Failed run" having taken all 4 wheels off the circuit with him.

The second run had Barry Bartlett recording his fastest time of the day and beating his self appointed target of 90 seconds by very nearly 2.5. Chris Bailey heaped the pressure on Ray by going 0.5 over target and Tim Harrison, with his recently completed “Mean Green Racing Machine” on its first visit to Harewood and fresh from its’ inaugural race at Donington the week before, setting his best time of the day.

However, as the sun broke through and the temperature started to increased, our mood suddenly plummeted as Ray Eatock took an outside line round Farmhouse Bend and then ran wide on the exit putting 2 wheels on the grass before slewing across the track to strike the tyres protecting the end of the armco. Driver was not happy but unhurt which is more than can be said for the car which looked as if it may require major surgery. As ever, the Speedmoggers pulled as one to offer help and assistance to recover the car and get it, Ray and Carole back home.

After that, I didn’t really take much notice of final run times. But as if things couldn’t get any worse, Simon Baines had recorded his best time of the day to beat me into second place by 0.04 seconds. B(al)last!

Apart from Chris Martin stealing the show, times were close all day with just 0.37 seconds separating second to fifth.

Chris Bailey
(Missing Ray already)