

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue: Shelsley Walsh
Date: 18th September, 2011
Weather: Sunny intervals and showers

Only seven Morgans at this historic venue with Robert Hamer in just his second event being a Shelsley new boy amongst the old hands but he did have the advantage of having attended the school earlier this year. The cars spanned the full range of classes from Nigel Housley's class 1 4/4 through to Mike Hall's class 12 beast.

The Morgan presence was, however, rather overshadowed by large numbers of Austin Healeys and TVRs and hopefully we can have many more cars there next year.

Overnight rain had left the track quite slippery and the unique Shelsley process of selecting your practice batch meant that those scrutineered first were able to choose later runs in the hope of a drying track.

Those with early practice runs had the additional disadvantage of having to face the hazard of a large oil spillage at the approach to the Esses caused when a con rod from a Ford Anglia escaped from the engine block in the first run of the day.

Practice eventually got under way after hard work from the Marshalls in neutralising the oil and Robert - one of the early starters - found that full V6 power on a damp track puts you on a line not recommended by the school - mainly because it lands the car on top of the left hand bank. No damage done however to his rather nice Roadster but he is now able to offer a large number of squares of Shelsley turf removed from around his chassis with the aid of two close at hand umbrellas.

The rest of us were more circumspect and even as we got near to lunchtime the track had to be treated with some caution as many drivers were experiencing understeer at the top Ess where the left hand bank was suffering some erosion. With times averaging four to five seconds above targets we could only hope for continued dry weather for the afternoon.

There was a shower during lunch but this did little to dampen the track and apart from giving some deference to the Esses we were able use full power on the first of the timed runs and times came down dramatically with Greg Dixon -Smith leading the way. We could now feel that the track was looking good for the second runs but as we waited in the collecting bay at the top of the hill we could see the rain coming across the valley and were soon soaked by a heavy shower. Unfortunately this put paid to serious driving and the second runs were done in a safety first rather than attack mode.

So it was a day of might have beens for most of us but not for the Greg Dixon-Smith express which charges on with yet another class record followed on the day at a respectful distance by Paul Bryan and Clive Hall.

Paul Bryan