

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Shelsley Walsh, Sunday 23rd September 2012

Shelsley's annual finale is a weekend of two one-day meetings hosting a number of one-make championships, including our own on the Sunday. Mike Meredith and I entered as MAC members on the Saturday to be greeted with an indecently slippery track after Friday evening's rain. But the tarmac dried quickly and we enjoyed a lovely September day in Shelsley's beautiful and lush setting.

But Murphy is alive and well! Eight Morgan drivers were met by a grey Sunday morning, a cold track and the forecast of rain by midday. Regrettably Clive Hall had to withdraw prior to the event due to engine oil emerging from unmentionable places on the way to Curborough and the fault had still to be remedied.

First practise was dry with Mike Hall setting the pace on slicks in the 33s. Paul Bryan, confident from his successful first ever race at the Silverstone Bentley 'Dealers' Club meeting, was well within a second of his target time and a +1 looked likely if it remained dry. On-form Chris Bailey was not much more than a second outside his target so things were looking good.

Ian Hargrave treated first practise with the respect it deserved but I had nowhere to hide from being the quickest of the road tyre +8s after Saturday's 'practise'. Even so I was over 2 seconds outside target, not being able to convince my right foot that Kennel and Crossing are taken flat in a standard Morgan. Speed lost in the first part of the climb always means a disappointing final time. Nigel Ledger-Lomas in his 3.5 and Clive Glass in his 3.9 were both on 1B tyres so had an even harder time trying to keep within target range.

Then it rained . . . and it was cold - thank heavens for covered paddock slots at Shelsley. Hoods went up, as did the times. Michele Bailey on her first competitive visit to Shelsley was held on the line for her second practise for what seemed an age. Marshals thought a paper trail up the racing line was too much of an advantage and were clearing it away. Thanks for the helpful gesture by the driver in front, but what was a loo roll doing unfurling from the back of his car? Don't even think about it!!

With his car on slicks, Mike called it a day, leaving the honour of FTD in the competitive runs to a brave Clive but his 1B target left him in third place. Nigel concluded that out in the cold and wet was not the place to be and passed on his second timed run. Chris maintained his form and comfortably took top spot ahead of yours truly with Paul treating the wet track with caution in fourth. Ian took a deserved fifth place and had a bonus of a congratulatory kiss from Michele for finishing ahead of her! The rest of us had to make do with chocolate brownies . . . (but gratefully none the less!)

Let's hope for better weather at Prescott . . . But maybe a drop of rain the night before CranMog's car trial on the 30th. . . .

Alan Foster