

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue: Loton Park
Date: 26th July 2015
Weather: I think John McEnroe had a phrase for it.....

Hagley and District invited Speedmog for their Saturday/Sunday 25th and 26th July meeting, and we decided our championship would run on the 26th. I'd decided a while ago that doing the two days would give me some much needed practice, so arrived to glorious sunshine and had a lovely day with Alan Foster and his wife. His Plus 8 is still with Billy Bellinger having a new diff, so he entered his much, trialed/sprinted/autosoloed (is that a word???) Toyota MR2. We had a cracking day and I ended up with my best time ever up the hill and a lovely glass trophy, so we both went home very satisfied.

If Saturday was the cheese, Sunday was DEFINITELY the chalk.....

The rain started just before first practice and continued throughout the day. Loton organise classes as either below or above 2000cc for Morgans, so in Alan's absence, Simon and Chris Baines and I made up the 'big' class, with Rob Stones, Simon Ashby, Andrew Farr, Nigel Housley, Adrian Smith, Clive Hall and Ian Hargrave making up the 'smaller' class. We welcomed back Adrian Smith into Class 1 after a long absence and Andrew Farr in his first season in his Class 1 4/4, and first time at Loton. It was a family event for Andrew and father in law Simon Ashby, so Charlie was on hand to ensure fair play!

First times up the hill were generally used as 'sighters' to try and see where the grip was. However, Rob Stones overcooked Museum and had a gentle, but damaging run onto the tyres. He was OK but his left front wing and undertray were damaged and with a leak of what was probably coolant from a cracked radiator sensibly called it a day. I soon realised Saturday's practice was of no help at all and had to re-learn the track again. Simon and Chris Baines, despite swapping to Toyos, soon noticed that 300+bhp, an 'on-off' throttle, and a wet track equals buggier all grip.... Simon A, Adrian and Clive H simply decided to ignore the rain and were all within two seconds of one another. Second practice was more of the same, and so then to the competition itself....

Andrew had a 'moment' on first run and didn't set a time, but Simon A set a cracking class time of 77.91, and with Adrian posting an 80.82, and Clive Hall 77.42, things were close at the top. Ian Hargrave knocked over two seconds off his practice to set an 83.04 and Nigel Housley, with a wet bandaged foot, a creditable 87.97. Ian had only flown back from Germany for the event and was flying back out on Monday - that's what I call dedication!!! Nigel had also shown similar dedication the night before, manfully managing without French wine and settling on Scotch instead of his intended Welsh or Irish Whiskey! The pains we have to endure for our art.... In the bigger engined cars, Simon B managed a 77.11 and Chris B an 82.54, but with a more tractable car I was on 73.93 and, as in both practice sessions, was for once ahead of the Red Baron!!!! I did of course

make this clear to anyone in the paddock who would listen, but thought better of going to the time keeper's hut and borrowing their microphone....

The second and final timed run led to improvements for Nigel and Adrian, and of course Simon B..... I'd been red flagged and sent back down the hill and Chris B said, as I returned to the paddock, that his dad had only done a 76 so I'd beaten him, so I set off up the hill again, waving to my adoring public (all three of them – everyone else had gone home to dry off...). Simon was magnanimous in defeat, and I was of course, quiet and circumspect.....until Jonno came along and said Simon had actually beaten me by half a second (1a tyres versus 1b tyres...!!!!). I took it in good heart of course.... but just to make sure I've bribed Brenda to go over Jonno's calculations with a fine toothcomb (he is a teacher when all is said and done....).

So very much despite the rain, a good day was had by all (except poor Rob). Adrian had a win in his maiden return event, with Simon Ashby second and Clive Hall third. Yours truly fourth (following a stewards enquiry- it's the percentages you know!!!!) Simon B was fifth, with Nigel, Ian and Andrew rounding off the places. Not to forget Alan Foster of course, who had a fun day with the non-Mogs and was last seen punching the numbers on his mobile to get hold of Billy Bellinger!

Roll on Curborough.....

Clive Glass