

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue: Debden
Date: 8th May 2016
Weather: Hot

For most of us, this was our first event at Debden since the course was radically altered and extended last year (or indeed our first visit ever!)

The Army had an unfortunate habit of dumping ballast piles on parts of the old course, so eventually it was decided to move to another part of the old airfield which should be safer from encroachment! Sadly we have lost the much-loved "slalom" through the go-kart course. But now the circuit is extended to 1.5 miles with some challenging chicanes and it still retains its famous "roundabout".

There was a new gatekeeper on duty. He followed his orders to the letter and no-one was permitted entry without their entry pass. Since this rule has not been strictly enforced before, many drivers had not printed out their passes and so were fumbling to find the email attachment on their mobile phones, or ringing up the organiser to confirm they were "legitimate." The queue stretched back towards Newport...

Once inside a wonderful day awaited. Hot and sunny all day, giving excellent track grip.

There were several novices at the event ("I could manage this course if all those cones weren't in the way"...) which resulted in a lot of stoppages before lunch. (No Morgans misbehaved!) So we did not get to the timed runs until after the lunch break. Fees will be up next year to pay for all the cones demolished! Nevertheless we still got 3 timed runs in the afternoon, making this event fantastic value for money.

Sadly Tracey Ashby had to retire after first practice. The rest of us got faster and faster with every run: literally! With the exception of Simon Ashby's very last run, every single driver improved their time on every visit to the track, quite remarkable!

The Simons (Baines and Ashby) had already beaten their bogey times by the 2nd Practice Run. They were followed by the Pauls (Clarke who beat Bogey on 1st Timed and Bryan who beat Bogey on the 3rd Timed Run.)

Both the Simons were defending an unbeaten season (having not raced together before Debden) so who was going to win this time? Simon Baines improved again on his last run while Simon Ashby missed a gear and was slower. The tension mounted...

But Simon Ashby's 2nd Timed Run was just too good: 7.79 seconds below Bogey was more than enough to clinch it this time.

A great days' racing at a great course with great company!

Ian Hargrave