

## **MSCC Techniques Speed Championship**

Date: Sunday 18<sup>th</sup> September 2016  
Venue: Shelsley Walsh  
Weather: Dry and sunny

When the weather is warm, and the morning mist starts to lift from the valleys between the hills, there are few places to beat Shelsley Walsh as a venue. At this stage of the season, there is a lot at stake for the protagonists at the head of the pack, and Rob Toon could be seen pacing the paddock, like an expectant father in a delivery suite, trying to calculate how much he needed to be under bogey to maintain his advantage over the chasing pack. George Proudfoot had polished his braces especially for the day, and was ruing the rain at MIRA the previous weekend fearing that this had all but done for his chances of taking the championship, whilst Clive Hall was searching for another sub-bogey run to try and gain at least a top three place. And what of the others in waiting? The two Simon's – Baines and Ashby were not taking part, but were keeping their powder dry for the season finale at Prescott on the 2<sup>nd</sup> October. Baines Senior and son Chris were both in the paddock however, the latter's height meaning he operates in his own weather system, whilst Simon Ashby was rumoured to be at home, praying for rain.....

Your scribe's day did not start well. Despite arriving with some nattily attached numbers, a review of the programme suggested the wrong number had been used, so they were stripped off and new ones duly attached. It was therefore of some amusement to my fellow competitors when it dawned that the newly applied numbers related to the allocated garage space, and that the correct number had, in fact, been applied in the first place. The air in the Glass garage was blue and, on the basis that it couldn't possibly have been my fault, Judy was sent to the sin bin....

Once everyone was signed on, we awaited scrutineering, a pre-requisite at Shelsley for booking batch times for practice runs. However, with a full grid of 140 cars, scrutineering was slow and we were only able to book into the later batch numbers. A series of 'offs' by other cars meant the morning runs were delayed and the latter practice batch numbers cancelled, so all bar Ian Hargrave and I were only able to have one practice run, which was frustrating to say the least!!! Shelsley have the option to re-instate their old paddock return road from the top of the hill, and if such full grids are to continue, it would perhaps be a welcome improvement.

Practice went well for all 10 Morgan competitors. George Proudfoot managed a sub-bogey run on his first attempt at the hill, closely followed by Rob Toon. He thought he too had broken bogey, although sadly the bogey time he'd downloaded from the Speedmog site had been corrected prior to the event. He was understandably more than a tad upset but, following a 'steward's enquiry', he graciously accepted the error and normal service was resumed.

First timed runs after lunch saw most set what was to be their fastest times of the day. Following a lot more 'offs' by other competitors, by the time of our second run the light was fading and the track cooling, which meant many were left frustrated. All apart from George Proudfoot, Nigel Housley and Paul Bryan that is, who each managed to improve their times. George's time meant he ended up in first place 1.48 seconds under bogey, Nigel knocked 2.5 seconds off his practice time, and Paul over 3 seconds, his performance all the more creditable as his bogey times and car class are at considerable odds to his car's actual performance. Sadly Ian Hargrave was unable to stay for his second timed run as the delays in the day meant he'd had to leave to catch his flight back to work in Marseille. He departed, however, with a smile on his face, having recorded his fastest ever time at the hill of 42.2 seconds. Alan Foster had clearly benefitted from his Portuguese practice, finishing a very creditable 1.14 over bogey with a best run of 36.88. I managed a 35.92, 0.8 over bogey, and had the consolation of taking FTD. Chris and Michele Bailey had something of a quiet day, finishing with times of 40.2 and 43.72 respectively, but having recently lost a close friend to breast cancer I suspect their hearts were not fully into the event on the day. Despite this, Michele still managed to cook up some brownies, for which we were all eternally grateful!!!

So with George taking first place and adding 103.8 points to his championship total, second place was taken by Clive Hall 0.69 under bogey and 101.8 points, with Rob Toon third, 0.53 under bogey and with 102.5 points. By my calculations that puts both Rob Toon and George Proudfoot on 617.2, Simon Baines on 613.9, and Simon Ashby, with one event still to add to his total, on 516.9. With Rob and the two Simons out at the season finale at Prescott it is, as they say, 'all to play for' .....

Clive Glass