

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship 2017

Event Report

Venue: Croft

Date: 17th April 2017

Weather: Damp practice, Dry later.

The winter is over, spring has arrived and with it, the opening round of the 2017 Speedmog Championship at the Croft Race Circuit near Darlington.

This was an opportunity to dust the cobwebs off the car and get back behind the wheel.

Such is the location of Croft that it doesn't tend to attract many Southerners but it is always well supported by our Northern residents and this year was no exception.

A few familiar faces were there, the Baileys, Martin McHugh, Paul Clarke and Simon Baines and a couple of welcome returnees to the championship – David Gibson and Steve McDonald.

Chris & Michele were trying out their recently acquired +4 Duratec in Class 6 spec, Simon Baines was sampling some new for 2017 tyres, Martin McHugh was getting the feel of his new Class B race spec engine whilst Paul Clarke was shaking down his recently rebuilt (only finished on the Saturday evening) Roadster Lightweight. Such was the list of work carried out to Paul's car over the winter that it was reminiscent of Trigger's Broom!

So to first practice on a cold damp track that was drying thanks to the stiff westerly breeze – yes it was cold but we have seen worse. Everyone was off to a cautious start, looking for grip amongst the patches of standing water, Chris and Martin did not receive any times but at this stage, they were fairly academic.

Second practice and with improving conditions, everyone was making significant inroads to their target times with no particular dramas.

Lunchtime beckoned and with that, a few surprises. The first was a visit from locals Tony and Mary Oliver giving their Aero an outing. This was closely followed by a new recipe of seasonal Birds Nests from Speedmog's own Bake Off Queen, Michele Bailey.

And to top all of these, Tim and Jane Hill, formerly Speedmogs but now living in New Zealand, dropped by after a short stay in the Lake District over Easter.

As the sun broke through and the skies cleared, the 1st timed runs were upon us. Slight improvements were found by Michele, Simon and Steve whilst others were pushing very hard, Chris overcooking it at Clervault and Martin had a couple of "red mist" moments, one off the start and a second one exiting the complex just before the finish line.

The second and final runs of the day found further improvements from Michele whilst Dave, ever quiet, just going about his day's entertainment, calmly took 1st place with a new Class 5 record, 0.85 seconds under bogey.

Simon missed a gear in the run to the 1st corner so his 1st run was his best of the day with a new Class 10 record just 0.06 seconds under bogey. Steve McDonald took the 3rd place honours only 0.5 seconds off target with a car that was running on old tyres whilst being troubled by an intermittent misfire – welcome back Steve!

Michele had recorded her best ever time at Croft and the smallest margin to husband Chris. Paul Clarke finished the day a respectable 4.6 seconds off bogey, a good day's work for a driver who had not driven the circuit for several years in a car that had only been finished 48 hours earlier.

Simon Baines