

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship

Venue: Blyton Park

Date: 24th and 25th September 2022

Saturday, cloudy with sunny intervals and then rain.

Blyton Park, an ex RAF Bomber Command airfield and now a test track for Ginetta was the host for Rounds 16 and 17 of the Speedmog Championship. With some sweeping curves, long straights and good run offs the track offers great opportunities for drivers to test themselves and their cars, if not to the limits, then certainly enough to get the adrenaline flowing. Coming to the event Simon Baines was leading the Championship overall and with John Stephens, George Proudfoot and Clive Hall absent there was a chance of other Championship chasers to make ground on Simon.

Saturday saw eight Morgans entered, with two shared drives making it a competitive field. We were to drive the Eastern Circuit, some 2300 metres. Late September in Lincolnshire is starting to get chilly and those of us on the pre 8.00 am track walk were grateful for our Techniques sponsored warm jackets.

Nottingham Sports Car Club run this event very efficiently and we were soon on our practice run, which we all successfully negotiated, including the tricky first corner, Chapmans.

After that first bend the course weaves through the Trubshaw curves, flat out for some, and into the long sweeping Curva Grande before heavy braking to take a sharp left hander, The Wiggler. It's then flat out along the back straight until braking at the marker board for the Bishops left hander, using all the road for the exit before another left hander, Bunga Bunga with a final dash to the finish at Ushers, which is more or less at a right angle to the straight; this means holding one's nerve for braking until the last possible moment and remembering that it's any part of the car to break the light beam to register a finish, so front ways, sideways or backwards counts.

Chris Baines lead the Morgan pack out in his father's Lightweight Roadster for the first timed run. The other Roadsters of Paul Clarke and Nick Bolton would be pushing as would the big +8s of Clive Glass and Steve McDonald. Chris and Michele Bailey and Andy Hatch were in their +4s and Howard Burton completed the field in his 4/4.

Simon Baines set what was to prove the fastest and winning time of the day on his second timed run before the rain set in. Clive Glass pipped Chris Baines to second.

Simon's win meant that he had a chance of clinching the Championship on Sunday by winning again. However if Clive Glass was to win it would go down to the wire at the final event of the season, the Prescott Hill Climb, somewhere Simon has never won. Excitement!

Sunday, cloudy.

Paul and Brenda Bryan joined us for Sunday, Paul in his +4 Supersports and Brenda keeping us up to date with times and scores. We were also pleased to see members of the Linmog centre who had come to support us in their Morgans. Always appreciated.

The previous day's rain had cleared and we were to race the faster Outer Sprint circuit with an easier first corner and more opportunity for faster sustained speeds, through Lancaster curve and straight before joining Saturday's course at the The Wiggler, now acting as a chicane. It was then flat out again towards Bishops with a final blast through Port Froid and a slightly different and even more acutely angled finish.

We were to get four timed runs after the practice which gave us all opportunities to straighten our lines through the curves, reduce our braking distances and generally go faster! Times came down steadily but the battle between Simon and Clive was going to the wire. Simon recorded his fastest time on his second run at 72.20 seconds, clocking 100 mph plus through the speed trap. Clive, after spinning on his first run was chopping off the seconds on each subsequent run, recording a final best time of 75.92 seconds. However it was not enough to beat Simon on handicap. Chris Baines was second, Paul Clarke third and Clive fourth.

So Simon Baines clinched the Championship with one event, Prescott, to go. Congratulations to him and well done to the other drivers and supporters who made this a great weekend of motor sport.

Howard Burton