

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship 2023

Venue: Hethel Sprint

Date: 16th April 2023

Five intrepid Speedmoggers headed way out east into deepest Folkmog territory on a very sunny Sunday 16th April to the Hethel sprint organised by Herts County Auto & Aero Club at the Lotus test track in Norfolk. The facility has undergone a complete refurbishment in the last few years and is now a fast flat circuit with a very smooth surface and plenty of useable concrete kerbs. The event used just over 1.5 of the full 2.2 mile circuit which led to an early start for the track walk. Those that had planned ahead and brought push bikes were looked upon with envy!

To make things interesting in the pace change department, the sprint layout incorporated two chicanes, the first at Windsock corner after the fast sweeping Senna curves, consisting of a short 'round the cones' 2nd gear type autosolo, and then the second, a proper chicane at the end of the long 700m 'terminal velocity' straight just before the last 180 bend and the finish.

After a practice run we were full on into the 4 timed runs, two before lunch and two after. As there were only 76 cars entered for the whole event, things moved on apace with little time for the bacon and egg roll and coffee between our timed runs. Paul Clarke led the charge closely followed by Nick Bolton, both in Roadster lightweights with the mixed bag of Paul Bryan's Supersport, newcomer Phil Cowpland's Plus 8 and my Plus 4 hot on their heels.

As the runs progressed, we all started to head down a fairly steep learning curve with improving lap times. After each run, there was much debate and 'chewing of the cud' as to how late you could leave the braking points into both chicanes without taking the cones with you into the runoff. Whilst our goal was to get closest to our individual target times (derived from a pre-calculated power/weight algorithm for the circuit), it was soon apparent that both the Roadsters of Paul C and Nick were the top dogs putting in very fast and consistent performances.

However, special mention must go to Phil as it was his first Speedmog event in his well travelled Plus 8 and from the start he found a good pace and quickly found the right lines for the circuit. At the end of the event, it was no surprise that the very experienced Paul Clarke in his Roadster collected the big silver plate with Nick not too far behind with slightly less ostentatious silverware. My plus 4 finished mid fleet in third place with Phil and Paul B close behind.

Overall, it was a great way to spend a sunny spring Sunday with a bunch of very like minded Speedmoggers at a very well organised event on a superb track. Many thanks must go to Brenda Bryan whose logging of the times and subsequent working out the 'math' was much appreciated by all, not forgetting of course that superb tea infused fruit cake! Roll on the next Speedmog event!

Andy Hatch