

MSCC Techniques Speed Championship 2023

Event Report

Venue: Goodwood

Date: 5th August 2023

Glorious Goodwood, but not for horsepower.

Despite a discouraging weather forecast, 97 starters braved the elements for Brighton and Hove MC's Eagle Sprint on the 5th August. Sadly, Tom Purves had to withdraw his entry so just 4 Speedmogs were scattered among the classes: James Andrews in his early 4 seater 4/4, James Walter with his familiar +4 and Phil Cowpland and your scribe in their +8s.

The Clerk of the Course predicted that the weather was likely to be showers rather than continuous rain. But what he could not predict was the intensity of the showers or their timing: you've guessed it, heavy rain to coincide with first practice! All four of us were in the first two thirds of the entry so had similar conditions. As I have a cracked screen after the Lydden Hill event I had to use the dry weather set up of just an aeroscreen . . . and umbrella. I don't think I have even driven a practice lap in such atrocious conditions of wind and heavy rain: definitely a time for the brave, which I am not. James W's courage came through with the best practice time with Phil at the tail end due to a 360 spin exiting the chicane; the guidance says "feed in the power" here . . .

Class performances were irrelevant as the under 2 litre Morgans had to cope with very hot hatchbacks and Locatafields while the +8s had powerful 4WD heading the field, capable of taking half a minute off our times. Conditions did not improve much for the first timed runs with the two James improving by the odd second but Phil able to improve by 26 seconds after his earlier spin and even I managed to lose 6 seconds.

As practice had taken an hour and three-quarters, lunch was taken early, before the second timed runs. Then, as soon as action on the track stopped, the sun came out . . . an hour passed and we had a fast drying track. The two James then took 14 to 16 seconds off their earlier times whilst the two +8s carved off more than 20 seconds. But before the second times runs were complete the rain started again, probably the heaviest we had seen all day, soaking the track and leaving pools were they were least welcome. As there wasn't a hope of the track drying for the third timed runs, most competitors started to pack up and the CofC brought the meeting to a close. One has to feel sorry for those with later numbers who missed the opportunity of running on at least a drying track, and those where the rain started part way through the class running order. Force majeure and all that . . . Last year, final runs were cancelled due to the heat and its effect on marshals . . . One also has to feel sorry for organisers who would like to finish an event with competitors saying "Thank you for a great day's motorsport at Glorious Goodwood."

The Morgan FTD went as expected to Phil but you will read elsewhere what the handicap system produced for the Speedmog Championship.

Alan Foster