

# **MSCC Techniques Speed Championship**

## **CADWELL PARK**

**23<sup>rd</sup> March 2024**

Fondly nicknamed the 'mini-Nurburgring' Cadwell Park is one of the UK's great driving challenges with its twisty and undulating nature, winding through open park and woodland of the Lincolnshire Wolds. Other than the final Mountain section which isn't used, the sprint circuit is 3100m long and provides a fantastic challenge with its variety of bends and varying topography.

For several of the 10 Morgan drivers entered for our season opener, this was their first visit. I say that but David (returning to our fold after an extended sabbatical) and daughter Ella Frow had participated in a rather wet track day a couple of weeks previously to acquaint themselves with their new Supersport and circuit, and Andy Hatch the Friday before as he had an extended away ticket whilst his wife Jane was away in Australia (well she can't have all the fun can she?).

With 10 Morgan drivers starting in 8 cars it was particularly rewarding to note that 3 of the drivers were female. With the British Women's Racing Drivers Club (BWRDC) promoting women in speed events this year it was fantastic to see Morgans leading the way with, I believe, only 2 other ladies in the total field of 85.

The practise runs were obviously taken cautiously by all to clear the rust built up since the end of 2023 (that's the drivers) and wanting to ensure that the strong, lazy wind had completely dried the track, particularly through the Hall Bends. A great time set by Philip Cowpland, maintaining his good form from 2023 ahead of seasoned campaigners Paul Clarke and Steve McDonald indicated there may be some interesting results. It was Andy Hatch who set the leading handicapped benchmark but the 1.2s difference between the Frows showed some real talent and commitment from Ella that was going to keep dad on his toes all day. A few timing gremlins showed up for P1 and R1.

Lining up for the start of the timed runs (I know, they're all timed!) and the coolant in the McDonald +8 decided it couldn't wait and made a bid to hit the track. The heavily leaking radiator meant that it was prudent not to even attempt a repair. Much to his delight both Paul and Philip offered double drives in their cars! Not to miss out on the opportunity to try a Roadster, Steve accepted Paul's incredibly generous offer. Andy maintained his practice form and his first run turned out to be his fastest of the day (FTD) with the majority also improving.

Lunch and time to reflect, eat plenty of chips and then get weighed! As we run the SpeedMog series on a power to weight ratio, every car and driver combo has it's own target time at each venue, so a check to see who had gained or lost weight over winter.

Second timed run and with a dry track everyone improved on their time apart from Andy who was possibly overdriving having heard he was currently in the top spot at the lunch break and Philip setting his FTD.

Run 3 turned out to be the driest of the day and we were now tuned in to the circuit. Simon, Jane Peck and Chris Bailey (by 5 seconds) all setting their FTDs.

And so to our final run of the day. All buoyed up and now totally rust free we were all looking to set our fastest times. As some lined up however, the mizzle drifted back in. For those who have never experienced it, driving alone, on track and with water running off your visor, you have very little perception of how hard it's raining so caution and self-preservation take hold. However for those

running either at the beginning or end of our batch, the rapidly changing conditions meant that they had practically dry runs, this time with Michele Bailey, Paul and the Frows, setting their FTDs. Andy, keen to regain his lead managed a perfect pirouette, keeping it all on the tarmac but the only 10 he got for his spin were the seconds added to his time.

So to the results. Chris 1st, Simon 2nd and then Andy 3rd. A special mention has to be made of the Frows finishing 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> less than 0.5 seconds apart. An amazing debut for the car and Ella; a team to watch in future.

A great start to the season with everyone looking forward to more friendly rivalry soon.

Chris Bailey