

# MSCC Techniques Speed Championship 2024

## Mallory Park

23<sup>rd</sup> June 2024

The Mallory sprint was organised by Sheffield & Hallamshire Motor Club. Their organisation of the event could, politely, be described as relaxed, but might also be said to be chaotic. There was uncertainty for a number of competitors on whether or not they had an entry or not, only being confirmed a day or two before the event. The on the day arrangements were equally loose. Running order – whenever you like. Where do double drives change over? – wherever you like.



Aside from the organisation, 12 competitors turned up to glorious weather. This event had a bit of a generational competition. Ella was competing against her father, & I against mine. This was only the 3<sup>rd</sup> time I was to have driven my Dad's Plus 8, and the first time in a competitive manner. Having turned 18 only a fortnight previously, this was going to be an exciting experience. Plenty of space in the paddock, and we were well situated to see an exciting part of the track.

Mike and Tom Meredith with Ella and David Frow

The sprint consisted of 1 ½ laps of the track. Starting from the pit lane, round Gerard's Bend, then brake hard for Edwina's Chicane - normally used by the motorbikes – accelerate through the Esses, then brake hard for the Hairpin, quickly followed by the challenging Devil's Elbow Corner, blast past the start / finish line, round Gerard's again, then across the sprint finish line just before the chicane.



Paul Clarke rounding Devil's Elbow

It was a slow meeting. We eventually got to our first (& only) practice run at about 11:30. Chris Bailey was top of the leaderboard, Ella ahead of her father, & I a couple of seconds behind mine. Dad was running ahead of me, & so could offer advise on where to change gear etc - not sure if it was any good! George, unusually, was near the bottom of the chart, not helped by a spin at Edwina's Chicane – maybe this was the track that would foil him!

They stopped for an hour lunchbreak at 1pm., halfway through the first timed runs (we were towards the back of the running order, so had only had the one run at this point). We found this out as I saw the marshals leave their posts. Whilst lunch was on, we congregated under the very useful sun shade of the Andy Hatch's Campervan Awning. Michelle sent round her usual and very tasty chocolate brownies, while we heard of Ella's dislike of all things Saab, and another of the group (who shall remain nameless) told his sad tale of speeding points, and his ingenious ways of avoiding getting a driving ban, having racked up a potential total of 21 points (although I may have lost count).

After lunch, we got round to having our first timed runs. George had worked out where he was going wrong taking 13s off his practice run, and headed the leaderboard, followed by Chris & then Simon, with Ella hard on their heels. Phillip

also had a massive improvement, taking 24s off his practice. I was down the leaderboard, but learning from Dad, I had my excuses ready! I had also met the first rule – keep it on the black stuff.

Outside of the Morgans, there was quite a bit of entertainment by the Caterham class, and the Lotus Sunbeam group, who turn up at our vantage point by the chicane with clouds of smoke and tyre squeal, sometimes making the corner, sometimes not.

Time was knocking on during that lovely afternoon, and it was about 4pm that we went to line up for only our 3<sup>rd</sup> run of the day. George (1<sup>st</sup> off), pulled up to the start line. Got set to go, and then the single seater that was going past on his



2<sup>nd</sup> pass through Gerard's went past with a cloud of smoke billowing out behind him. This was then followed by zero communication from the organisers as to what happened, whether it was oil or not (it was), where it started / finished etc.

After half an hour or more, still with no idea on what awaited us, the track re-opened.

It was a lottery. It turned out that they hadn't soaked up the oil with cement dust (visible), but something else (invisible), so no one knew where the oil was or if they were driving through it. Brave pills all round. George was the first on this voyage of discovery, and I think seeing him come round for the 2<sup>nd</sup> go at Gerard's gave everyone else a bit of confidence. This was possibly false confidence, as Ella, following George, had a bad

lottery ticket, slid on the oil, collected a cone, and drove half the course with a cone under the car. The rest of us, blissfully ignorant, pushed on. Michelle took 4s off her previous time, while Paul took 6s off.

Ella Frow running the invisible cement dust.

In the end, George prevailed, 0.11 off handicap, followed by Simon (1.67) & Chris (2.8). I (following orders / instruction), deliberately went slowly, so didn't challenge Dad.

Summarising, a great track, organisation needs some serious improvements, but a good day had by all (just as well the weather helped).

FYI, below is a link to Dad's best run on uTube: [https://youtu.be/aZ4bCS\\_mQaE?si=bSBILro9biRZb3dO](https://youtu.be/aZ4bCS_mQaE?si=bSBILro9biRZb3dO)

Tom Meredith

Photos provided by Brian Lee.