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2012 Event report 3. British Sprint Championship rounds from Northern Ireland and Scotland, plus club meetings Blyton Park and Goodwood Circuit

After a tough round at Pembrey, we were lying 5th in the British, and a few weeks preparation time for the overseas leg in Northern Ireland held at **Kirkistown circuit**.

For the first time, this meeting brought together the Irish Sprint championship and the British contenders and well over 100 cars led to a great days competition. It was mostly dry for a change and I was pleased to easily qualify for the run off 3rd overall. Terry Holmes in the V8 had made the long journey from Chichester - flying into Belfast on the morning of the competition, while Graham and TEGRA team did the big slog of getting the car there.

I was pleased to pip Colin Birkbeck in the Dallara in the run off by 0.5s to set a new PB and finish 4th, behind the V8s of Stewart Robb, Mike Musson and Terry.

There were the usual battles behind, with Graham in the Lola V8, both Peter and Brian getting good points in the V8 Ralt. Martin and Tony who share the 2litre Reynard were only 0.08 apart at the end of the day. John graham, had welding repairs to the exhaust and coil pack mounting to keep him busy in the evening while we had a few celebratory beers! Colin bought dinner for me which was a very nice gesture.



The following day didn't start unit midday which gave me time to change the final gear ratio. I had optimised the gearbox for each day as we running different track layouts. It paid off as on the fast course, I managed to repeat the result from Saturday. It was a real panic to make the 7 am sailing, and the trailer and car was packed so that as I came off the track it straight into the trailer, overalls off and away, driving an hour to Belfast to make the ferry with 3 minutes to spare!

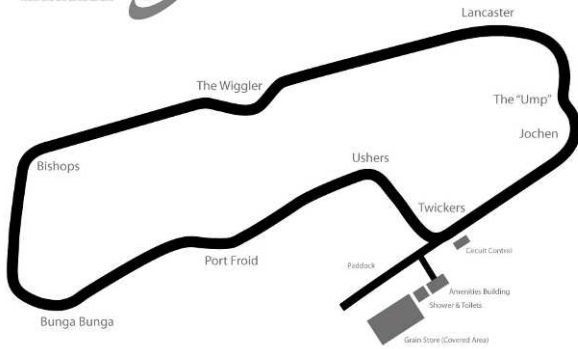
Blyton Park

Having tested here pre season, I was keen to return to this great venue to try it in anger, and what an event it was. 100+ cars and was well run by the WSCC. The friendly circuit owner pointed out that my fellow BSC compatriot, Jonathan Toulmin was at the venue a month earlier and set a new lap record of 63.71 - and that was the target to beat!

Due to only 4 days between this meeting at heading to Kames, I had optimised the gearbox for Kames and not Blyton, but this didn't seem to hold me back as in second practice we were in the 61's!



Blyton Park Test and tuition circuit



The course started on the straight at 'Twickers' and was 110mph before the first corner, 'Jochen'. A flowing but tight chicane and then the fastest point of the circuit on the back straight, 130mph into 'The Wiggler'. Bishops is faster than it looks and the 'Bunga Bunga' catches you out on the exit as it tightens. A glorious sweeps of 'Port Froid' taken at around 120mph but not quite flat! The final sting in the tail is 'Ushers' and then you hit the finish beam, 1.5 miles later.

This was a two day meeting with the best time of the weekend to count to the final results. I had the confidence of a brand new set of tyres for when it counted. I was being pushed by Glyn Sketchly in his carbon fibre tubbed Force- weighing only 320kgs and some 250bhp. At the end of the 2nd run, I had posted a 61.42 and Glyn was just 0.2secs behind. It was time to deploy the new tyres!

I approached the start queue to find that Glyn had done exactly the same - brand new tyres also! He banged in a committed 60.83 to take the lead, but I was equally committed and dead chuffed to see 59.62 on the clock as I went over the line!

A video can be found on the www.blytonpark.co.uk website of my run.

A good evening in the hot sunshine and beers were had yet again - can you see a theme developing here in these weekends! The following morning I had an incident while pushing the car around in the paddock and cut my little finger rather badly on the steering wheel. I was patched up with a dressing that allowed me to put my racing gloves on and we continued the day.

Martin Pickles had his first class win in his new Jedi and John Graham fresh from the reweld in Kirkistown come 3rd overall.

Glyn piled the pressure on all three runs and ultimately got to within 0.08 but no one bettered the time set the previous day and I am now proud to hold the outright sprint course lap record for Blyton Park!



The Scottish round of the BSC, was a weekend to forget! I have been driving the race car for 12 seasons now and only had one minor shunt, so perhaps it was my time!

Kames is a tight karting track, but still the big guns get to 120mph, and I managed around 100. It favours the smaller cars as it is only about 1.5 car width wide. We had heavy showers and sunshine all weekend. The Saturday anticlockwise course was the better way to run the venue, although I had a small off at the hairpin I didn't hit anything, but I only managed to qualify 11th after the timed runs.

In a run off the slowest car starts first, so after being second away, with just light rain falling, I was in the pound seats when the heavens opened for the remaining runners. At the end of the first 12 runs I was 3rd, but the track was drying all the time, and gradually I got pushed back - to 11th!

Scott Pillinger had a great run to end 5th and Colin had got his form back to record 2nd fastest.

The following day we ran clockwise and it was on the 3rd lap of practise that 'the big one' occurred. I just understeered slightly, then the outside, loaded wheel touched the grass and I was a passenger. leaving the track at 47mph and hitting the tyre wall 3m later recording 7.8G. Onboard video by clicking [here](#) or search YouTube for Kames 2012 moleracing crash.

I think the marshals who attended quickly thought I had tourettes due to the swearing going off in the cockpit. Steve Wilkinson captured the sequence wonderfully as you can see below.



However, in around 2 hours, we had it rebuilt and out for 1st timed runs, with fantastic help from all my fellow competitors.

Chris and Jonny - left - helped admirably all weekend and perhaps got more work than they bargained for!



So, repairs and bills and remember its only money, you cant take it with you. 5 days later and a 5am alarm saw Giulia and I at **Goodwood in Sussex**. this is a superb historic F1 venue - with a track around 7 car width wide and 2.4 miles around. I have driven here before but last time got evicted due to triggering too many noise meters around the circuit. This time I deployed "Big Bill", the exhaust that came with the car when I bought it off Bill Gouldthorpe in 2010.



Bill, who is not a young whippersnapper (but thinks he is) is, shall we say somewhere between 70 and 80, but no one seems to have told him to slow down yet. When he retired from sprinting at the end of 2010 to look after his wife who has Alzheimer's, I bought his car as it was very similar to mine. A distraught Bill, with no car took only a few months to get a new bike engined special from the SBD stable for 2011, then for 2012 upgraded it to some 250bhp and it weighs just over 300kgs. He is a Goodwood expert and won there many times, so a close contest was to be had.

It was essentially dry all day. I had one accident when a tyre exploded at the furthest point of the circuit. Luckily I was on bike at the time getting a sighter lap in at around 15mph. This led to an unexpected 1.5 mile run back to make the drivers briefing!

After the one and only practice run Bill was heading the 100 odd cars and I was some 5 seconds behind - Yikes, I don't want to get beaten by an old 'un. What was worse, even Big Bill was too loud and so Martin Pickles - spanninger and generally "good advising and sorting me out" for the day - and I stripped the large exhaust and repacked it fresh silencer wadding that I had brought along specially. We were OK on the next run and allowed to play.

So on the first of only 2 timed runs, with best tyres on I went some 5 seconds faster to record a 80.49, ahead of Glyn (from Blyton competition) by less than 2 seconds, but Bill had a few tenths on me to hold the lead at 80.18.

Talking to some locals - Terry & Graham who were along to watch, they analysed my data and we made a plan where I had to be braver, not lift the throttle and generally be committed. On my first run I had already gone faster than ever before at 147mph, but they decided my corner speed after the fast bit at 110mph was too low and I needed stop being a wuss!

A video of the final run can be found by clicking [here](#), or searching YouTube "Goodwood Eagle Sprint moleracing"

It was a good run, although when I look at the logger afterwards - I did slowly back off the throttle as the corner loomed for the last 200m of the fast bit but still clocked 149.8mph (243kph)! However Bill found extra and time and stopped the clock in new PB of 78.43 and Glyn got down to 79.50, but when results were published I was rather pleased with a new outright course record for the new sprint circuit of 77.46. A day only topped off by Jessica, Greg and Mo getting golds for team GB!





A new event has been added - Brands Hatch on September 22, but it's Brighton Speed Trails next and we shall see if that 3rd place by 0.06 secs can be improved on!

2 Litre Class 2012 after round 9 of 11		
Steve Miles	Van Diemen RF96mm11	310
Colin Birkbeck	Dallara F301	279
Scott Pillinger	DSP SBD	256
John Graham	Dallara F397	246
Mark Smith	SBD Reynard	229
Tony Jarvis	Reynard FVL	192
Martin Webb	Reynard FVL	186
Dave Pillinger	DSP SBD	155
Craig Sampson	SBD Reynard	88
Matt Hillam	SBD Reynard	74
Steve Broughton	SBD Reynard	49

British Sprint Championship 2012 Top 12 after round 7 of 11		
Stewart Robb	4.0 Pilbeam-Judd MP88	87
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola-Judd ERH	77
Colin Birkbeck	2.0 Dallara F301	54
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola-Judd ERH	49
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm11	48
Mark Smith	2.0 SBD Reynard	44
Mike Musson	4.0 Pilbeam-Judd MP88	44
Scott Pillinger	2.0 DSP SBD	29
Colin Calder	4.0 Gould GR55	28
Terry Graves	3.5 Gould GR37	27
Heather Calder	4.0 Gould GR55	20
John Graham	2.0 Dallara	20

Remaining Events 2012		
8 September	Madeira Drive	Brighton
22 September	Brands Hatch	Kent
6 October	Anglesey	N Wales
7 October	Anglesey	N Wales

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