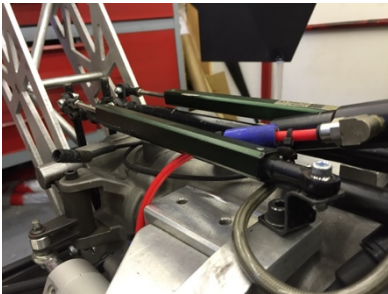


## moleracing - second report of the 2016 season

### Snetterton

The intervening 6 weeks since Croft saw additional front wing second element go on the car in a high downforce configuration for better front end grip. I'd also added extra padding for shoulders and legs in the cockpit so that in the big corners, where high lateral G is being generated (2.7G is the highest sustained loading seen so far!) I'm now restrained laterally as well as with the six-point harness.



Suspension linear potentiometers have also been added so that movement of the car can be logged and frequency analysis used to clever things – of which at this moment in time I'm not sure what! Still life is about learning!

The double weekend at Snetterton was a nice return to competition and it was a busy class with 6 V8's and 6 2 litres, and also the first showing of the British champion Colin Calder and daughter Heather sharing the car for a full blown assault this year. Colin had had an engine rebuilt and to quote his own words "we could have bought a nice house where we live for what it has cost" gulp!

Well if you want 700bhp plus, it doesn't come cheap.

I was helped by Martin Pickles whose engine was being rebuilt following a tactical withdrawel after graunchy noises at Castle Combe. Also Naser was keep to see how the latest aero tweaks were working. He also became my race engineer for the day and suggested lots of different things that I never usually think of. All this on 1.5 hours sleep, 2.5hrs driving, a full day at the circuit before 3 more hours driving and an evening shift working! Chris from MBE who supply the ECU also helped out all day with data and ideas!

Poor old Nick Alger's supercharger parted company with its engine and he was last seen heading to Silverstone to see if he could get out again on Sunday.

The circuit suited the car as always and I think the cold weather seemed to go against the SBD Dallara working well as I ended up 1<sup>st</sup> 2 litre and 4<sup>th</sup> in class with a new PB and 5<sup>th</sup> in the run off just 0.08 ahead of Matt. Defo beer time and the new 'victory' shirts were deployed!

Photo right shows the sprint boys wishing Bill Gouldthorpe a swift return to action following his big operation

Amazingly, first run Sunday – despite a few ales the previous night and being on practice tyres, was only 0.6 off the run off yesterday! The day was warmer and Matt and Steve were determined not to be pipped again. I tried quite a few different lines, which was easier said than done, but ultimately I went quicker. Although I went faster than a couple of the big V8s due to only 7 of the 8 cylinders working, Matt beat me this time, but it was still a great 5<sup>th</sup> place again.



(Terry Holmes lower left, Colin Calder, Graham Porrett, Simon Bainbridge, Matt Carter (top right), John Hansell, Martin Pickles and me)

I'd like to put a video of the run on YouTube, but the circuit owners threaten any onboard video found on the internet to be subject to a £25,000 fine – don't think I'll risk it!

## Pembrey

After two 5<sup>th</sup> places at Snetterton, with Matt getting the upper hand in the 2 litre class, everything was to play for at Pembrey Circuit in South Wales a few weeks later.

I was hoping for more rain as I seem to go well when it is damp, but a hot dry weekend prevailed, so any win had to be earned the hard way as the dry warm weather really suits the SBD Dallara and the compound of tyres they run. Apparently the cooler weather to date has meant that they couldn't get the tyres to 'switch on' and deliver the grip, but the warmer it gets, the better they become. Gulp!

So after a 4.5 hour drive – not as bad as the Calders 19 hour drive mind you - we decamped and got set up in the paddock for the weekend of fun, adrenaline and competition ahead – plus hopefully some music and drinks thrown in too!



Last year my best time was 96.69 and 7<sup>th</sup> Saturday and 4<sup>th</sup> Sunday (mainly due to a lot of retirements), so the minimum was to beat this target and try to get top 2 litre. A 102 first practice was followed by a 100 for 2<sup>nd</sup> practice. But both Steve and Matt were in the 96's and also the tatty old blown van Diemen of Dave Cutcliffe was beating me! So further experimentation and also cleaning up of the tyres and more bravery pills were needed.

For timed runs, the ones that qualify you for the top 12 run off, I moved to the low 97s, behind Matt who took the class win in a 94 and Steve went backwards for some reason. This run can be seen in HD by clicking [here](#) – where a YouTube link can be found. So run off achieved, time for best tyres and some commitment.





The car was handling really well, with a new more stable lower rear wing and smoother structure, the old aluminium frame now skinned with thin carbon fibre sheet. For the top 12 run off increased commitment delivered a 96.2, but this was behind Steve and Matt, so only 7<sup>th</sup> and I was a bit disappointed in my performance. No loud music from the mole trailer that evening.



I was determined to try harder on Sunday, and after checking things over and getting more jobs done I had an early sober night. Up with the larks on Sunday, walked the course, and practice runs were in the 98's. Followed by two identical times runs at 97.35 each time. Matt again took the class win with a high 95 and Steve was 0.1 faster than me.

So best tyres on, a very detailed plan made with the assistance of Colin Early who was helping me all weekend. The plan had an entry phase, apex phase and 'post apex to exit kerbs' strategy for every one of the 13 bends. I had a

good launch and the first corner went to plan, so did the second, then the third and I was gaining confidence (and time), I needed an extra gear due to the speed build up and most importantly I didn't make any glaring errors for all 1.75 laps. Well knock me sideways – the clocks stopped at **93.94!** to take top 2 litre spot and 5<sup>th</sup> in the run off. Beers were shared out to the hot marshals and it was loud music playlist in the sun as I cleaned up the tyres and packed away, pleased to be lying 3<sup>rd</sup> overall in the championship at this stage. What a brilliant day, and such memories are why we do the sport and keep you motivated though cold dark hours in the winter.

**“I WASN'T QUITE SURE WHERE MY FINGER WAS, BUT WHEREVER IT WAS, IT WAS TIME TO PULL IT OUT”**

A weekend in the garage gave the car some love and attention, finding some loose bits, some damaged parts and generally gave it a thorough check over, including improve the suspension geometry that was not correct left to right with 9 degrees of castor one side and 5.5 the other and camber was 0.5 to 1.75! It will be interesting to see if the handling is improved further at Anglesey!

## Anglesey

More fancy carbon fibre parts were added for a stage 3 aero upgrade, making the diffuser work harder and the front wing second elements also. There is always a lot of interest on developments as the trailer is opened at the circuit on a Friday!

First practice, the rear of the car was all over the place, like driving on ice and the steering was strangely light. A front roll bar adjustment of 2.5mm totally transformed the handling with both front and rear end bolted. Game on, especially with a new set of tyres to deploy!

An easy qualification to the run off – helped by Nicks repaired (350kgs, 430bhp) DJ Firehawk overgearing for 170mph when he only got to 130, and blow me a new PB again but exactly the same time as Steve on 78.68! with places decided on count back I dropped behind Steve and Matt to take 6<sup>th</sup>. Heather took 1<sup>st</sup> place and beat her dad by 0.3 with a 73.62!



An encounter with the barrier meant Matt Carter had a long night with a rebuild but got it out the next day!



We had a good evening in the trailer, which became an "F1 in Baku" viewing centre via 3G and data dongles and a Sky go package! With fellow drivers who work at Mercedes and McLaren watching, some good rivalries enjoyed and a few beers consumed!

The Sunday weather forecast was 'moistly' promising, with increasing rain forecast all day. 2 dry practice runs on a different circuit saw a conventional order, Nick not hampered by overgearing this day. But with 2 different weather forecast radars running

I made sure I was ready to run when called, so despite the rain now starting and being on slicks, I set the launch control to 3, floored the

throttle and dropped the clutch. Lots of banging and popping and within a few seconds we were doing 100mph and throwing up the rooster tails! I slithered and slipped my way round the 2 laps, almost coming off about 3 times, but kept it on the tarmac – unlike Nick who did all two laps and came off on the last corner taking out the timing gear and recorded no time!



Conditions worsened as the forecast suggested and only 3 V8's moved ahead of me in that run. Lunchtime now, then it just got wetter and windier, and the organisers decided to cancel the meeting before a serious accident occurred. Run off points were awarded on qualifying conditions, so although disappointed to not get a high speed run on wet tyres to attack the V8's, I'll take the points for 4<sup>th</sup>!

Oil to change, stage 4 aero upgrade to add, a practice meeting at Blyton and then it will be Knockhill in Scotland for the next round.

Steve

2 Litre Class 2016 after 8 rounds		
Matt Hillam,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	367
Steve Miles,	Van Diemen RF96mm16	364
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	360
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	232
Tony Jarvis,	Dallara F399	200
Nick Algar,	DJ	96
Dave Cutliff	Van Diemen	89

British Sprint Championship 2016 after 8 of 15 rounds, best 9 scores to count		
John Graham	2.8 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	76
Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	69
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm16	65
Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	64
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	63
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	58
Steve Broughton	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	53
Matt Carter	1.3 radical PR6	39
Jim Belt	3.0 Juno TR400	28
Simon Bainbridge	4.2 SBR Chrono V8	26
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	23
Nick Algar	2.0 DJ Firehawk	15
Grahame Harden	1.0 Jedi	14
Carole Torkington	1.6 SBD OMS	10
Martin Webb	2.0 Dallara 399/00	9
Tony Jarvis	2.0 Dallara 399/00	8
Dave Cutcliffe	1.3T Van Diemen 83M	5
Richard Arrowsmith	1.0 Force PC	4
Mark Demster	2.0 Imagination	3
Colin Metcalf	2.0 Primera	1

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Remaining Events 2016		
9 July	Blyton (Not BSC)	Gainsborough
10 July	Blyton (Not BSC)	Gainsborough
30 July	Knockhill	Scotland
31 July	Knockhill	Scotland
6 Aug	Kirkistown	N Ireland
7 Aug	Kirkistown	N Ireland
11 Sept	Blyton	Gainsborough
1 October	Anglesey	N Wales
2 October	Anglesey	N Wales



All track photos by Neil Lambert