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moleracing 2018 season – Final report

After the trailer tyre puncture on the way home from Scotland, I invested in 4 new trailer tyres to make sure I made it to Northern Ireland a fortnight later. Unfortunately, 1 hour into the 12-hour journey, a wheel came off at 60mph, but luckily it cleared 3 lanes of the M6 and dropped to a halt in the central reservation – no one hurt, just my wallet in getting a new wheel, tyre, studs and nuts to continue the journey with no further incidents.



Kirkistown, Northern Ireland

10 years ago, a trip to Ireland was 'easy points' as not many made the effort to get there. However, in recent years it's a full turnout of every V8 registered, and the entry is only really for enjoyment, comradery, a great track and the warm & friendly welcome from the locals.

The full double lap circuit layout was run both days, so plenty of track time. Brakes and transmissions were taking a punishing on several cars. It seemed that between runs, everyone was nursing, repairing and fettling all day just to keep in the game. The biggest casualty was John Graham whose gearbox side-lined his V8 early on Saturday. The 800bhp Audi of Simon also went 'hors de combat' and a road car was borrowed to take last position in the run off.

I was a little over exuberant in my braking and gave the marshals a bit of a fright at the chicane, but no damage as I took the escape route between the cones. When I did it a second time they were used to it! But practice is just that, practice and find the limits!



Stewart Robb, achieving 170mph in his 5 litre V10, had push rod failure on Saturday that was welded overnight and then on Sunday encountered a dog on the track at similar speeds. He was shaking on his return to the paddock.



After a 6th place in the Saturday I found a broken front antiroll bar joint, which explained the strange handling I had been battling for a while. With a borrowed spare from the Calder's we were handling much better during Sunday qualification. But all went downhill in the run off, with the car stopping on track, then restarting back in the paddock, then on my second run, it stopped again but started again, so I recorded the slowest time in British Sprint history at 258.20 seconds to come 8th!

Excellent remote dial in support from SBD in London eventually diagnosed the throttle pot sensor wiring issue and with some new parts all was running well for the next event.

Colin closed the gap at the top to Heather to keep his championship attack alive as Heather thought it wise not to drive at 160pmh without brakes!



Rockingham

A single day event to the closest track to me was quite a contrast to the Ireland weekend. Not so close for Colin, who took advantage of Heather being at wedding and grabbed a sneaky extra point back with a win and record point!

We were running a new track layout that no one had driven before, so it was a good leveller. With sponsors, customers & work colleagues present, the pressure was on to deliver! Things were progressing well, but in the first of the two run offs, I located the rear wheel against the spacer and torqued the nuts up (exactly as I had done for 18 years) but the spacer wasn't flush – just parallel, so when I launched it moved and the wheel was loose, This led to a wobble, that machined a groove and the tyre deflated. The first I knew of this was at 120mph when it went through the chicane and hit the brakes. Suffice it to say, the old heart rate rose quite a bit, but I wrestled the twitching car to a sensible speed and we got back to the paddock. Swapped the tyre for a practice rear, and attempted a second run off, but it was nothing special, and only could managed 9th place. Impressive drive of the day was from fellow 2 litre driver Matt Hillam (shown here) who took second place.



Blyton Park

A wet Saturday and a dry Sunday made for some unusual results, and I was mid to lower top 12 both days. We did have a willing pit crew this time made from children of friends at work!



A storm of a drive by Heather Calder saw her stake a very strong claim on the British Championship 2018 title with a new outright course record on her final run of the day.



The season finale was held at **Anglesey Circuit**, a wonderful venue, paid for by Welsh and EU money!

Just the final placing to fight over – 10th or 11th I'd calculated as I was definitely going to be 3rd 2 litre. This was further confirmed when after some special testing with Pirelli Ultrasoft compound – exactly as F1 proved very successful on an 1100cc car, the rest of the 2 litre class must have spent circa £4k and all turned up for the last event with Pirelli tyres on – and boy did they fly, immediately finding 2 or more

seconds. OK it's not all tyres, there was some superb driving from Matt, Steve and Nick – but my gamble on Michelins this year didn't pay off, and I know what direction I shall be going in 2019!

I experimented this weekend trying to push harder and carry the braking/steering phase to the apex – when it worked it was fantastic – often it didn't and several time I spun quite harmlessly. A video of my best long lap is here - https://youtu.be/PsyCFET_8tk – you will note I actually crossed the finish sideways and ended up on the infield!

A 7th in the run off both days was reasonable. The drama of the weekend was Graham Blackwell launching off the line then turning sideways into the Armco, follow this link for onboard video!
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fw6ICe_F58U



Steve Broughton (of SBD) took a well-deserved 2018 2 litre class win, I ended bottom step joint 3rd. In the main British Championship, Heather won, Colin accepting it would take a major miracle and they elected to skip Anglesey. Overall, I finished 10th place this year.



After 20 years, this event was the last run by British Championship organiser Paul Parker. He has organised and made it happen over this time and given us all a great amount of pleasure, thanks Paul.

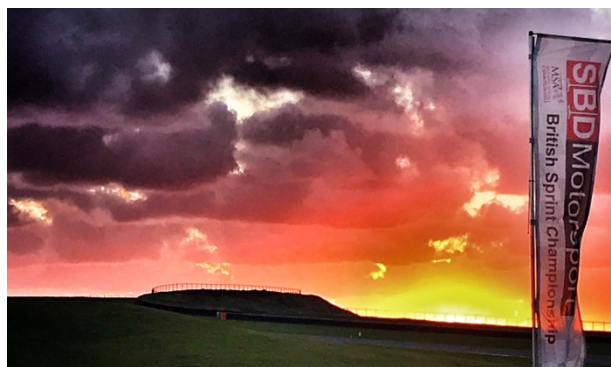
Thanks also go to sponsors **Telsonic**, **LAC Conveyors & Automation** & **SBD** this season for their invaluable support.

Finally, I'd like to mention an inspirational man, who's chassis I'm still driving, and he keeps fighting - Bill Gouldthorpe aged 82 – who only a few months ago, battling with the return of cancer was banging in the fast laps at Lydden!



I trust you've enjoyed me sharing my adventures in 2018, roll on the winter and can't wait to be out again in 2019.

Steve



British Sprint Championship 2018 – Top 12			
1	Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	109
2	Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	105
3	John Graham	3.5 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	90
4	Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	87
5	Steve Broughton,	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	82
6	Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	80
7	Nick Algar	1.3T DJ Firehawk	79
8	Stewart Robb	5.0 Pilbeam MP88 B-01	75
9	Graham Blackwell	1.6T Mygale VVTi	62
10	Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	59
11	Pete Goulding	1.6T Mygale FF200	59
12	Chris Jones	1.0 Force TA	54

Telsonic – www.telsonic.com
 LAC – www.lacconveyors.co.uk
 SBD - www.sbdev.co.uk
 Carbon-fibre.com
<http://moleracing.com/>

British Sprint Championship 2018 – 2 Litre class		
Steve Broughton,	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	427
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	419
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	408
Nick Algar	1.3T DJ Firehawk	408