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moleracing 2025 British Championship Season (report 1 of 5)

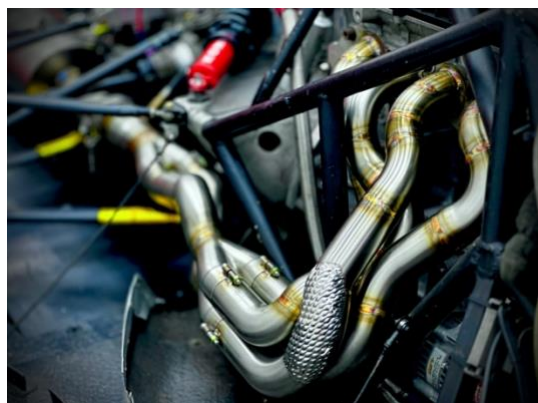
Winter developments & upgrades



3 years into retirement and still wondering after a hectic winter how I ever found time to do a job and run a hobby. Life and health is great, chilled with only self-induced stress! In planning for 2025 I took some advice from a TV interview with Sir Chris Hoy late last year, who, after his stage 4 cancer diagnosis said, *"If you have a plan, don't put it off, do it now"*. So various upgrades I'd been thinking about to bring in over the next few years, I thought *'sod it let's do them all right away!'*

So, in the relentless pursuit of more power, less weight, more downforce and better handling I managed to achieve the following upgrades leading up to the first event at Cadwell end of March as well as fitting a few holidays during the winter.

NEW:- dampers, springs, exhaust system, silencer, clutch, front wing, floor intakes, driveshafts, NAS bolts, upright swivels, brake discs, pushrods, loom refurb, knock sensor, fuel, lubrication system and on board air compressor.



In a little more detail, the most beautiful addition was from APH Precision in Banbury and is a new larger titanium and stainless-steel exhaust made to the precise dimensions as SBD developed on the dyno for my engine to allow it to release the full 307bhp – perhaps 20bhp more than the old 'stifling' system. This is quieter and lighter than before as well as looking stunning. Cannot recommend Alans work highly enough.

The

dampers and spring package from Raceshocks in South Wales is another thing of beauty, Nitron 3 way adjustable - that's rebound, high speed and low speed compression. Lots of tuning and development needed however to get it in the right window. A new clutch from SBD that is now from a different manufacturer following last years failure.



The aero has been upgraded by adding some infeed throats to feed the floor, doubling its intake area and taking advantage of the new SBD developed triple element front wings – less drag, more downforce and a vortex inducing feed to the new tunnel. They look the dogs!



Then a whole series of safety and maintenance jobs. A new car set of NAS bolts helped by James Wills of RaceParts, then all 3 upright swivel pins were replaced after the 29-year-old one failed last year in Northern Ireland. This was a tricky removal and installation but well within the skilled capabilities of Steve Cambell at Thunder Engineering in Leicester. The loom was removed and given a thorough check over by SiLeck who built it 10 years ago.



With new sponsor, Sustain Fuels onboard we are running Sustain Racing C50, a 102 Octane MSUK legal pump fuel, but giving more power than Shells finest. A knock sensor has been added to allow a tighter tune of the engine map.

Also supporting the team this season are ROWE oil, and they can supply a really wide range of quality lubricants including some sustainable non fossil fuel based and we are running some really high quality 0-40W racing oil and also suitable gearbox lubricant. So, all in all, there has been a lot going on and a shakedown and test were planned before the season start on March 29 at Cadwell.



I managed to lose some mass also and weighed in sub 70kgs in the last week – haven't been that light since I was in my 20s!

Curborough Shakedown

A basic 'does it move, stop and start' type test was planned 3 weeks before the first event at the local venue of Curborough. In the end this was very useful as I never got on track due to the onboard high pressure air tank regulator somehow failing and damaging the valves – so no gear selection. Steve Broughton and SBD rapidly arranged a solution of using some elements of the system and fitting an onboard compressor solution and a small addition to the loom.

Llandow test 1

En route to the first proper test, I called in at Level Motorsport Wiring in south Wales to have the loom modified to run the compressor. SBD provided map updates for the ECU and were also in attendance at the test all day to fine tune the engine maps now we are running the sustainable fuel. With motion sickness pills deployed I was able to run about 12 laps during the day and the car was fettled and checked and improved. It



Photo by Kim

was felt the springs selected by Steve were a little strong for ride quality and so were changed back to last years, but the new dampers were valved to this specified harder level and ride quality still not good. Raceshocks were also in attendance to advise and at the end of the day, they took the dampers away to revalve to a new softer spring rate.

Llandow test 2

So, 2 days before the event I found myself back in south Wales at Raceshocks and set the car up to the new damper rates at their workshop. They even left me the keys to carry on working in to the evening and I spent the night in the camper in carpark. The job was finished the following morning, and I headed to Llandow again to try out. Whilst better, it was still a harsh damper setup, even though the springs were now softer than last year, but hopefully at Cadwell this would be OK and Llandow is just very bumpy. Arriving home at 10pm, it was a swift repack the following day, and I headed off to Cadwell mid-afternoon.



Cadwell Park

Rounds 1 & 2 of the British Sprint Championship at this Lincolnshire venue were held in glorious early sunshine with a stiff cold breeze. Only 9 runners had made it to the first day of competition and nice to see two new faces sharing a drive in a Mygale Ecoboost. Nick Scott helped me all day, not wanting to drive after his extensively damaging crash here last year. The car, now softer had great traction and was so nice to launch with a working clutch again, 2.17secs 0-64ft was the best. Unfortunately, the damping still wasn't in the right window and the high-speed section gave a lot of harsh oscillation and traction events and I was some 4 secs off the pace of the 2023 champion Pete Goulding in the Mygale Ecoboost running on new Michelins. Steve Brown in the supercharged Empire Evo, also running Sustain fuel was well on his heels though and he eventually beat me in the up to 2 litre class.



Photo by CF Photos

Just before I got on the track from the holding area, I noticed the front wheel making a noise and decided to abort the run to investigate as the inner wheel hub was being shaved by something. Back in the paddock I found the lower suspension nut had worked loose and was scraping the wheel. So Loctite applied and a tighten got everything sorted and I managed to get swiftly out to take my qualifying run. I checked all the others for the rest of the day. Normal blue needs to be replaced with high strength green Loctite!

A further couple of seconds quicker but I confess to the most stupid mistake as I drove back into the paddock and misjudged the steering sweep angle and impacted the stout trailer ramp base with the tip of my front wing – that you cannot see from the cockpit. This ripped out the wing end plate and cracked the main plane outer skin but luckily the new front elements were intact. The carbon fibre magic man, John Hansell swiftly came to my aid and between my spares and repair box and Simon Wallis, we found enough 5minute epoxy to glue and tape it all back together. It held out for the day and more extensive repairs will be done at Anglesey or after.



The repairs held and I managed a further couple of seconds improvement to come 4th behind Pete Goulding and then Steve Brown who was only a tenth behind Pete and was so close to his first run off win! Simon Bainbridge had a trouble-free day to take the last podium spot and I was fourth ahead of John

Loudon. The final run chipped another few seconds off and I pulled back to a few seconds off the winning time of Pete but 4th place it was.

So, Monday after the event saw me back in South Wales and Raceshocks are putting another set up on the dampers that we shall try in a few days' time. There are 19 runners for the Anglesey weekend, so qualification for top 12 points will be harder – let's see how we get on!

Feel free to visit any of the events as per the schedule below.

Cheers
Steve/Smiles



Photo by Paul Kitchen

British Sprint Championship 2025 after round 2 of 34. Best 29 to count		
Pete Goulding	1.6T Mygale FF200 EcoBoost	51
Steve Brown	1.3S RLM Empire Evo2	49
Simon Bainbridge	4.2 Chrono V8 TT Sports Libre	47
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm2025	44
John Loudon	1.1 Force TA	43
Mike Taylor	1.6T Mygale EcoBoost	39
Grahame Harden	1.6 Radical PR6	39
Cathy Sewart	1.6T Mygale EcoBoost	36
Graham Porrett	1.6T Mygale FF200 EcoBoost	
Chris Jones	1.0 Force TA	
Carole Torkington	1.5 OMS CF08	
Nicholas Scott	1.6 Force TA	
Lloyd Bettinson	1.0 STM Phoenix	
Steve Broughton	1.4 DJ Firehawk CT004	
Nick Houston	1.0 OMS Hornet	
Duncan Barnes	2.1T Norma M20FC	
Martin Pickles	1.0 Jedi MP	
Ethan Faulkner	1.4 Force PT	

Schedule 2025			Run off Result
29 March	Cadwell Park	Louth	4 th & 4 th 😊
5 April	Anglesey Nat	North Wales	
6 April	Anglesey Int	North Wales	
17 May	Blyton Eastern	Gainsborough	
18 May	Blyton Outer	Gainsborough	
7 June	Pembrey	South Wales	
8 June	Pembrey	South Wales	
21 June	Mallory Park	Leicester	
22 June	Mallory Park	Leicester	
12 July	Lydden	Dover	
2 August	Kirkistown	Northern Ireland	
3 August	Kirkistown	Northern Ireland	
16 August	Llandow	South Wales	
22-24 Aug	Car Fest - TBC	Hampshire	
6 Sept	Pembrey	South Wales	
7 Sept	Pembrey	South Wales	
4 Oct	Anglesey	North Wales	
5 Oct	Anglesey	North Wales	
18 Oct	Castle Combe	Wiltshire	