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moleracing 2017 season – closing stages of season news update



Lydden Hill Circuit

Another circuit I enjoy driving and this event was entered purely for the pleasure of doing so as I hadn't been there for a few years as no sprints have been run for a while. Massive M25 delays meant many competitors who set off on the Friday never got here until Saturday morning!

I managed fastest overall in practice, but my car was triggering the circuit noise meters, so I pulled the exhaust system apart and repacked it. A gentle next run, that was the second fastest time gave me the green light from the authorities (as they packed the noise meter away), to have a full beans attack on the next run.

I did indeed give it large - but the time was disallowed as I had all 4 wheels of the track on the exit of one of the corners – the Devils Elbow.



So for the last run, a big build up, and then 'BANG' as I launched and the drive shaft snapped in half. Game over and time to get the wallet out again!



Hethel – Lotus cars test facility



A rather enjoyable weekend started with an emotional final day at work after 27 years. A fabulous evening and quite a lot of beers with 30plus colleagues, that then culminated in a tooth shearing in half and a lot of pain despite 7 pints! Saturday was spent chasing emergency dentists and eventually I was patched up and I set off to deepest Norfolk to a B&B, just outside Hethel Circuit - the home of the Lotus factory and a fantastic test track.

I had put gears in the box to get me to 155 mph and also got new drive shafts following the destruction on the final run at Lydden 3 weeks previous.



I was up against several regulars who knew the layout but I'd never been before. It is a fantastic blend of curves, straights, very smooth tarmac, some gravel traps but a lot of close armco!, very high speed braking zones and high G both lateral and longitudinal. Definitely the best circuit I have driven on in many years.

After a 3.5km early morning run of the track I was up for it!. Pete Goulding was leading after first practice as "Turn Left Tony " (Beesley) was living up to his nickname, and forgot which way the chicane went and turned right instead of left! Timed run 1 still had me in 2nd behind Petes 'big class' ecoboost single seater and only a tenth or so ahead of Tony.

Gaining confidence, I managed to find 3 seconds on the T2 run to move in the overall lead. For the last run, spurred on by the 'Woolley family pit crew services' and encouragement who visited whilst on their holiday, I decided to put the new tyres on and have a crack at the outright circuit record.

Pushing on this final run and apparently I was some 3 seconds up on T2 - **at the point I left the circuit!** A momentary distraction caused by a dash warning for low fuel caused me to choose to go straight off and through the gravel rather than attempt the corner and risking a sideways entry into the gravel.

Ho Hum, that's motorsport – not much damage, just a lot of cleaning up before Scotland!

Knockhill Race Circuit

It's a 6 hour tow each way, so a tiring weekend but immensely satisfying if it goes well due to the exhilarating nature of the circuit, the reverse direction we run on the Saturday, the pitlane garages and the way the meeting is mixed in with SuperLapScotland time attack rounds.

Having spent the intervening 3 weeks cleaning the car of grass and gravel after Hethel, I was annoyed to end up in the gravel, mud and grass again in first practice in the wet, but no damage done and just a clean up required. I didn't think I was going too fast really for the wet conditions, but when I saw my split times for the first lap, I was some 5 seconds up on the big V8's so maybe I was pushing unnecessarily for the conditions.



The onboard video of this incident is here:-

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3f5YttZKcJA>

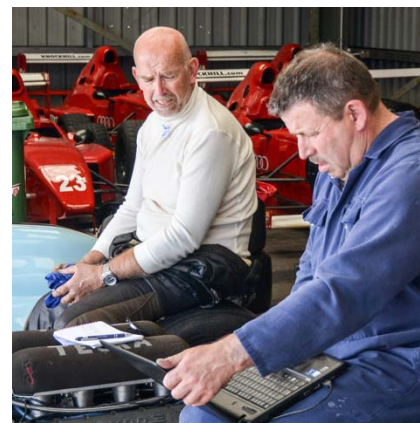
Poor Stuart Robb had a similar incident but put his car in the tyre wall causing considerable damage, but just to the carbon fibre and metal parts, not himself.



It was a shame the day dried out, but at least it meant a crack at the record set by Nick Algar last year was on the cards.

With just 4 British Championship rounds remaining, my focus was trying to retain my National 2 Litre Racing Car title, and do as well as I can in the main championship, so with a second practice out of the way I put the best tyres on relatively early in the day to maximise my position and points for this class position. My rival in this class, Nick was just behind me so I think this move paid off as when timed runs were over I was lying 4th fastest with Nick a position behind. Job done!

We were now 3 V8's down due to Terry and Graham having gearbox issues and Stu crashing in practice. The final run off saw Nick move ahead of me by 0.8secs and he also set a new class record. But all in all a good day and points, so we listened to musing and had a beer or 4!



The following day we ran the track in the traditional direction and with Terry and Graham (shown above) sorting the gearbox enough to run for the day, I had more V8 opposition. But I applied the same logic and finished ahead of Nick in the timed runs and he pipped me by 0.8secs in the run offs.

At the top, It was also a climax to the overall championship as Heather Calder – seen here being interviewed on the pitwall, managed to secure enough points to win the Championship in 2017 and thought this would be a fitting picture to end on as she powers at 180mph down the straight!!



A weekend with my local car club at Blyton should be a relaxing practice weekend, followed by MIRA a week later, again just for fun and then in October we have the finale of the British campaign at Anglesey!

Steve

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British Sprint Championship 2017 – after 12 of 14 rounds		
Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	111
Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	105
John Graham	3.5 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	93
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	85
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	77
Nick Algar	2.0 DJ Firehawk	70
Simon Bainbridge	2.5 Chrono	64
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	52
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	51
Grahame Harden	1.0 Jedi	31
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	29
Tony Jarvis,	Dallara F399	27
Graham Blackwell	1.6T ecoboost Mygale	26
Simon Boulter	1.1 OMS	14
Chris Jones	1.0Force TA	13
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	11
Matt Carter	1.3 radical PR6	10
Scott Pillinger	1.4 SP special	8
Jim Belt	3.0 Juno TR400	
Chris Bennett	1.6 Force	
Martin Pickles	1.1 Jedi	
Dave Cutliff	2.0 Van Diemen	
Bill Gouldthorpe	1.6 OMS	
Carole Torkington	1.6 OMS	
Nick Houston		

2 Litre Class 2017 after 6 rounds		
Steve Miles,	Van Diemen RF96mm17	417
Nick Algar,	DJ Firehawk	402
Tony Jarvis,	Dallara F399	290
Matt Hillam,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	277
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	273
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	265
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	273
Dave Cutliff	Van Diemen	45

Remaining Events 2017		
2 September	Blyton	Gainsborough
3 September	Blyton	Gainsborough
9 September	MIRA	Leicestershire
14 October	Anglesey	N Wales
15 October	Anglesey	N Wales

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