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moleracing 2017 season - first 4 events update

Back to School

I thought I'd treat myself to some proper instruction and go back to school to see if I could drive a little better! Five of us had secured the services of a well-respected professional race engineer and excellent driver and we spent a day at Blyton learning to drive the quick way – as opposed to the safe way.

This was in our own racing cars and throughout the day equipped with video analysis and datalogging, we successively went out on track and then came in for 1 to 1 analysis and repeated this all day until we had it nailed! I must confess though around 3pm, I could go on no longer as I was too car sick – from just even a 3 lap run – I'll never make a racing driver!



I'm not sure if it was the coaching, the car set up advice, the new engine or the new aero upgrades – but as you will see the season has started rather well!

Castle Combe

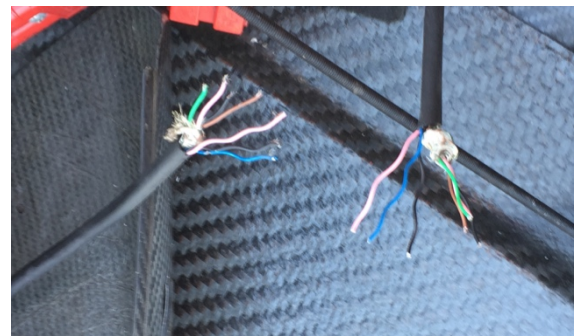
Full of confidence from the testing, this day went from good to bad to despair to elation!

The car ran faultless all day in testing, but the engine just died on track in the first and only practice run, after a tow back, we tried to find the issue, which was an electrical fault of some kind. I was helped by Steve Broughton of SBD, who was running his own car shared with Matt Hillam. Also on the phone we were supported by Simon of Sileck who built the loom, plus Chris from MBE and the two Colins affiliated with SBD – so you cannot say I was short of help.



We spent over 2 hours looking for an electrical short between the 0 and 5v lines – perhaps a tiny chaffing. Couldn't find anything. We swapped ECUs from another car, traced every pin to the sensors for continuity, disconnected every sensor. Nothing.

By this stage, I had missed the first qualifying opportunity and was about to give up, cancel my hotel for the following days Rockingham event and feel sorry for myself *#firstworldproblem!* But then I checked a large part of the loom that went to the rear of the car that was hidden by the battery and found it had been completely severed in two – no mild chaffing then!





I decided to attempt a slow careful repair and abandon the day, but with all the help, we rebuilt the loom and screening to get me out for qualifying run 2, I got back into my race suit and I secured a place in the run off with 4th fastest time overall.

In the run off, the favourite, John Graham with a fresh 3.5litre V8 with some 700bhp, was pulling 170mph when his rear wing ripped off – luckily, he did a rapid 360 and retired with no damage. The next favourite, Terry Holmes in another V8 had a worsening misfire and an intermittent engine that 'worked' at the wrong time and he went straight on in the chicane! I managed to pip Matt by a few tenths and Steve put the car in the gravel

trap on the second lap of a very promising run.

My time was the best of the rest and I took my 3rd ever run off win in 17 years to lead the British Championship!

Rockingham

Full of confidence, we exhaustedly unpacked again the following day for some club meeting fun and a crack at my winning time from last year.

Terry and Graham in the V8 Lola, still had misfire issues and didn't have a working car to make a threat and so I took fastest time of day as I should have done being the only 2 litre.

But I was most pleased with how well the car was working and I was driving and on the final run of the day I put new tyres on and lowered the outright lap record of this circuit by 1.4 seconds!



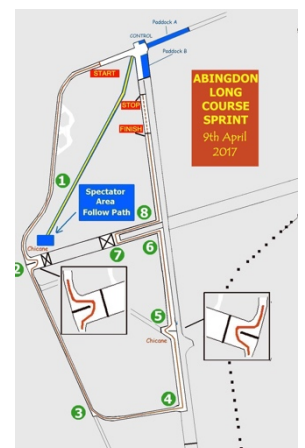
Abingdon Long Course

It had been some 10 years since I was last at Abingdon, so for just fun and enjoyment I entered this new combined course layout. It was a difficult course to remember due to the airfield nature, the 2 miles in length and the mass of cones.



A beautiful sunrise as I arrived at the venue at 6.30am meant I had to stop the car and get the camera out.

In first practice I went off at corner 6. Chicane 2 was tricky to get right all day, and the entry speed into this chicane was 137mph, slowing to 60 at the tight apex. Lessons learned from Blyton were very applicable here, and although I led



the field after the first timed run, a committed attack on the final run established a new course record, some 3.5 secs faster than the previous run, so another satisfying day. Final run from onboard can be viewed by clicking [here](#)

Dave Simms in another 2 litre was a few seconds back and then the new British championship hot shot Simon Boulter in the bike engine OMS to a well deserved 3rd from Martin Pickles in a 1100 Jedi.

Croft

Easter Monday and the second event of the British championship at this fantastic race circuit in Yorkshire. A cold night in the trailer at 1.5 degs measured inside! An officially 'traumatic' molar extraction that wasn't 100% successful meant I was in a lot of pain all day and I can confirm that after 90 mins of being in the dentist chair means your jaw is rather tender and doesn't fit nicely into a tight fitting crash helmet!

An early morning track walk, and practice 1 and practice 2 went well. Timed run 1 however saw me return on a tow truck again, with the engine cutting out. This time it was Graham Porrett, Richard Arrowsmith, Terry and Steve Broughton assisting the diagnosis and repair – which turned out to be the servo driven throttle bodies getting a mismatch from the two throttle potentiometers and on safety grounds they shut the engine whilst on track.



After a full strip of the offending areas, 2 slightly loose grub screws were found to be the cause and after a calibration software reset the car was 'on the ball' again for timed run 2.



This left me top 2 litre from the 6 in class and 3rd overall, however in the run-off I got pipped by Matt by a tenth and Nick Algar by 8/10ths to finish 5th – not bad but should have been better! John took the win with all wings attached this time and Terry had enough cylinders running to get second place. For onboard video – click [here](#)

A holiday before Snetterton should see me fully rested for the next two rounds. Matt and I are joint top of the British after two rounds – so it's downhill from now on!

Steve
smiles@moleracing.com

2 Litre Class 2017 after 2 rounds		
Steve Miles,	Van Diemen RF96mm17	95
Matt Hillam,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	95
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	93
Tony Jarvis,	Dallara F399	85
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	83
Nick Algar,	DJ Firehawk	45
Dave Cutliff	Van Diemen	45

British Sprint Championship 2017 – after 2 rounds		
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm16	20
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	20
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	15
Tony Jarvis,	Dallara F399	13
Simon Boulter	1.1 OMS	12
John Graham	2.8 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	12
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	11
Martin Webb,	Dallara F399	10
Nick Algar	2.0 DJ Firehawk	10
Scott Pillinger	1.4 SP special	8
Grahame Harden	1.0 Jedi	7
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	7
Matt Carter	1.3 radical PR6	
Jim Belt	3.0 Juno TR400	
Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	
Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	
Chris Bennett	1.6 Force	
Martin Pickles	1.1 Jedi	
Dave Cutliff	Van Diemen	
Bill Gouldthorpe	1.6 OMS	
Carole Torkington	1.6 OMS	
Simon Bainbridge	2.5 Chrono	

Remaining Events 2017		
13 May	Snetterton	Norfolk
14 May	Snetterton	Norfolk
3 June	Pembrey	South Wales
4 June	Pembrey	South Wales
1 July	Curborough	Staffordshire
8 July	Blyton	Gainsborough
9 July	Blyton	Gainsborough
15 July	Lydden Hill	Kent
6 August	Hethel	Norfolk
26 August	Knockhill	Scotland
27 August	Knockhill	Scotland
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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