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moleracing 2019 season – Early Summer update

At the end of the last report we had some issues in terms of a snapped driveshaft and an ECU value that had the net effect of dropping 2 run offs scores which knocked back my British championship campaign somewhat.

With all these issues sorted and now on Temporary driveshafts while a new pair were being made, I set off for Llandow in South Wales for a club meeting for way of personal enjoyment and friendly competition, no points, no championships, just PB chasing and satisfaction.

It was also the first outing in the new tow vehicle. This Transit panel van was left to Giulia and myself by the late Bill Gouldthorpe, so we have had it turned into a full spec camper van, so no more sleeping in the box trailer and the car wrapped up in the paddock, it full luxury from now on!



Llandow – and it all goes wrong!

After an overnight stop at near the circuit and walking the track the night before, we unpacked and got ready to do battle with the 120 other cars. Fastest time in practice – aided by a re run as I caught the racing car in front, and a new PB was a promising start as I took the start gently on the ‘temporary’ driveshafts. I don’t mind confessing to a small mistake on the next run, which I had assumed was 2nd practice and so took it easy on the start to minimise stress on the drivetrain, this run turned out to be timed run 1, and the net effect was that I was second overall behind Dave Sims.

I had a plan for the next run and the first lap was going really well and the data logger showed a good time gain. Ironically my notes for this run said “Don’t be too ‘Dan Dare’ in the braking for the bus stop chicane” as it would be easy to throw the lap away and overshoot the turn in point.

Peak speed on the straight was 131mph (210kph) and for the first two runs I left the braking to 75m before the corner which is a tight right hander taken at about 40mph. This time however it didn’t go so smoothly. I hit a bump and the back went light, and on landing – maybe due to rear suspension geometry? Certainly, too much rear brake bias and maybe the car was too stiff in bump and rebound, I found myself going backwards at well over 100mph. Initially I thought I could save it but with all 4 wheels locked the steering wasn’t too great and gradually I was drawn into the grass and eventually went into the tyre wall backwards a quite a speed.

A high definition video from onboard from the accident can be viewed by clicking [here](#).

The ripped off the wing, the floor, the wheel, all the right rear suspension elements, the exhaust and broke the gearbox end casing. I was a bit shaken, but more concerned about the cost initially of getting all back together. A trip to the ambulance for a check over and in the meantime the car had been recovered to the truck and brought back to my paddock position.



We had fun getting it into the trailer but there were plenty of helping hands- see above. Getting it off at home was

equally challenging but with help from local competitor Gary Thomas, we managed ok.



I didn't drive home that night but had a few beers on a nice welsh campsite, taking in the view from a cliff top walk and contemplating how lucky I had been in hindsight that I wasn't sitting in the A&E at Cardiff hospital.



I cancelled the next two events – Crystal Palace and the two British rounds at Blyton. I dropped off the floor moulds to John Hansell from who was attending Blyton supporting Simon Bainbridge, and he pulled out all the stops and made 3 new floor tunnels, the strakes, two end plates and repaired the main element in only 4 days flat. Also within the week Mark Bailey welded and tapped the gearbox casing and Alan Mugglestone supplied new pushrods and brackets. I had a spare set of wishbones and brackets and rear wing support in stock for such and eventuality. So, after a lot of hard work, some 2.5 weeks after the accident we had the car rebuilt and set up again for Pembrey weekend.

Having missed 6 run offs, I now have limited events to drop scores and had dropped to 13th, so it's all upwards from here I hope.

Pembrey

The exciting flowing track is always worth the effort of getting too, and my annual fix of Welsh cakes from the Shell garage in Llanelli!



The fast flowing circuit is an exciting challenge and the run is long over 1.75 laps and suits the power cars. Admittedly I was helped by the Calder's retiring due to a radiator problem, but I beat 6 more powerful cars to come 4th overall, with Terry Holmes taking the win, so very pleased with the comeback.

Unfortunately Martin Pickles wasn't so lucky and was having a great day in the car but kept his foot in a bit too long and had this accident which has curtailed him for a month or so as shown here in this excellent capture from Mark Little.



The following day delivered the rain promised and it was chance to try out the new Pirelli wets – exactly the same compound as they use in F1 and they were unbelievably good. Around 5 drivers up and down the pit lane were using them out of the wrapper! It was as though you were driving in the dry, despite the rooster tails coming off the rear of the car and 135mph in the wet was no problem.

The official 'fastest time of day' award is set during the meeting before the run offs and although it was tight, I was very pleased to bag my first FTD of 2019 at a British round and sneaked ahead of fellow 2 litre driver and engine supplier Steve Broughton by 0.01 of a second after nearly 2 minutes of track action!

O/All Pos	PIC	No	CI	Name	TIMED_2
1	1	10	5D	Stephen MILES Van Diemen RF96	116.62s
2	2	5	5D	Steve BROUGHTON SBD Dallara F3RB01	116.63s
3	1	4	5E	Terry HOLMES Lola Tegra Judd	118.29s
4	2	2	5E	Colin CALDER Gould GR55	
5	3	6	5D	Matt HILLAM SBD Dallara F3RB01	119.67s
6	1	16	4C	Jeff WILTSHIRE Zeus Challenger EVO11	119.73s
7	3	1	5E	Heather CALDER Gould GR55	120.99s
8	4	3	5E	John GRAHAM Gould GR55B	121.76s



Simon Bainbridge had an exciting lap when his left front wheel parted company with the hub, showing the paddock in ball bearings!



So I left Wales feeling rather pleased with all the expense and effort of the last 3 weeks in turning the car around from the crash.

Abingdon

Abingdon was just a fun club meeting that I went back to this year to defend my win from last year.

Lying 3rd from 120 cars at the half way point, I was a few tenths behind Graham and Llandow winner Dave Sims, but clutch issues side-lined him for the afternoon. Then Graham Blackwell came back on a tow truck after hitting a bump and bending a rear push rod at high speed on the back straight. Whilst we were

looking at his damage, I thought I better check mine – and my car was similarly damaged, after hitting the same bump. A gentle run was all that was needed for the win so I put a spare on and set off.

Unfortunately the bump inflicted it damage again and I found myself at 130mph with only 3 wheels in contact with the ground, the right front being some 100mm off the track and steering somewhat dodgy. I knew the floor was scraping as I could hear the grinding so slowly brought the car to a stop in about 600m and inspected the damage!

So I got away with that, just wallet bruised again, though nowhere like the £1500 the Llandow accident caused!



Aintree

The next meeting British was at Aintree and we were in for the full roasting of summer! It is a short intense track, only 3 corners but that puts the pressure on even more. Due to the nature of the long straights, power comes into its own and I didn't do too well and finished 10th in the run off. But hey!, I am on the up now and clocked in at 10th on the leader board and adding scores whiles others are dropping!



Lydden Hill this Saturday near Dover, I often go well here so who knows!

Steve

British Sprint Championship 2019 top 12- After round 9		
Pete Goulding	1.6T Mygale FF200	80
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	71
Graham Blackwell	1.6T Mygale VVTi	64
Steve Broughton	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	61
John Graham	3.5 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	71
Nick Algar,	1.3T DJ Firehawk	53
Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	50
Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	44
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola TeGra T 90 Judd	41
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	=29
Steve Brown	1.6 KS JR1	=29
Simon Bainbridge	4.2 Chrono V8 TT	18

2 Litre Class 2019 after round 9		
Steve Broughton,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	378
Matt Hillam,	SBD Dallara F3 RB01	374
Steve Miles,	Van Diemen RF96mm17	272
Nick Algar,	DJ Firehawk	230
Dave Cutcliff	1.3T Van Diemen DC93M	79

Remaining Events 2019		
13 July	Lydden Hill	Kent
27 July	Castle Combe	Wiltshire
3 August	Kirkistown	N Ireland
4 August	Kirkistown	N Ireland
7 Sept	Knockhill	Scotland
8 Sept	Knockhill	Scotland
14 Sept	MIRA	Leicestershire
5 October	Anglesey	N Wales
6 October	Anglesey	N Wales

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Photo by Kim Broughton