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moleracing 2021 – midseason update *“That’s gone better than expected”*

After a cracking start to the season with successful testing, shakedown events and a maximum score at the first British round, I’m A) amazed and B) pleased to say, that the trend has continued to the halfway point!

Pembrey

After Blyton we had a break as the Anglesey round was cancelled due to covid restrictions, but a few weeks later in South Wales we could play again, with careful subdivision of the paddock in to groups of less than 50! I think the whole of the UK were travelling that day and a 4 hour became a 7 hour trip. In the meantime, I’d prepared the car more than normal and the SBD team were launching their season here although the V8 of the TeGra team wasn’t yet rebuilt after the Blyton crash.

Mixed conditions on Saturday layout saw wets and slicks, I set a good time in practice – but this was disqualified due to exceeding track limits! Got to push hard and early I say. Run off 1, I was soundly beaten by Matt, who was off to a good season start. In Run off 2, I took the upper hand but only by 0.6secs in a damp 103 second run – very close.

The V8 of John Graham, last year’s British Champion was back but struggling a little with gears. I had a narrow escape when I put the kettle on in the camper van and got distracted, luckily the van didn’t burn down, but it was a warning not to do again (I now have a low power electric kettle for such times!).



Heavy rain overnight, led to damp start, but we stayed on slicks all day. The SBD car driven by Matt and Steve had retired due to spotting a nick in the cam belt (I’ve never understood why they are so exposed on a Vauxhall 2 litre engine, mine is tucked away under a tight cover on the Ford Duratec. Steve drove the SBD Westfield, and had a big off that ripped the floor off the car at speed but was OK!

So, with the main opposition retired, and John still off the pace even though the gears were fixed, I managed a pair of run off wins, and set a new 2 litre racing car national record in the process for a bonus point. This may prove very useful later in the season.

Great help all weekend from Martin, who hasn't got his race car back together yet due to a few issues.



Snetterton

A few weeks later, more preparation and coaching later, we all arrived at Snetterton. TeGra were back and all the other competition as well. Game on!

The first run off of the day was very close, but in a 78 second run and a PB, I was pushed into second place by Matt by just 0.13 seconds, then in the final run off I tried something different I got to 'dare to fail' and it didn't pay off so came third, with the Ecoboost of Pete Goulding slipping between us.

The TeGra V8 with its 500bhp was struggling to get under the noise limits, Terry and Graham are always helping everyone else repair things, so I was pleased to have some exhaust tape that helped them run and Terry took 5th place.

All in all a good weekend, nothing damaged, burnt and everyone enjoyed themselves! Still leading the British as we headed to Lydden Hill.

Llandow

But first, partly to keep my 'eye in' and also as the last time I drove there I had a big crash, I wanted to do Llandow in south Wales again.

Coaching advice from Triple M Motorsport always advocates spending a good percentage of the available budget on testing, so I went early and enjoyed 3 hours on track on the Friday afternoon with Mike and Gary who have a lesser powered 2 litre car and always have my old tyres. However, when testing I can only do 2 laps and then a 30 minute break as I get so car sick!

The day started well as I was assisted by a friend who was an old customer from the Valleys from Tenneco so nice to catch up again. We put wets on, then took them off for a damp practice on slicks. 5 secs ahead of everyone, but my main rival Dave Sims, hadn't driven for 18 months, so was rusty.

New gearbox software upgrades had come in overnight from SBD and were installed. Even during the day SBD dialled into the car ECU and detected some issues and rectified. Great service thanks SBD.

Timed one run however I gave it some and with yesterdays practice set a new PB and Fastest Time of Day. However, Mike spotted that two of my rear hub bolts had snapped and were loose. So we retired the car while the rest of the field had 2 more runs. The time stood as FTD at the end of the day and I had discovered a problem that would have been much more of an issue had it occurred at Lydden, a BSC round next weekend. PS 12 x 5/16th x 2" long NAS bolts - £93!! Hope they don't break!



Lydden Hill

5 hours drive to Lydden and I bagged the last full length paddock slot. Sensible night, eg just 2 beers and we were all psyched up for a good battle. The weather was blisteringly hot, so only putting the best on for the run off and the rest of the runs on the older tyres, as with 18 BSC runners in the field of around 100 cars, I should be able to qualify OK on them.

T1 (qualifying for run off 1) went very well to the extent that I set a new PB and also FTD so far. However, my good run of form came to an end for run off 1, as I caught a car up that had problems and so I got a rerun.

This however turned out to be no use as the tyres were so hot, they were like jelly, then the engine was too hot, and despite Steve helping me cool to 80 degs, it didn't take long on the second lap for temps to get over 100 and warnings were going off on the dash and in my ear. With no real grip I came in 7th place and 5 secs off of Matts winning time. A new potential threat started emerging with Graham Blackwell – Ecoboost was in second place! Poor John Graham retired and set off early to Cumbria with electrical issues.

With tyres cooked, 3rd was all I could manage with Matt taking a win again. At least my T1 time was not bettered and I took the FTD trophy.

In fact at the halfway point of the season, this is the 2021 award shelf!



Its not all glamour and living the high life, cleaning a set of 8 tyres takes about 6 hours of laborious use of a surform and water!

I took most of the week off to recover/prepare as I head off to Scotland this weekend for the Knockhill rounds. I have new software updates from SBD, new coaching advice from Triple M, a well prepared set of tyres and the car thoroughly checked. I shall try my best, as this championship won't be settled until dropped scores start happening in a few rounds time and all the gaps will close up.



Photo by Martin Morely

British Sprint Championship 2021 to date		
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm2020	337
Graham Blackwell	1.6T Mygale VVTi	289
Simon Wallis	1.0 OMS 3000M	254
Simon Bainbridge	4.2 Chrono V8 TT	245
John Louden	1.1 Force HC	238
Pete Goulding	1.6T Mygale FF200	232
Mark Anson	1.0 Jedi Mk 6	228
Robert Tonge	1.4 Force TA	225
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	200
John Graham	3.5 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	197
Tony Beesley	1.0 Jedi Mk 4	168
Steve Broughton	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	168
Carole Torkington	1.5 OMS CF08	134
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola TeGra T 90 Judd	118
Stephen Mallet	1.3 Radical PR6	98
Richard Mallett	1.3 Radical PR6	80
Chris Fulke-Greville	1.5 TBA Turner	80
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola TeGra T 90 Judd	72
Graham Harden	1.3 Radical	63
Zoe Kingham	1.6 T SBD Westfield SeiW	45
Nick Houston	1.1 Jedi/OMS TBA	27
Chris Bennett	1.0 Force TA	23
Chris Jones	1.0 Force TA	19
Nick Algar,	1.3T DJ Firehawk	
Steve Brown	1.3T JKS Superbusa	
Dave Cutcliff	1.3T Van Diemen DC93M	
Nicholas Scott	1.6 Force TA	
Paul Tinsley	2.0 Dallara F397	
Christopher Price	1.0 Force	
Stewart Robb	5.0 Pilbeam MP88-GV5-1	

Events 2021 – Schedule & Results			Top 12 Run
Date	Venue	Overall	Offs
11 April	Curborough	1 st / 85	-
17 April	Goodwood	1 st / 90**	-
15 May	Blyton Eastern	1 st / 120**	1 st & 1 st
15 May	Blyton Outer	1 st / 120**	1 st & 1 st
5 June	Pembrey	2 nd / 100	2 nd & 1 st
6 June	Pembrey	1 st / 100^**	1 st & 1 st
26 June	Snetterton	2 nd **	2 nd & 2 nd
27 June	Snetterton	2 nd **	2 nd & 2 nd
10 July	Llandow	1 st / 105**	-
17 July	Lydden	1 st / 90**	7 th & 3 rd
24 July	Knockhill, Scot.		
25 July	Knockhill, Scot.		
7 Aug	Kirkistown, NI		
8 Aug	Kirkistown, NI		
25 Sept	Blyton Park		
26 Sept	Blyton Park		
2 Oct	Anglesey		
3 Oct	Anglesey		
23 Oct	Castle Combe		

^Denotes new 2 litre racing car national record set
** Denotes new personal best

Telsonic – www.telsonic.com

LAC – www.lacconveyors.co.uk

RoundWorks IT - www.roundworks-it.co.uk/

SBD - www.sbdmotorsport.co.uk

Alan – www.triplemmotorsport.co.uk