

CNC HEADS SPORTS/SALOON CHAMPIONSHIP – ROUNDS 10 & 11

– CADWELL PARK – SEPTEMBER 07/08

Garry Watson's Westfield finally put an end to Simon Allaway's run of four successive victories, with the narrowest of successes at Cadwell Park. But Allaway maximised a safety car intervention in race two to return to the top step of the podium.

QUALIFYING

For a number of drivers it was their first visit to the picturesque and challenging Lincolnshire parkland circuit. It was dry and bright for the qualifying session and straightaway it was Robert Spencer's Locosaki and Garry Watson's Westfield to the fore. Spencer took pole by 0.366s, "it was jumping out of third gear though. Brilliant though, I loved it, but just keeping my fingers crossed for two races," he said. "I was just trying to stay on as I had few moments at the Gooseneck. It was handling well though and I hadn't changed the set up," Watson replied.

"I haven't been here for years, but was bedding in brakes. I was steady for the first one and a half laps and then just went for it," said Allaway after qualifying third. He had Philip Duncan's Westfield alongside, "I just loved it, it was like two circuits in one. The car suits it and the gearing is spot on, brilliant," he enthused having not even seen the circuit before qualifying started.

Although Dennis Crompton's BMW M3 was next up, he professed to being, "too slow." He had no particular reason, "but I am four seconds slower than my last time here and thought I was quick," he added. Kevin Cryer's Caterham completed the third row, "everything seems to be Ok and both driver and car behaving," he said.

Brian Dean's Westfield headed the next row, "I had a stone wedged under the throttle pedal and had to pit after it was way too fast into Barn," he explained after his session was reduced. Iain Gorrie was another who claimed to be too slow in his Ultima GTR. "I haven't changed anything since Oulton though," he admitted after qualifying eighth.

Heading the next row was Paul Woolfitt who wasn't entirely happy with his Z Cars Mini, after returning to the paddock early with a front puncture. But Steven Parker was delighted

with his BMW Compact. "The slicks were brilliant, just need some new front suspension now," he said.

Graham Saul was well up to with his XR2, qualifying in 11th with Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza alongside for his seasonal debut. "It's a wonderful circuit and the car's Ok apart from a hot start issue," Thomas explained.

Richard Roundell was also fairly happy with his Vauxhall Vectra. "I haven't touched it since Donington, I had a few close moments but it felt good," he reckoned. He was joined on row seven by Jamie Cryer, out for the first time in a Ginetta G20. "It's really trying it out for next year now. I had tested Friday and had no problems, so just getting used to it now," he explained.

Paul Greaves also brought out his Mini again, "the brakes are better but it's still very unstable at the back, so I haven't got any confidence yet," he said. Down in 17th languished Joe Spencer, after his Locosaki broke a rear rose joint after only one lap. "It failed on me as I turned into Charlies," he said.

There were problems for Ralph Underwood's TR7 V8 too. "The clutch doesn't seem happy, particularly not releasing first gear, but I will just have to live with it," he decided. Brian Allen's XR2i completed the 18 car field, "I should have gone faster though," he said.

RACE ONE

There were no last minute dramas and all 18 qualifiers made it to the grid for a 9.10am race start!

Rob Spencer got away well from pole, but still had Watson alongside before going ahead into Coppice. "I didn't expect Rob to let me through that easily," said Watson. "I didn't really have a choice as I was flat out," Spencer replied.

Duncan was third, from Allaway, Kevin Cryer, Dean, Crompton, Joe Spencer (from the back of the grid), Woolfitt and Gorrie.

But dramas were already unfolding as Joe Spencer pulled off approaching Hall Bends, "I had a good start, made places and then the propshaft broke," he explained. Roundell also fell back after spin too.

Watson quickly built a sizeable lead as Spencer had Duncan and Allaway chasing him down for second, before an increasing gap to fifth placed Cryer.

Onto the Park Straight for the second time Allaway blasted into third place but it was beginning to spread out further. Dean ousted Cryer for fifth and started to get away as the Caterham driver came under pressure from Crompton.

Having lost out to Crompton, Cryer had Woolfitt next in line to challenge, while behind them Gorrie and Thomas were on their own in ninth and tenth.

Further back Parker was being harassed by Greaves for 11th, while Saul and Jamie Cryer began to have their own duel. But for Underwood it was race over, “it was the clutch again I just couldn’t get the gears,” he said after returning to the paddock.

By lap five Spencer had started to eat into Watson’s lead, with Allaway making little impression on either of them. But as he was poised to challenge Spencer suddenly pulled off at Mansfield. “It just stopped and I didn’t know why, but the gearbox had gone,” he explained.

Allaway was up to second, from Duncan now solo. Dean was clear too after taking fifth into Coppice, but Cryer started to close on Crompton again, after shaking off Woolfitt’s threat.

By lap ten Allaway was much closer to the lead and was ready to challenge over the closing laps. An aborted lunge at Coppice on lap 12 was followed by another late challenge approaching the Mountain, But Watson’s defence held tight and victory was his by 0.649s. “Fabulous, I was getting worried though and hit neutral a few times when Simon was catching,” he said. “I was well crossed up and sliding onto the Mountain, just trying as hard as I could to close,” Allaway added.

Duncan was over 39 secs adrift in third, but even further ahead of fourth placed Dean. “I scared myself on the Mountain, but it was great being able to keep Simon back early on. Then it got a wee bit lonely,” said Duncan. “I had started to feel travel sick in the car, so just wanted to bring it home.” Dean added.

Crompton found himself harassed by Cryer during the second half, but held his ground and fifth place. “I just kept an eye on my temperature gauge and it was lower than normal, but if Kevin could have found a gap, he was welcome to it,” said Crompton. “I was fairly pleased with that, Dennis got me on Park Straight, then the traffic worked Ok and I got back on his tail,” Cryer replied.

Gorrie moved ahead of Woolfitt after nine laps, “three spins and a lot of ground lost,” Woolfitt admitted. “I still wasn’t quick enough though,” Gorrie added. Thomas completed the top ten, “Now I remember what to do., the car was lighter and the brakes worked, “he confirmed.

Parker was next home, “feeling good even though the shockers gave up again, so need a repair job,” he said. Saul eased his way clear of Jamie Cryer, “I just needed the class win and points and no incidents, but when it spread out I retook Jamie and we had a play,” he explained. “I hoped Paul would back Graham to me more and then he spun, but it was Ok and nice to finish a race,” added Cryer Jnr.

Roundell was never able to make up for his first lap spin. "It was good until then," he reckoned. Greaves had also been up to 10th place until he started spinning. "The rear brakes started playing up again after about five laps and then it was the tyres," he said. Allen was 15th and completed the finishers.

RACE TWO

With both Rob Spencer and Underwood absent it was a 16 car grid for race two with Watson alone on the front row.

From the start it was Watson again but Allaway and Duncan stayed close, as Crompton led the rest of the field through Charlies.

Gorrie was into fifth but sixth placed Woolfitt almost lost it onto the Mountain, as a queue formed behind while he regained his momentum. "Very scary moment," he admitted. But Spencer Jnr was flying from the back of the grid, into eighth behind Cryer Snr as they turned into Hall Bends.

Allaway was already shadowing Watson, but with the safety car out after Crompton and Spencer Jnr had collided at Barn on the second lap, his chance to close was even greater.

From the green flag Allaway used his power and surged into the lead with Watson powerless to respond. But Duncan was all over Watson for second too and took the place into Chris Curve on lap 10. Watson responded quickly and regained the place a lap later and closed on Allaway. But it was too little too late and Allaway topped the podium once more. "I couldn't believe it when Philip passed me and wondered where he got that pace from. But it was the safety car that ruined it for me," said Watson.

"I did have a better start but not brilliant. Then I had a couple of laps to think about the restart and just went for it at the green flag," Allaway explained. Duncan stayed well in touch right to the flag too for another podium finish. "Loved it again, just getting better and passing Garry was brilliant," he said.

After Crompton and Spencer had gone out, Gorrie was on his own in fourth, but had Cryer Snr closing towards the end, after Dean's pursuit of the Ultima ended with a grassy excursion. "I was slower than in the first race, but fun and finishing qualifying and two races, it's progress," said Gorrie.

"I started in third gear and dropped back, so had to work my way back up and had a good fight with Brian and Iain," said Cryer Snr. But following his excursion Dean settled in seventh behind Woolfitt. "When I went over the grass I trapped a fuel pipe and had to short shift to

finish. I just couldn't get past Iain and went off trying," Dean added. "I just don't know why my car was so twitchy again," said Woolfitt.

Thomas almost got Dean at the flag too, "I had to change tactics after Dennis went off and think about where Steven was. It was my first class win," he said. He was safe as Roundell was between them, "I enjoyed that and didn't spin," said the Vectra driver.

But Parker had his own duel with Cryer Jnr and finally claimed 10th on the last lap. "Jamie was quicker in the corners and me on the straights," he commented. "That was a really good duel," Cryer added.

Greaves, Saul and Allen completed the finishers, but it wasn't quite that straight forward. "I got close to spinning and almost lost it at the Mountain, but didn't," said Greaves. For a couple of laps Allen was heading Saul for the class F lead, "Graham confused me and didn't go for me, so I made him work a bit," said Allen. "The headgasket had gone and I had to keep the revs down and nurse it home. Raced with my head," Saul concluded after taking charge again from lap three.

Results: 1 Garry Watson (Westfield SeiW) 14 laps in 21m47.509s (84.30mph); 2 Simon Allaway (Lotus Daytona Esprit V8) +0.649s; 3 Philip Duncan (Westfield SeiW); 4 Brian Dean (Westfield SE); 5 Dennis Crompton (BMW M3 E36); 6 Kevin Cryer (Caterham Seven); 7 Iain Gorrie (Ultima GTR); 8 Paul Woolfitt (Z Cars Mini); 9 Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza WRX); 10 Steven Parker (BMW Compact). **Class A:** 1 Allaway; 2 Gorrie; no other starters. **Class B:** 1 Watson; 2 Duncan; 3 Dean; 4 K.Cryer; 5 Woolfitt; 6 Jamie Cryer (Ginetta G20); 7 Paul Greaves (Mini). **Class C:** no finishers. **Class D:** 1 Crompton; 2 Thomas; 3 Parker; no other finishers. **Class E:** 1 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); no other starters. **Class F:** 1 Graham Saul (Ford Fiesta XR2); 2 Brian Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i) no other starters. Fastest lap: Allaway 1m30.362s (87.12mph).

Race two: 1 Allaway 12 laps in 22m47.366s (69.09mph); 2 Watson +0.795s; 3 Duncan; 4 Gorrie; 5 K.Cryer; 6 Woolfitt; 7 Dean; 8 Thomas; 9 Roundell; 10 Parker. **Class A:** 1 Allaway; 2 Gorrie; no other starters. **Class B:** 1 Watson; 2 Duncan; 3 K.Cryer; 4 Woolfitt; 5 Dean; 6 J.Cryer; 7 Greaves. **Class C:** no finishers. **Class D:** 1 Thomas; 2 Parker; no other finishers. **Class E:** 1 Roundell; no other starters. **Class F:** 1 Saul; 2 Allen; no other starters. Fastest lap: Allaway 1m31.831s (85.73mph).

Published by Peter Scherer for BARC NW, September 9th, 2013