



Sports/Saloon Car Championship Round 8 2014

Oulton Park

With such a high entry for round eight of this year's championship at Oulton Park, the field had to be split into two races. Paul Rose stormed home to win the first in his Saker, before Ilsa Cox made history as the first female driver to win a race outright in the history of the championship.

Rose had Garry Watson's Westfield alongside him on the front row of the grid, but the Scot had problems after fitting a new propshaft following his Anglesey retirement. "It was vibrating between fifth and sixth gear," he explained.

Steve Harris's Saker and Joe Spencer's Locosaki shared row two, before Philip Duncan and Cam Forbes made it an all Westfield third row. Brian Dean's Westfield was next up from Ric Wood's ex BTCC Honda Accord, while Luke Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra headed David Fuller's Locosaki to complete the top ten qualifiers. Armiger was sidelined however when his headgasket went, but others had problems too. "I had electrical problems and it kept cutting out," said Ultima driver Iain Gorrie.

CLASSES A TO D RACE

Spencer and Watson were side by side into Old Hall from the start, with poleman Rose in third, followed by Harris, Forbes and Duncan. Watson had the lead but soon had Rose challenging, after he had demoted Spencer on the opening lap. Into Lodge Rose was through and eased himself clear to a comfortable 19 seconds victory.

Spencer continued to push for second and was rewarded for his persistence when Watson hesitated exiting Old Hall on lap seven, having caught a backmarker. "It was a good battle with Garry and I was flat out from the start," said Spencer. "He just got me in the wrong place, I had big oversteer and came off the throttle to correct it. I waited for Joe to make a mistake to get back, but he didn't," Watson replied after being forced to settle for third.

Forbes lost his early fifth on lap two, "too hot into Old Hall then onto the rough fed it back onto the tarmac and spun to the grass on the other side and Philip was right with me," he explained. Duncan went by before Forbes recovered, as did Dean and Fuller.

It was Harris' turn to fall back a lap later from a strong fourth. "My stomach rubbed on the bottom of the steering wheel and it caught the seatbelts and undid them. So I had to slow right down to fasten them again," he admitted.

"I was on my own after Cam's incident, " said Duncan but was eventually caught again by Harris and lost fourth place to the Saker on lap 11. Forbes retained a solitary fifth, although Dean held a steady gap to his Westfield rival during the second half of the race. "That was because I was giving it death to stay with him until my tyres went off," said Dean.

Wood had started from the pitlane and was in eighth from lap five, while Fuller continued his education with a solid ninth. "I learned a lot following Cam and had made a few tweaks to the car before the race," said Fuller.

Gorrie had also started from the pitlane after his gear lever snapped on the out lap. "I rejoined with a ratchet extension and tank tape, it did the job but hurt by hand," he said after completing the top ten.

Bod Buckby's BMW had been in ninth early on but retired after seven laps with a worsening oil leak. James Aukland's Capri, Chris Maries' MK Indy and Eric Bamber's Ginetta G20 completed the finishers, while Colin Robinson's Escort retired with electrical problems and Paul Sampson's Volvo Grand National was in the pits from lap three.

RESULTS

1 Paul Rose (Saker) 15 laps in 21m47.178s (91.95mph); 2 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taulor Locosaki) +19.045s; 3 Garry Watson (Westfield SEW); 4 Steve Harris (Saker); 5 Philip Duncan (Westfield SEiW); 6 Cam Forbes (Westfield SEiW); 7 Brian Dean (Westfield SE); 8 Ric Wood (Honda Accord); 9 David Fuller (Stuart TaylorLocosaki); 10 Iain Gorrie (Ultima GTR). Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris; 3 Gorrie; 4 James Aukland (Ford Capri); no other finishers. Class B: 1 Watson; 2 Duncan; 3 Forbes; 4 Dean; 5 Wood; 6 Chris Maries (MK Indy RR); 7 Eric Bamber (Ginetta G20). Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Fuller; no other starters. Fastest lap Rose 1m25.822s (93.37mph).

Ilsa Cox's Seat Cupra had pole by over two seconds in the second race, "the car felt lovely but I hadn't a clue what times I was doing," she said. Paul Dobson "took it easy" in his Mazda RX7 as he was bedding in some new engine parts, but was still over two seconds up on third placed Garry Wardle's Ginetta G50.

Championship leader Stephen Hibbert was bedding in new tyres on his Lotus Elise, but was still fourth best, while Mike Hurst's Vectra and Mike Nash's Peugeot 106 Rallye shared the third row, despite Hurst losing his drivers door window during the session.

James Cryer was seventh with his Ginetta G20 but Dad Kevin was immediately sidelined again with diff problems in his G20 after qualifying 10th. Richard Roundell's Vectra was eighth and Paul Rotheroe's Citroen Xsara ninth, while further back Tony Ellis's Mazda RX7

and Oliver Thomas' Impreza both had turbo connected problems and Steven Parker's BMW lost its rear brakes.

CLASS E TO F RACE

While Dobson made the best getaway Wardle was almost caught out at the start when Cox's rear wheel drive polesitting Seat made its customary slower start. The Ginetta was second into Old Hall, followed by Cox, Hibbert, Hurst and Rotheroe.

Within a couple of laps the lead duo were in the clear with Wardle a solitary third. Dobson continued to hold the advantage until he missed a gear on lap four. "I had a good start but would have struggled for straightline speed later on. Then I missed a gear at Island, went from second to fifth and then first," said Dobson.

It remained close but once ahead Cox stayed there and created history as she crossed the line as the first female winner, "if he hadn't missed the gear I don't think I would have got him as he defended well," Cox replied.

Although Wardle was on his own in third he was increasingly happier with his car too. "So much better with different rear springs," he confirmed. Although Hibbert held fourth throughout, he had to up his pace when Hurst finished duelling with Ellis and closed in on the Elise driver, "I hadn't got a clue he was there as I had dozed off a bit," Hibbert admitted. "I was swapping with Tony and finally got away up the Hill out of Island when he missed a gear," said Hurst, who remained in fifth.

Thomas completed the top six after Ellis had a late off, "I kept swapping with Mike when we missed gears but then I hit the barrier side on cresting Clay Hill but still carried on," said Ellis after taking seventh.

For much of the race Nash ran inches behind Rotheroe in eighth. "That was the widest Citroen in the world," Nash reckoned. "It was a lot of pressure, too much and I couldn't hold them off any longer as they gave me a headache," said Rotheroe after both Nash and Parker went by on lap nine. "It came stronger at the end as I started with a lower tyre pressure," Parker added.

Roundell came out on top of a duel with Cryer Jnr to secure 11th. "I got him back at Island, it was great," said Roundell. "I had him from Old Hall and then we went side by side at Lodge but I locked up and ran wide at Island and that settled it," Cryer replied.

Ralph Underwood's TR7 V8 was 13th and Matthew Darlington's Peugeot 106 GT 14th, after Graemae Lslett's Elise pitted with a spark problem and debutant Gary Mitchell crashed his Vectra heavily at Druids as Darlington piled the pressure on.

Leslie Kirk's Clio broke away from his duel with Bob Claxton's Renault 21 Turbo, "I lost first gear and needed it at the Hairpin," Claxton explained. Helen Allen's XR2i and John Marsden's

Mini completed the finishers, after Brian Allen's XR2i made a fiery exit when engine oil ignited after the engine had blown.

Stephen Hibbert was also awarded with the annual Dave Simpson Memorial Trophy at the end of the days racing.

RESULTS

1 Ilsa Cox (Seat Cupra) 14 laps in 21m44.607s (85.99mph); 2 Paul Dobson (Mazda RX7) +0.903s; 3 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 4 Steven Hibbert (Lotus Sport Elise); 5 Mike Hurst (Vauxhall Vectra); 6 Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza WRX); 7 Tony Ellis (Mazda RX7); 8 Mike Nash (Peugeot 106 Rallye); 9 Steven Parker (BMW Compact); 10 Paul Rotheroe (Citroen Xsara VTS). Class D: 1 Cox; 2 Dobson; 3 Wardle; 4 Hurst; 5 Thomas; 6 Ellis; 7 Parker; 8 Ralph Underwood (Triumph TR7 V8); 9 Bob Claxton (Renault 21 Turbo). Class E: 1 Hibbert; 2 Rotheroe; 3 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 4 James Cryer (Ginetta G20); 5 Leslie Kirk (Renault Clio); no other finishers. Class F: 1 Nash; 2 Matthew Darlington (Peugeot 106 Gti); 3 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i); 4 John Marsden (Austin Mini Cooper S); no other finishers. Fastest lap Cox 1m30.743s (88.31mph).

Current Championship positions: 1 Hibbert 81; 2 Rose 72; 3 Dobson 60; 4 Nash 57; 5 Watson 51; 6 Cox & Darlington 49; 9 Forbes 47; 10 Wardle.

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