



Sports/Saloon Car Championship Round 8 2015,

OULTON PARK

ROSE & ELLIS TAKE THE WINS

With over 40 entries for the Dave Simpson Memorial Trophy, grids had to be split for CNC Heads Sports Saloons at Oulton Park.

Paul Rose's Saker romped to a comfortable win in the Class A-C race, but it was celebrations all round for Tony Ellis, after his Mazda RX7 gave him a maiden victory in the D-F's.

QUALIFYING

It was an all Saker front row for A-C race, with Rose heading team mate Steve Harris by 1.21s. "It was smokey in free practice, but I think it was overfilled with oil, as it was fine in qualifying," said Harris.

Garry Watson's Westfield headed row two from the Porsche of returnee Colin Willmott, in his first race for seven years. Joe Spencer's Locosaki was fifth best, "the clutch was slipping towards the end, but the car is much more to my liking now," he said.

He had Mark Burton alongside in the third Saker, "average and a wheel weight came off so a lot of vibration," he explained.

Dave Harvey's Locosaki was seventh, from Ric Wood's Nissan powered Audi V8 Star, Nick Cresswell's Caterham and Luke Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra completed the top ten. "It was Ok but I had brake problems and the diff had gone in free practice," said Armiger.

RACE

As the lights went out Watson darted between the two front row men to lead into Old Hall, from Spencer, with Rose just holding off Willmott for third.

It was nose to tail for top three into Lodge, before Rose surged into second place as they completed the opening lap, with Harris also taking Willmott for fourth.

Cresswell headed the rest in sixth, from Harvey, Wood, Armiger and Burton, but Wood was soon on the move, demoting Cresswell and Harvey on the second lap.

Rose led from lap two and eased his way clear to a comfortable 8.799s win. But the battle for second raged on with Watson and Spencer inches apart. Spencer finally made it by into Knickerbrook on lap five, after which it was clear all was not well with Watson. "I tried to stay with him but got a misfire and had to pit," Watson explained.

The second place duel had also allowed Harris to close and with Watson pitting after eight laps, he had a clear track to challenge Spencer's for second.

Three laps later Harris made his move and emerged from Old Hall with inches to spare, as Spencer tried to rechallenge. "Great fun and I tried my luck again with Steve after he passed me, but then thought championship and points," said Spencer. "I had to work for it as he made it very wide," Harris replied.

Willmott had survived a third lap spin at Cascades, but ran strongly in fourth from half distance, while Burton snatched fifth into Old Hall on the last lap as Wood was forced to slow. "I had fuel surge and was running out of fuel, the brakes had gone too but I was only running half boost," Wood explained.

Cresswell and Harvey spent most of the race as one and were still only 0.6 secs apart in seventh and eighth at the flag. "I got him once but he got me back within half a lap, but he braked earlier than me," said Harvey.

Armiger had been up with them too, but fell back to a solitary ninth during the second half. "It's the last time I follow Ric at the start, then my brake pedal got loose and I nearly hit Dave Harvey," he explained.

Garry Wardle also misjudged Wood's start and had to take to the grass in his Ginetta, but recovered to take 11th behind Brian Dean's Westfield.

John Seery's Westfield SEight was 12th, with Les Kirk's Fisher Fury, Chris Maries' MK Indy, Eric Bamber's Ginetta G20 and Dave Chilton's MK Indy completing the finishers.

RESULT

1 Paul Rose (Saker Rapx) 15 laps in 21m58.168s (91.19mph); 2 Steve Harris (Saker Rapx) +8.799s; 3 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 Colin Willmott (Porsche 997 GT3 Cup); 5 Mark Burton (Saker Rapx); 6 Ric Wood (Audi V8 Star/Nissan); 7 Nick Cresswell (Caterham R400); 8 Dave Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 9 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 10 Brian Dean (Westfield SE). Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris; 3 Willmott; 4 Burton; 5 Wood; 6 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 7 John Seery (Westfield SEight). Class B: 1 Cresswell; 2 Armiger; 3 Dean; 4 Chris Maries (MK Indy); 5 Eric Bamber (Ginetta G20); no other finishers. Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Les Kirk (Fisher Fury); 4 Dave Chilton (Mk Indy); no other finishers. Fastest lap: Rose 1m26.096s (93.07mph).

CLASS D-F

Ilsa Cox secured pole in her Seat Leon Cupra, but had Stuart Pearson's Ginetta G20 only 0.659s behind. "It overheated in free practice so we changed the ecu, but it made no difference," said Ilsa.

Peter Davies headed the second row having a second run out in Paul Dobson's Mazda RX7. "I tried a different line though at Old Hall, caught the spoiler on the kerbs and suddenly saw my own front bodywork," he explained after parking up.

He originally had reigning champion Steven Hibbert's Lotus Sport Elise alongside, until he was put to the back of the grid for being under weight and penalised 10 seconds.

So Tony Ellis's Mazda RX7 moved up to complete the second row, with Graeme Laslett's Elise and Steve Rowles; Honda Integra sharing row three.

Mike Hurst debuted his Seat Leon Cupra in eighth, with Steven Parker's BMW Compact, Kevin Cryer's Ginetta G20 and Jason Hennefer's Honda Prelude rounding off the top ten qualifiers.

Graham Saul's XR2 was the quickest of a well-supported Class F line up, over five seconds up on Geoff Morton's Honda Civic.

But there were casualties too, with Ralph Underwood's TR7 V8 out with a rear axle problem and Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 with a blown headgasket.

RACE

Pearson made a lightning start to head Ellis, Cox, Laslett and Davies, but the top three were already going clear as they arrived at Lodge for the first time.

Ellis shot ahead cresting Deer Leap and Cox followed a lap later, before it became a nose to tail duel at the head of the field for the rest of the race.

"I had a limit of 5000 revs so it didn't overheat," Cox explained as Ellis kept his nose ahead throughout to take his first ever victory, "Absolutely brilliant, went like a dream," he enthused.

Pearson was left in a solitary third, "great start, but I shouldn't really have been that far up in my car," he reckoned.

Rowles had made a good start too but after losing fourth to Davies on lap three, he finally settled in sixth. But after a lonely race Davies had Hibbert's Elise reeling him towards the end, after storming drive from the back of the grid. Time just ran out with Hibbert 0.506s short, which left Davies to retain fourth. "It had been quite lonely until Steven caught me, then I tried to drive properly," he reckoned.

Hurst had a first lap spin at Cascades but made his way up to seventh with three laps remaining. "I didn't warm the tyres up, but thought I had caught it at first," he said.

Kevin Cryer chased Parker for a while for sixth early on and finally got passed his rival in the closing laps for eighth, while Laslett followed a lap later, leaving Parker to completed the top ten.

"I had Hennefer and Laslett in my mirrors too, so under threat from someone for the whole race," said Cryer. "My clutch went at the end, so no drive out of the corners," Parker explained,

Hennefer was next home, from Richard Roundell's Vectra and Simon Sheridan's Clio. But in 14th place Saul's dominant class F win also gained him the Dave Simpson Memorial Trophy.

Alex Harris; BMW Compact, Mike Budd's Toyota MR2, Clive Dix's Ford Puma, Geoff Morton's Civic, Helen Allen's Fiesta, Colin Flynn's Mini and Brian Allen's Fiesta all made the finish too.

RESULT

1 Tony Ellis (Mazda RX7) 14 laps in 22m14.066s (84.09mph); 2 Ilsa Cox (Seat Leon Cupra) + 0.825s; 3 Stuart Pearson (Ginetta G20); 4 Peter Davies (Mazda RX7); 5 Steven Hibbert (Lotus Sport Elise); 6 Steve Rowles (Honda Integra Type R); 7 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Cupra); 8 Kevin Cryer (Ginetta G20); 9 Graeme Laslett (Lotus Elise); 10 Steven Parker (BMW Compact). Class D: 1 Ellis; 2 Cox; 3 Davies; 4 Hurst; 5 Alex Harris (BMW Compact); 6 Mike Budd (Toyota MR2). Class E: 1 Pearson; 2 Hibbert; 3 Rowles; 4 Cryer; 5 Laslett; 6 Parker; 7 Jason Hennefer (Honda Prelude); 8 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 9 Simon Sheridan (Renault Clio). Class F: 1 Graham Saul (Ford Fiesta XR2); 2 Clive Dix (Ford Puma); 3 Geoff Morton (Honda Civic); 4 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); 5 Colin Flynn (Morris Mini Cooper); 6 Brian Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i). Fastest lap: Ellis 1m33.487s (85.71mph).

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