



Sports/Saloon Car Championship Rounds 9 & 10 2015

ANGLESEY

WATSON'S TAKE DOMINANT WELSH DOUBLE

Garry Watson comfortably won both rounds of the CNC Heads Sports Saloons at warm and sunny Anglesey. But there was plenty of action behind him

QUALIFYING

36 cars took part in the session which was red flagged after only a couple of minutes when Joe Spencer's Locosaki went off at the Corkscrew after contact with Alex Harris' BMW Compact.

Watson's Westfield came away with the quickest time, 1.467s ahead of Paul Rose's Saker but both were penalised along with Philip Duncan's Westfield for flag infringements. "I was absolutely flying though," said Watson. "I came in early anyway with a rear puncture," said Rose after both he and Watson were put back to the sixth row.

Luke Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra therefore started from pole, "amazing everything was alright for the first time in a long time," he reckoned. He had Steve Harris's Saker alongside, "the car was fine again after dramas in testing," he added.

Mark Burton's Saker headed row two from Dave Harvey's Locosaki. "It felt really comfortable too," said Harvey. Stuart Pearson's Ginetta G20 was next up, "new brakes and they are far from perfect, very spongy," he reckoned. But Brian Dean had no complaints with his Westfield, "a lovely Welsh weekend," he said.

Garry Wardle's Ginetta G50 and Les Kirk's Fisher Fury shared the fourth row. "Lots of interruption, traffic and cars off," Kirk reckoned.

Although Ilsa Cox's Seat should have been next, she was forced to withdraw. "A throttle problem, it worked Ok in the pitlane but not on the track," she explained. Reigning Champion Steven Hibbert was also far from happy with Lotus Sport Elise. "Nothing spectacular but I have had to use different tyres as my old ones were extinct. Different size and compound and a lot to do," he explained.

Behind Rose and Watson on row seven Mike Hurst lined up for his second outing in his Seat Leon Supercopa. "More comfortable than at Oulton and had the right tyres on too," he said.

Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 was alongside him. "It was Ok once I was out there but it wouldn't start in the assembly area and then I ran out fuel at the end of the session," he explained.

Richard Roundell's Vectra headed row eight from the penalised Duncan. "I lost my brakes on the Banking Hairpin, then snatched it and spun," said Duncan.

Kevin Cryer found his time "better than expected" as he lined up 17th, with Jason Hennefer's Honda Prelude alongside. Paul Sampson's Volvo Grand National Coupe and James Auckland's Capri shared the next row.

Graeme Laslett's Elise was just ahead of Kingsley Ingram having a run in Clive Dix's Puma, while Danny Bird was disappointed to be back on row 12 in his Pell Genesis, with Mike Budd's MR2 next to him.

Despite his contact with Spencer, Harris headed the next row from Barry Long's Metro. Steven Parker's BMW was surprisingly well down too, while the grid was completed by Dave Chilton's MK Indy, Geoff Morton's Honda Civic, Colin Flynn's Mini, the Fiesta's of Helen and Brian Allen's and on the very back Spencer and Piers Grange's Escort.

Alastair Chalmers also got a run too as reserve in his Caterham, after Cox's withdrawal.

RACE ONE

Harvey sprinted into the lead initially through Turn One, with Armiger and Harris swapping and changing for second until the Saker driver made it stick on the run up to Rocket.

Watson was into fourth through Church and third by the end of the lap, with Armiger, Burton and Rose completing the early top six.

After a couples of laps chasing Harris for second, Watson got by exiting the Banking Hairpin on lap three, but had a gap to close before challenging Harvey's lead. "That was the best start I have ever had, then didn't look in my mirrors until I had to," said Harvey.

Rose was pursuing Burton for fifth which came easier after his rival spun at Turn One, with Armiger losing out to the charging Rose too. Although Burton recovered quickly Spencer had charged by into sixth and was soon closing on Armiger.

Watson's pace gave him the lead on lap five, but before Rose could challenge further he had to get by team mate Harris, whose defence cracked when he went off at Church on lap six. "I could see Paul in my mirrors so wasn't going to surrender and went flat into Church and you can't," he said, having already been penalised harshly for an alleged jump start.

Duncan was also charging through and after relegating Dean on lap five, soon had Burton in his sights. Dean held firm in ninth, while Bird was making his way through the order, taking Pearson, Wardle and Kirk on consecutive laps to hold 10th by lap nine.

Rose reeled in Harvey for second but Watson was well clear. The Saker was past at Rocket on lap 11 but had to settle for second, while Harvey was still looking set for the podium until Spencer caught him and snatched third with a lap to go. "I had all sorts of hassle, oily lines on the track, gearbox problems, couldn't change up and then couldn't change down, but great though," Watson insisted.

"Not too bad from where I started and had a good duel with Mark until he spun," said Rose. "It would have been nice to have been nearer the front with Garry, but as steering was still way out after the contact in qualifying, but good points still," Spencer added.

Harris had pitted after grass had blocked his radiator, which left Armiger fifth and Burton still sixth after successfully keeping Duncan at bay. "I backed off towards the end as I wasn't catching. No point in hammering it," said Armiger. "I enjoyed hassling that pro car, me a farmer with a car built in my shed, great but very slippery," Duncan added.

Bird's rise settled in eighth after ousting Dean on lap 13, but the Westfield driver retained ninth from Pearson who had Kirk threatening for the latter laps. "I have never driven so close to a car before," Kirk reckoned. "I started to lose gears at the end," said Bird.

Wardle finished 12th with Hurst next and Hibbert in 14th with Hennefer closing. "It was slippery and I just struggled for any grip out of the corners," Wardle admitted. "I had no grip, a real struggle," Hibbert added. "My car gets better after the new suspension and making it lighter," said Hennefer.

Jamie Cryer escaped from Roundell to consolidate 16th on the 15th lap, but the Vectra driver was still well clear of Grange, Auckland and Parker who completed the top 20. "A great race with Richard trying to force him into a mistake but couldn't stay with Jason," said Cryer.

Laslett and Harris were next home before class F winner Ingram, who had both Chilton and a lap in hand over class rivals Morton, Helen Allen, Flynn and Brian Allen.

RESULT

1 Garry Watson (Westfield SEW) 18 laps in 21m31.003s (77.80mph); 2 Paul Rose (Saker Rapx) + 10.375s; 3 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 Dave Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 5 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Mark Burton (Saker Rapx); 7 Philip Duncan (Westfield SEi); 8 Danny Bird (Pell Genesis); 9 Brian Dean (Westfield SE); 10 Stuart Pearson (Ginetta G20). Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Burton; 3 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 4 James Auckland (Ford Capri); no other finishers. Class B: 1 Watson; 2 Armiger; 3 Duncan; 4 Dean; no other finishers. Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Bird; 4 Les Kirk (Fisher Fury); 5 Dave Chilton (Mk Indy); no other starters. Class D: 1 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Supercopa); 2 Alex Harris (BMW Compact) no other finishers. Class E: 1 Pearson; 2 Steven Hibbert (Lotus Sport Elise); 3 Jason Hennefer (Honda Prelude); 4 Jamie Cryer (Ginetta G20); 5 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 6 Piers Grange (Ford Escort); 7 Steven Parker (BMW Compact); 8 Graeme Laslett

(Lotus Elise). Class F: 1 Kingsley Ingram (Ford Puma); 2 Geoff Morton (Honda Civic); 3 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); 4 Colin Flynn (Morris Mini Cooper); 5 Brian Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i). Fastest lap: Watson 1m09.784s (79.96mph).

QUALIFYING 2

With no flag or technical infringements the grid for race two lined up as per qualifying, but with Budd not taking part after mechanical woes the day before, it was 33 cars that took part in the late morning session.

Watson and Spencer shared a more familiar front row, "I got fired up after being forced off," Watson admitted. Although second Spencer was 2.671 s off pole. "A good session though, didn't hit anyone," he added.

Harris and Armiger were on the second row, "I had Burton's Saker spin in front of me, guessed the right way to go and otherwise Ok," said Armiger. "I was second pitted and got pipped," Harris added.

Harvey was on his own on the third row after Rose pulled out. "It was a precaution as a pressure cap was leaking and we didn't want to take the risk," Rose explained.

Burton and Duncan shared row four, "I pitted early to save my tyres for the race," Duncan admitted. The top ten was completed by Wardle and Bird. "I lost the gears again part way into the session mainly going for fourth and fifth," Bird explained.

Pearson was next up, "sorted the brakes but didn't feel quick," he said. He had Dean alongside with Hurst and Kirk close in 13th and 14th.

Jamie Cryer and Grange were on the next row with Laslett and Hennefer behind. Auckland headed row 10 with Kevin Cryer next to him, hoping his clutch woes from race one were cured.

Parker and Hibbert followed, from Roundell, Harris, Sampson and Chilton. Although Chalmers was 27th he withdrew his Caterham with mechanical maladies, leaving Morton, Long, Helen Allen, Flynn, Brian Allen and Clive Dix back in his Puma to complete the line-up.

RACE 2

Spencer made his customary flying start but it only lasted until Rocket on the opening lap when Watson sped past up the Hill. Harvey, Harris Duncan and Armiger slotted in behind, with Armiger into fifth through Church, before swapping back, only for Armiger to repeat it again on lap two.

Roundell had pulled off at Rocket on the first lap and after losing fifth back to Duncan again, Armiger headed for the pits. "We put an extra bottle for coolant and it was spraying out onto the exhaust, so we pitted and ripped it off again," he said.

Burton was therefore up to sixth, with Bird, Dean, Kirk and Pearson settling in the early top ten.

Hurst had settled in 11th after ousting Pearson, while Grange pulled clear of Auckland who had the battling Hennefer, Parker and Jamie Cryer closing in on him.

At the front it was all but settled early on, with Watson taking his second win of the weekend by nearly 25 seconds. "I was slow off the start but I expected Joe to keep up. But I had to start short shifting as it became hard to change down," he explained.

Spencer did retain second but Harvey closed considerably in the final laps. "I could see Joe keep locking up and I really tried to catch him," Harvey admitted. "I think I flat spotted a front tyre early on and then just locked up. Great start though," Spencer replied.

Harris was a solitary fourth, with Duncan and Burton retaining fifth and sixth on the lead lap. Bird was forced to pull off after 11 laps, which promoted Dean briefly, before Armiger's comeback netted him seventh. "I made some progress but not enough," Harris admitted. "It was going well but the exhaust broke and then we lost oil pressure," Bird explained.

Dean was then caught by Kirk, losing eighth on the last lap, while Pearson completed the top ten. "The hardest race I have had in that car, but once I had caught Brian I had to have a go," Kirk admitted. "My tyres went so I had to surrender," Dean admitted. "A busy race but strategic for the Championship," Pearson added.

Grange was 11th after Hurst fell back. "I had a lump of rubber under the wheel arch and it was smoking. When I realised it was nothing serious I speeded up again," said Hurst.

Wardle had to drive back through the field to claim 12th. "I spun on the first lap or was tapped sideways but rejoined last," he explained.

Parker and Hennefer had a great scrap with lots of exchanges before Parker got away to secure 13th. "I am using the rev limiter now and more speed, but missed a gear when Jason got me," Parker explained. "He had the power difference on the straights," Hennefer added after finishing 15h behind the recovering Hurst.

Jamie Cryer almost got Hennefer too and was still on his tail at the flag. "I got alongside but not past," he confirmed. Kevin Cryer was next home, with Hibbert and Laslett completing the top ten.

Harris and Chilton were next before Long's class F wining Metro, who was well clear of class rivals Dix, Helen Allen and Flynn.

RESULT

1 Garry Watson (Westfield SEW) 18 laps in 21m11.521s (78.99mph); 2 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) +24.948s; 3 Dave Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 Steve Harris (Saker

Rapx); 5 Philip Duncan (Westfield SEi); 6 Mark Burton (Saker Rapx); 7 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 8 Les Kirk (Fisher Fury); 9 Brian Dean (Westfield SE); 10 Stuart Pearson (Ginetta G20). Class A: 1 Harris; 2 Burton; 3 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 4 James Auckland (Ford Capri); no other finishers. Class B: 1 Watson; 2 Duncan; 3 Armiger; 4 Dean; no other starters. Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Kirk; 4 Dave Chilton (Mk Indy); no other finishers. Class D: 1 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Supercopa); 2 Alex Harris (BMW Compact) no other starters. Class E: 1 Pearson; 2 Piers Grange (Ford Escort); 3 Steven Parker (BMW Compact); 4 Jason Hennefer (Honda Prelude); 5 Jamie Cryer (Ginetta G20); 6 Kevin Cryer (Ginetta G20); 7 Steven Hibbert (Lotus Sport Elise); 8 Graeme Laslett (Lotus Elise). Class F: 1 Barry Long (MG Metro); 2 Clive Dix (Ford Puma); 3 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); 4 Colin Flynn (Morris Mini Cooper); no other finishers. Fastest lap: Watson 1m08.920s (80.96mph).

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