

## **BARC North Western Centre report for BARC Magazine 2016 Summer edition.**

It is probably the case with all centres that the main activities since the Spring edition of this magazine have been their motor racing. The NW Centre's CNC Heads sports saloon championship is in full swing having run 7 rounds at the time of writing. Difficult to accept that we are over half way through the season!

The first round was run at Oulton Park in the middle of a cold March with a full grid of entries although 3 cars did not race due to new season gremlins. Joe Spencer came out to start his title defence having repaired his Locosaki following a big shunt at the Plum Pudding meeting by putting the car on pole by nearly a second and ultimately winning the race. Scott Matthias was one of this season's crop of new drivers and took a very solid 8<sup>th</sup> place in his Escort Cosworth. Piers Grange won class E in his rapid Escort Mk2 and marked himself as a man to watch for overall honours.

Previous multiple champion Paul Dobson won class D and established his hero status by taking Steve Rowles and his Honda Integra Type R back to his not too distant workshop after qualifying to carry out some welding needed to get the Honda through scrutineering. Steve thought his day was over before it had begun but raced from the back of the grid to a euphoric second in class E.

Late April saw the championship turn up at Croft for a double round with another substantial grid which included our 2 Scottish competitors for the first time this season. Philip Duncan made the trip from Aberdeen with his Caterham 7 and put it on fourth spot but clouted the tyres at the chicane in the first race causing damage which sadly put a premature end to his weekend's racing. Garry Watson made his trip down from the Scottish Borders worthwhile by putting his Westfield on pole for the first race and then winning both races.

At the start of the first race Garry Watson led Joe Spencer, Duncan, Jon Woolfitt in his turbocharged bike engined MK, Paul Rose and Steve Harris, out for the first time in their Sakers. Things changed steadily as the race wore on with spins, breakdowns and other

problems putting a few cars out some of which did not make the second race but leaving plenty for another session of fierce racing. After 3 rounds the points were as follows: Paul Rose leads class A, Garry Watson class B, Joe Spencer class C, Paul Dobson class D, Piers Grange class E and David Bird class F in his Honda Civic.

Rounds 4 and 5 were held at Anglesey in late May and gave us what could be described as a perfect race meeting. The weather was fabulously sunny and a full grid plus reserves had a great weekend's racing with very little bother at a great venue.

Two new cars appeared with two regular drivers. One was Chris Maries now sporting a Mazda rotary engine in his MK Indy. Maries was set for eighth in the first race until he spun at the Corkscrew on the final lap with an oil leak. This also proved to be his downfall in race two so there are some new car issues to sort.

Another new car making its track debut was Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza. "It was five times faster than my brain". This car is a scrutineer's dream, self built to a beautiful standard and pretty quick aswell! 8<sup>th</sup> overall and second in class in race 1 is not a bad result for the first time out.

Garry Watson controlled race 1 to record his third win of the season. Paul Rose was able to concentrate on his chase for the lead as Joe Spencer was unusually off the pace. In race 2 Garry held onto third until he suddenly peeled off into the pitane four laps from home with oil coming from the rear axle all over the rear tyres.

Paul Dobson had a cracking race with Danny Bird in his Pell Genesis. He had turned the power down to preserve tyres but had a great battle taking 6<sup>th</sup> and 1<sup>st</sup> in class in both races.

The weekend of 18<sup>th</sup> and 19<sup>th</sup> of June saw 41 entries for another double round meeting at Donington. This was made additionally interesting by the fact that Motors TV transmitted live all the races on the Sunday afternoon. A full grid of cars made for a great TV prospect. Steven Parker carried a camera in his class E BMW Compact having been chosen for this by the fact that he is always a part of the regular class E close battles which add great excitement to every race. This group is usually made up of Paul Rotheroe in his Citroen Xsara, Ric Roundell in his Vauxhall Vectra, Jamie Cryer in his Ginetta G20 and often joined by Graeme Laslett in

his Lotus Elise and Jason Hennifer in his Honda Prelude. This proved to be a wise decision as the TV feed included some great close racing.

As for the usual performers at the front end of the grid, they all were there at first, accompanied by our sponsor Ric Wood in his new car, a fabulously prepared BMW GTR.



However the high power demands of the Donington circuit brought some casualties. Garry Watson dropped out on the penultimate lap of race 1 due to excessive fuel consumption (this is a diplomatic way of putting it!) but managed to correct this with a larger can for race 2 and finished in 3<sup>rd</sup> place. Race 2 saw Joe Spencer disappear after 7 laps with engine failure so two leading championship contenders took big hits on their points tally although Garry still leads class B and Joe still leads class C but is now 2<sup>nd</sup> overall.

Piers Grange who was 1<sup>st</sup> overall early in the season did not finish either race and again still leads class E but has dropped to 5<sup>th</sup> overall. Paul Rose is 3<sup>rd</sup> overall and Clive Dix has crept up to 4<sup>th</sup> overall and leading class F in his Ford Puma. This means that Paul Dobson is now the overall leader. Some people have a lot to do!

*Peter Gorrie NW Centre Secretary*