

BARC North Western Centre report for BARC Magazine 2016 Winter edition.

Another season over! A double win for Paul Rose's Saker at a soggy Oulton Park, crowned him 2016 CNC Heads Sports Saloon Champion. Mind you it was a close thing, as close as you can get with 1 point between 1st and 2nd!

Quoting with thanks from Peter Scherer's race report of the final meeting of 2016, it was a damp qualifying for the 38 car grid and Garry Watson made the most the most of it, placing his Westfield SEW on pole by 0.802secs from Joe Spencer's Stuart Taylor Locosaki.

It was an all Saker second row, with Steve Harris out qualifying Rose. In fifth Ric Wood brought out his BMW M3 GTR, "my last outing in this car this season," he said. Alongside Luke Armiger returned with his Vauxhall Tigra. "All good, glad to be back and showed my passport at Watford," he replied. Dave Harvey was back too after missing the last round, with his Locosaki heading Paul Dobson's Mazda RX7 on the fourth row. With her earlier season problems hopefully sorted, Ilsa Cox joined the returnees too. "So far so good," said the Seat driver. She had Jon Woolfitt alongside in his MK Indy, having admitted to reducing the power in his ex Hillclimb/Sprint car in search of reliability.

After a three year absence Russell Hunter was back on the grid in his V8 MGB and despite reckoning his MK Indy GT1 was trying to kill him, Alistair Chilton still made it through the session, heading Bob Claxton's Golf Gti, Daniel Lenthall's Clio, Natalie Norman's Mini, Brian Allen's XR2i and Graeme Laslett's Lotus Elise. Ralph Underwood missed the session however, after filling his TR7 V8 with diesel!

Race One

It was full wet as the grid formed up and both Harris and Foxlow headed for the pitlane on the green flag lap. Most drivers had opted for wets but as the lights went out it was Spencer heading Watson into Old Hall, closely followed by Rose and Dobson. Wood was into third through Deer Leap on lap two, but both he and Dobson moved up when Watson spun off at Cascades and dropped to fifth.

Harvey and Armiger were still sixth and seventh but running on their own, but Thomas started to make inroads on Armiger as Cox and Paul Woolfitt completed the early top ten. When Mike Hurst crashed heavily at the Water Tower the race was red flagged.

Despite the soaking conditions, Rose still managed to get away first on the restart, heading Spencer, Harvey, Dobson, Wood and Harris through Old Hall. Rose eased himself clear to win by over five seconds, "that was possibly the first standing start I have led in the Saker, but its much better starting in the wet," he explained. Spencer was well clear in second too, but it was team mate Harvey that had all the pressure. Harris had deposed Wood when the Championship sponsor had a grassy excursion at Knickerbrook, before both Dobson and Harris took Harvey on the second lap.

Thomas was closing on Harvey too at the flag. Armiger and Cox were next home, with Paul Woolfitt edging out Wardle for 10th on the second lap. Lee Jones made it home too, from the "careful" Foxlow, Lenthall and Philip Morris and Bartlett, while a sedate Auckland came in 26th, as Claxton, Myerscough, Hennefer and Parker completed the top 30. Helen won the Allen family duel over Brian, who had his hands full holding off Natalie Norman's Mini.

Race Two

With no sign of respite from the rain, there was no question over tyre choice for the final championship deciding race of the year. The grid had been formed from the second best qualifying lap, and despite the ravages of the first race it was still a massive 34 cars.

Watson had the best get away and headed Spencer into Old Hall, from the Saker's of Rose and Harris, Harvey, Armiger and Jon Woolfitt. Rose was soon ahead however, Spencer was still in second as they completed the opening lap, from Harris, Armiger, Dobson and Harvey as Watson headed pitwards with more rear axle problems. Cox and Bird had also been first lap retirements. "I was flat out on the straight and the bonnet flew up and smashed the screen. I will be having words with Mr Cox," promised Ilsa. It

had become fairly spread out on the second lap but the safety car was called into action after Aukland had an off at Lakeside. Two laps followed behind the safety car but although Rose and Spencer started to go clear again as the green flag was waved, it was Armiger on the attack, scything passed Harris for third onto the Avenue.

Within a lap Spencer's second place was under threat too, only for the outgoing champion for see all of his title hopes for this year disappear, with a spin into the gravel at Cascades. With only two laps left Rose's lead proved sufficient, taking the flag for his second win of the day by 12.486 secs and with it the title.

Armiger was delighted with his second overall, Harris was still on the podium, despite having dropped 20 secs to Armiger. Having held fifth in the early laps Dobson lost out to Harvey on lap five when he straightlined the Knickerbrook chicane, but then got him back on the last lap for fourth. Wardle was close to stealing sixth from Harvey too, after a late charge. Thomas had seventh from Deer Leap on lap seven, after taking three places in one lap. Jon Woolfitt was on his own for much of the race in eighth, while Rotheroe took a class win and ninth overall from Parker.



Paul Rose receiving his last Class A winners trophy from Drivers Rep Duncan Aukland

Grange joined the retirements after five laps, as did Bartlett and Paul Woolfitt, which left Parker clear to chase Rotheroe. Morris' Golf was next home but a jump start penalty dropped him to 12th behind Foxlow. Hennefer had kept class mate Cryer at

bay, but after the Ginetta lost its its alternator belt, Laslett, Richard Morris and Jones

followed him home, before class F Champion Dix. Claxton and Underwood completed the top 20, from Lenthall and Helen Allen, while Norman got the better of Brian Allen on this occasion, as Myerscough completed the finishers.

All in all it was an eventful conclusion to a very exciting season with another new name on the Champions' trophy and an average grid for the season of 31.75. Many thanks to all the drivers for making it so successful.

The Final Points Table:

1	Paul Rose	104
2	Paul Dobson	103
3	Joe Spencer	101
4	Clive Dix	88
5	Paul Rotheroe	76
6	Steve Parker	74
7	Dave Harvey	72
8	Steve Harris	69
9	Piers Grange	68
10	Garry Watson	64

Away from the championship, we are delighted to report that Margaret Simpson our Chief Marshal of many years has received an award from the MSA for her services to marshalling. Colin Whitter has also been recognised for his long term efforts in running and developing our rescue unit.

The next big event on our calendar is The Real Night Out, our awards dinner dance on the last weekend of January. We all look forward to catching up then with all our members, giving out the trophies and celebrating the exciting 2016 season.

Peter Gorrie *NW Centre Secretary*