

BARC North Western Centre report for BARC Magazine 2017 Spring edition

As with all previous years 2017 started with the Real Night Out on the last weekend of January when all the 2016 drivers', marshals' and officials' trophies were awarded. The event was a sell out and the venue could not safely or comfortably add any more tables to the function room. As ever this was a very sociable evening which ran far into the early hours.

The main drivers' trophy was the 2016 CNC Heads Sports Saloon Championship Overall Winner which was awarded to Paul Rose after one of the closest results for some time, winning by one point, largely as a result of previous champion Joe Spencer dropping his car in the gravel in the last race.



*Paul Rose receiving his overall trophy from Championship sponsor Ric Wood
(Photo : Peter Scherer)*

The Spirit of the Championship trophy was awarded to Paul Dobson who regularly went far beyond what could reasonably be expected to help fellow competitors repair their

cars after various major incidents on track. This despite the fact that Paul was usually driving himself at the time.

The Driver of the Year trophy is decided by the accumulated results of a Driver of the Day vote by the marshals at each meeting through the season and was awarded to Jamie Cryer for persistently pushing the limits, particularly in the wet.

Garry Watson won the Dave Simpson Memorial Trophy for winning his class in a nominated race by the greatest margin.

An unusual award was made to Brian Allen who has now competed in 100 rounds of the championship. To reward such loyalty the NW Centre gives a cheque or token of some value to allow the driver to give their partner a weekend away for support given for so many seasons!

The Marshal of the Year Colin Barnes was presented with the Philips trophy by Mark Hulme our Chief Post Chief.

The 2017 championship year has made a stunning start with already 86 driver registrations and 51 entries for the first round held at Oulton Park on 18th March. As the grid held 36 cars it would have been unreasonable to disappoint so many drivers so we managed to juggle the programme to allow us to split the grid with all the specials cars running in one race and all the modified cars in another. Seems like we could have a real challenge for the rest of the season!

The weather at the first race was also pretty challenging with strong winds blowing copious amounts of rain over the proceedings. In the end the drivers are all to be congratulated for coping so well, particularly the large number of new drivers who performed competitively and sensibly and brought some very nice new cars into the championship. There were few breakdowns and no incidents, but most of all a lot of fabulous racing, a great result for the first round of the year in lousy weather.

In the Specials race, Champion Paul Rose took pole and won the race in his Saker but as in previous years had to deal with a lot of pressure from Joe Spencer in his Stuart Taylor Locosaki. In the end cubic capacity usually wins but Joe won class C. Paul Woolfit brought out his new car, a spaceframed Lotus Exige with a supercharged Hyabusa engine. This turned out to be remarkably quick and stood third on the grid. Roddie Paterson used his vast experience to take third place overall and the class B win.

The Modified grid of 26 cars was headed by Garry Wardle who brought along a Porsche 997 only a tenth ahead of Ilsa Cox's Seat Leon who was a couple of seconds ahead of Oliver Thomas' Subaru Imprezza. In the race however when the heavens opened the four wheel drive of the Subaru helped Oliver off the grid and on to the tail of the Porsche for most of the race with some superb car control from them both. Eventually Oliver's caution in backmarkers lost him a couple of seconds and Garry took an excellent win in conditions which should not really suit the car. Steven Hibbert won class E in his Lotus Elise and new driver Simon Sheridan took a good win class F in his Honda Civic. Despite the weather and all the difficulties it brings the day ended with most drivers happy with the results and the quality of the racing. Lots of smiles to be seen in the paddock is always a good finish!



Tom Foxlow and Colin Robinson in their classic Escorts (Photo : Marvin Hall)

Peter Gorrie NW Centre Secretary