

CNC HEADS SPORTS SALOONS – 2019 Championship review

BURKINSHAW CONQUERS ALL

It was almost a clean sweep for Rob Burkinshaw's Honda Integra, with only two defeats in his class in the whole season, he was duly crowned 2019 CNC Heads Sports Saloon Champion.

There were six different winners in the 14 round Championship, which visited four circuits and shared some of the best and worst of the UK weather.



Danny Bird's Spire GTR managed six wins, both treble successes at Anglesey. But too many small niggling problems and a non start at Oulton in round seven after an off in qualifying, were to cost him dearly. Although Bird often lost out to Dave Harvey's Locosaki in the starts, he tended to have the better of his rival in a straight fight. Harvey was second on eight

occasions, but didn't manage to secure an outright win this year.

But Harvey had his own share of problems, a mercy dash back to Leicester for a gearbox from Anglesey among them, after pulling off on the green flag in round 10. Bird was third in third in the Championship to Harvey's fourth, as they battled it out for the class C spoils, with only Graeme Smith's Caterham joining them on a regular basis.

It was former multiple Champion Paul Dobson that took the runner-up spot by a tie break from Bird, he was victorious eight times in class B with his flame spitting Locost 7. A spin at Cadwell and a suspension breakage at Anglesey were the only time he failed to make the class podium, finishing the season on a high with a double win at the last Oulton Park rounds.

David Bird's Honda Civic was fifth overall, but often had little to race against in class F. He topped the class eight times and some entertaining duel with Guy Carter's Honda CRX, but failed to get out in either of the Donington races after a problem with his wheel studs. Garry Wardle rounded off the top six overall, but you were never quite sure which car he would be racing. Two different Mini's, his Porsche and a VW Scirocco, gave him five class wins though.



Despite only contesting the six Anglesey rounds, plus Donington and the Oulton Park finale, Graham Saul managed to take the class A title, having raced both his Porsche 928 GTS and Sierra Cosworth. He just edged out Duncan Aukland's "Proton" by a single point, despite having only two wins to Aukland's four. If Jon Woolfitt had played his joker he

would have probably been class Champion, having started the season with his MK taking the overall win in the opening round at Oulton.

But Woolfitt failed to appear after his class win at Donington in round eight, as did Steve Keenan, whose MK took three wins on the first visit of the season to Anglesey. Outgoing Champion Paul Rose made one appearance, but after climbing to second his Saker retired with headgasket problems in round seven at Oulton. There were also fleeting appearances from Ric Wood with his Nissan Skyline, Piers Grange, who crashed out in the opening round and Ben Gough, whose Reliant went off on his debut at Donington.

Although Dobson outpaced most of his class B rivals, he had both Andrew Southcott's MG Midget and Luke Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra to duel with on occasions. Southcott won both Cadwell races outright, but after a second place in the first Anglesey round a misfire reduced his pace. After retiring from the first Donington race, he didn't re-appear.

Donington was also the scene of Armiger's outright win, despite holding the door closed for most of the race. He made his seasonal debut at the first Anglesey meeting, but struggled for pace. He still had a class win though when Dobson retired however and was second in the class in the final standings. Tim Foxlow joined in from Donington too, but it was Anglesey before he joined the class podium, with three second places in his Escort RSR.



Like his brother Jon, Paul Woolfitt was an intermittent visitor. His Lotus Exige had a throttle cable break in qualifying at Cadwell, but still had third and fifth overall. He led at Donington too until he started losing gears. Despite failing to secure a class win, his fourth in class didn't reflect his pace or input. Roddie Paterson re-appeared at Donington for the first

time since his huge shunt at Cadwell last year. He had a third at Donington, before taking his seasons best second overall in the final round, only 0.046 secs behind class rival and overall winner Dobson.

Nine more drivers made appearances in the class too, notably Danny Winstanley's Caterham, a dominant winner at Oulton and Donington, Stephen Sawley's Honda that took third in class in round seven and Mark De Spong's Ginetta G20 with a hat-trick of third's in the second Anglesey visit.

As Bird and Harvey battled for the class C and overall crowns, Smith's Caterham secured third in class, with only four other irregular participants. Dave and Alastair Chilton took their MK's to Cadwell, Bruce Carter's MG had second at Donington, before being put in the tyrewall in race two, while Richard Jessop's Mini had three third places at Oulton rounds.



Wardle was the only regular taker in class D, duly taking the class title with five wins. But Nigel Mustill's Nissan GTR won both times out at Oulton, losing out in the final standings to Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza, Allan Davies' BMW and Ilsa Cox's Seat. Davies didn't appear until the second Anglesey meeting, but took two class wins to secure third in class, ending his year with another class win in the Oulton final, having crashed out of

the first. Thomas had a class win at Oulton, Ric Wood won at Donington, while Cox had three second places, at Oulton and in both Donington races. Alistair Stenhouse's BMW had a third in a one-off return at Donington, Ian Burrows' Toyota was third in the final Oulton races and Mike Budd's Toyota had a second and third at Anglesey.



Class E proved to be the biggest class of the Championship this year, with a massive 22 drivers making an appearance. Burkinshaw may have been dominant, but numerous drivers vied for the podium. Steven Parker's BMW Compact finally came good and was the only other class winner at Anglesey and Oulton. He beat Chris Maries' Honda Integra

into second in class by a tie break, but the latter was a consistent podium finisher all year.

Having just missed out on the overall title last year, Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 didn't have the best of seasons. He still managed five podiums however, with Nick Bartlett's BMW and the Honda's of Ian Bruce, Chris Grimes and Ben Griffiths, joined by Connor Modro and David Jones' Ford Focus's, all having at least one podium visit.



Class F suffered for numbers, but there was still stiff competition between David Bird's Honda Civic and Guy Carter's Honda CRX. Like elder brother Danny, David took the class title with eight wins, over Carter with three. Barry Long's Mini also had a couple of outings and won the class in both races at the Oulton final, while David Green also had a win with his Civic at Cadwell.

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