



North Western  
Centre

## CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship – Oulton Park Round One

### SOUTHCOTT TAKES SEASON OPENER

Although numbers were down there was plenty of action in the opening round of this year's CNC Heads Sports Saloons, but with Paul Dobson's Locost an early casualty, it was a relatively easy win for Andrew Southcott's MG.

#### Qualifying

21 cars were due out in qualifying and it was Jon Woolfitt's Spire GTR that went quickest. But the day was soon over for the Beverley driver. "There was oil coming out of the bottom of the engine, so I knew it was serious," he explained as he loaded up for a premature departure.

Southcott was therefore the new poleman with his Lenham MG Midget, from Dobson's Mazda-powered Locost. "I've decided to change an injector before the race though, as it seemed to be low on fuel, but still has the flame out," he added.

Next up was Championship sponsor Ric Wood in his Nissan Skyline, joined by Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza. "I felt very, very, very rusty but pleased that everything was working," said Thomas.

After a troublesome 2021, Tim Foxlow's Escort RSR had a trouble-free session. It's all working, but a bit of a sticky throttle. It felt really good overall though and got quicker at the end," he said.



Marshall Groves was one of the Championship debutants in his Vauxhall Vectra Challenge car. "I did a few races in 2018 at 750MC meetings but it's my first time back and the car felt great," he enthused.

Back for another title defence, Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 had a good session and was comfortably quicker than class rival Paul Rotheroe's Citroen Xsara.

"All was fine, maybe I just had the tyre pressures a bit too high," Cryer suggested. "I had got my gear ratios wrong and wasn't using fifth. But the engine felt good," Rotheroe replied.

Connor Modro was 10<sup>th</sup> quickest, now in a Ginetta G40, just fractionally ahead of Class B rival Mark Primett's Banks Lotus Europa.

"It wasn't revving for the whole session and with the red flag too I never felt I really got into the session," Primett admitted.

Graeme Smith's Mazda MX5 topped Class F. "It was flying, fastest I have ever been around here," he reckoned.

Back in his Mini R56 JCW Ric Walker was next quickest, followed by returnee Bod Buckby. "My first time back for eight years and my first time racing an open car," said Buckby, now in a Caterham 310R.

Ian Bamber was also making his CNC debut in the family Ginetta G20. "It was my first proper time in the car and was bedding in slicks," he said.

Jonathan White was another of the debutants out in his Mazda RX8, while in the Allen family, Brian's Ford Puma was 0.134 secs quicker than Helen's Fiesta Zetec S.

Completing the qualifiers was Andrew Smith in his rebuilt VW Beetle. "It's the first time on track since we rebuilt it and we had some tyre problems," he said.

Bob Claxton made it out but his VW Golf Gti broke a driveshaft on the out lap, while Clive Dix had to qualify his Mazda RX7 out of session after an early drama.

## Race

With both Woolfitt and Claxton morning casualties, it was a 19 car line-up that finally came to the grid.

Dobson made the best of the start to lead down the Avenue from Thomas and Southcott.

As they re-emerged over Hilltop, Southcott was into second and already closing in Dobson's lead, with Wood, Foxlow and Groves the early top six.

Wood was soon passed Thomas too and was on his own in third. But in sixth Groves was under pressure from Cryer.

Rotheroe was unable to stick with Cryer for the Class E lead, but had managed to gap Primett, who in ninth was coming under threat from Modro.

Into Knickerbrook for the third time Southcott had the lead, with Dobson pitting to retire from second at the end of the lap.

"I had changed a fuel pump before the race and was looking forward to holding him off after a cracking start. But then I lost fuel pressure and it was over," he explained.

Southcott was in the clear and cruised through the remaining nine laps for a 52 seconds plus victory. "I thought Paul's engine had gone when I caught him, but I did slow down a bit myself towards the end," said Southcott, after developing a late misfire.



In second and third Wood and Thomas had been having fairly solitary runs, with Foxlow under pressure from Groves and Cryer.

Primett had Modro starting to threaten for eighth and Bamber, Smith and Walker ran in formation for a while, before Walker hit the front of the trio from lap four.

But the oil flags were out along Lakeside after Allen's Puma had blown up, with Andrew Smith joining the retirements after four laps.

Modro had got ahead of Primett into Knickerbrook on lap five, but the pair stayed inches apart, while in third Thomas was under pressure from Foxlow.

"I had lost fourth gear and had to complete a full rethink on how to continue," Thomas explained, after Foxlow nosed ahead but couldn't break the tow.

Thomas finally claimed the place back at Knickerbrook with a lap to go. "What a cracking race," he said back in parc ferme.

Foxlow was equally delighted with his fourth place, "I had a bit of early pressure but then noticed Oliver had a problem. I had a sticking throttle too, but a great race," he added.



Groves and Cryer completed the top six. "I had a bit of an early play and then backed off as he wasn't in my class," said Cryer, after he took the flag well over 10 seconds clear of Rotheroe.

"I was losing out to Jamie at every corner on every lap, so it soon added up," Rotheroe replied.

In eighth there was a brief exchange of paint before Primett finally escaped from Modro's racelong challenge. "The car had been lovely in assembly but when I put the power on I had problems and think it was fuel. It did get interesting and I didn't expect him to catch me," said Primett.

"We touched at Cascades and for a while I thought I was getting away but then my tyres went off at the end," Modro replied.

Walker completed the top 10 a lap down from Bamber, Graeme Smith, Buckby and Dix, with Helen Allen completing the finishers.

## Result

1 Andrew SOUTHCOTT (MG Midget Lenham 2700) 12 laps in 22:12.522 (87.27); 2 Ric WOOD (Nissan RB26 2600) +52.202; 3 Oliver THOMAS (Subaru Impreza 2000); 4 Tim FOXLOW (Ford Escort RSR 2500); 5 Marshall GROVES (Vauxhall Vectra Challenge 3175); 6 Jamie CRYER (Ginetta G20 2000); 7 Paul ROTHEROE (Citroen Xsara VTS 2000); 8 Mark PRIMETT (Banks Lotus Europa 1998); 9 Connor MODRO (Ginetta G40 2000); 10 Ric WALKER (Mini R56 JCW 1600).

Class A: 1 Andrew SOUTHCOTT (MG Midget Lenham 2700); no other finishers.

Class B: 1 Tim FOXLOW (Ford Escort RSR 2500); 2 Mark PRIMETT (Banks Lotus Europa 1998); 3 Connor MODRO (Ginetta G40 2000); no other finishers.

Class C: 1 Bob BUCKBY (Caterham 310R 1596); no other starters.

Class D: 1 Ric WOOD (Nissan RB26 2600); 2 Oliver THOMAS (Subaru Impreza 2000); 3 Marshall GROVES (Vauxhall Vectra Challenge 3175); 4 Ric WALKER (Mini R56 JCW 1600); 5 Clive DIX (Mazda RX7 FD 1308); no other finishers.

Class E: 1 Jamie CRYER (Ginetta G20 2000); 2 Paul ROTHEROE (Citroen Xsara VTS 2000); 3 Ian BAMBER (Ginetta G20 1800); no other finishers.

Class F: 1 Graeme SMITH (Mazda MX5); 2 Helen ALLEN (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); no other finishers.

Fastest lap: SOUTHCOTT 1:45.909 (91.50 mph).

Next stop Cadwell Park April 23rd/24th.

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Photographs courtesy of Danny Walton [dwmotorsportphotography.com](http://dwmotorsportphotography.com)

