



## **Sports/Saloon Car Championship – Round One Oulton Park**

Joe Spencer started his title defence with a dominant lights to flag win in his Stuart Taylor Locosaki at Oulton Park on the 19<sup>th</sup> March 2016.

### Qualifying

Despite his car having been totally rebuilt after a shunt at the Boxing Day Plum Pudding meeting, he was on pole by 0.818s over Roddie Paterson's Caterham, with both well clear of the second row men. "It was a bit noisy but otherwise spot on and I managed to get a clear lap near the end," he said.

Nick Cresswell's Caterham headed the second row, "I locked up at every corner with my new brakes," he explained. Alongside was Dave Harvey, having borrowed David Fuller's Locosaki while his own is being repaired. "It was pushing me on too much as the down blipper was overrevving," said Harvey.

Peter Davies continues to get used to his Spire GT3 and was fifth best, "I am enjoying it but there is a lot more to come with the car, just getting quicker each time," he said. Ilsa Cox's Seat Leon Cupra completed the row, "my team manager said I should have been faster," she explained.

With a new blue colour scheme former multiple champion Paul Dobson was next up in his Mazda RX7. "I have got bigger wheels and it's given me some understeer. It's definitely the car and not me," he reckoned. Garry Wardle's Ginetta G50 was alongside, "an ordinary day at the office, just what I expected really," he added.

Newcomer Scott Matthias headed the fifth row with his Escort Cosworth and is planning to do selected rounds this year. He had Piers Grange alongside with his Escort Mk2.

Row six was Jamie and Kevin Cryer side by side in their Ginetta G20's, with Jamie outqualifying his Dad by 0.103s. "We had made a few suspension tweeks and it felt a lot better," said Jamie. "Apart from a small oil leak at the breather everything was OK," Kevin added.

Danny Bird pitted early in his Pell Genesis with concerns about his temperature gauge. "It soared and then dropped and soared again so I came in," he said. He had another newcomer alongside as Simon Sheridan lined up in his Clio, "I came in to lower the tyre pressures and when I got out the flag came out," he explained.

Mike Hurst's Seat and Steven Parker's BMW shared the eighth row. "Left foot braking didn't work," said Hurst. "Old tyres and a slight oil leak," Parker added.

Next up were Jason Hennefer's Honda Prelude and Graeme Laslett's Elise, before Ralph Underwood head row 10, happy with his new Quaife rear axle in the TR7 V8. "It doesn't rattle now," he said.

Dave Chilton's MK was alongside Underwood and was followed by returnee Nicholas Bartlett's BMW M3 and Richard Roundell's Vectra. "No grip and new brake pads, the tyres have had it," said Roundell.

The grid was completed by the class F runners, with David Bird's Honda Civic on class pole by over four seconds from Matthew Spencer's Peugeot 106. The Fiesta's of Helen and Brian Allen completed the grid, with Steve Rowles' Honda Integra on the back after scrutineering problems.

Richard Evans' Astra had qualified but withdrew after losing fourth gear, while Geoff Morton's Honda and Colin Flynn's Metro were also qualifying casualties.

### Race

The top four sprinted away from the start, with Spencer heading Paterson, Cresswell and Harvey through Old Hall. Harvey was soon into third and as they completed the opening lap. Dobson was in fourth with Wardle and Cox doing their best to hold onto him.

Davies had dropped to eighth having lost out at the start, while Jamie Cryer was ninth from Grange, Matthias, Bird, Kevin Cryer, Hurst and Sheridan.

The sixth placed duel allowed Davies to close on them, but at the front Spencer was building a dominant lead. Paterson slowed on lap four with overheating problems, which briefly dropped him to third behind Harvey. He recovered a lap later as Cresswell then got the better of Harvey too.



*Jamie Cryer leading Peter Davies, Piers Grange and the rest of the field into Cascades.  
(Photo : Phil Rainford)*

Davies managed to pick off Cox and Wardle at Lodge over a three lap period and was into sixth by lap six, with Dobson his next target.

Spencer continued to build on his lead and finally took the flag 23.5 secs clear. "A perfect start and a good race. I think I got away as I was quicker than Roddie in the twisty bits," he said. But Paterson's recurring problems became terminal and he was out after nine laps.

Despite racing long pressure Cresswell managed to hold off Harvey to hold onto second. "I was briefly second when Roddie had problems, but lost out to Nick when I chose the wrong side lapping Helen and went onto the grass," Harvey explained. "I was quicker in some bits but he was back onto me under braking every time," Cresswell replied.

Dobson retained a solitary fourth, "I expected Ilsa to catch me, I was looking for her but she never arrived," he said. His nearest threat had remained Davies, but he was still well adrift in fifth. "After that start I had no choice but chase them," he reckoned.

Cox had got passed Wardle on the fourth lap and gradually consolidated her sixth place in the second half. "It was a good race but I think I was bit down on power as we changed the ecu to cure a noise problem," she said. "I had blocked Ilsa for miles but she finally got me at Knickerbrook," Wardle admitted.

Jamie Cryer's race ended in early disappointment, when after running in ninth overall he had throttle problems. "I overshot at island when it stuck open and I lost 10 places. Then it was over fuelling and I had to pit at the end," he said.

So Matthias, Grange and Hurst rounded off the top ten. "I backed off a bit as I was concerned about fuel level," Hurst admitted.

Despite starting from the back after missing qualifying, Rowles came through to hold 11<sup>th</sup> from lap 10.



Danny Bird had to park up after more overheating problems and after running just outside the top ten, Kevin Cryer coasted pitwards too after his Ginetta cut out at Lodge.

Parker, Hennefer, Underwood, Laslett, Sheridan, Bartlett and Chilton were next home before the class F fight. Although Matthew Spencer had held onto the lead for five laps, David Bird finally made it by into Island.

*Rob Spencer, Dave Harvey and Nick Cresswell on the podium (Photo : Simon Allaway)*

"He went wide but I still had to make a strong move and we did touch," Bird admitted. Helen and Brian Allen completed the finishers.

## Results

1 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki) 15 laps in 22m23.356s (89.48mph); 2 Nick Cresswell (Caterham Seven) +23.500s; 3 David Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 Paul Dobson (Mazda RX7); 5 Peter Davies (Spire GT3); 6 Ilsa Cox (Seat Leon Cupra); 7 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 8 Scott Matthias (Ford Escort Cosworth); 9 Piers Grange (Ford Escort Mk2); 10 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Cupra). Class A: 1 Wardle; no other starters. Class B: 1 Cresswell; no other finishers. Class C: 1 J.Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Davies; 4 Dave Chilton (MK Gti); no other finishers. Class D: 1 Dobson; 2 Cox; 3 Matthias; 4 Hurst; 5 Ralph Underwood (Triumph TR7 V8); no other starters. Class E: 1 Grange; 2 Steve Rowles (Honda Intergra Type R); 3 Steven Parker (BMW Compact); 4 Jason Hennefer (Honda Prelude); 5 Graeme Laslett (Lotus Elise); 6 Simon Sheridan (Renault Clio); 7 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 8 Nicholas Bartlett (BMW M3). Class F: David Bird (Honda Civic); 2 Matthew Spencer (Peugeot 106 Xsi); 3 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); 4 Brian Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i).; no other starters. Fastest lap Roddie Paterson (Caterham R400) 1m27.671s (91.40mph).

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