

CNC Heads Sports/Saloon Car Championship – Round 5 - Oulton Park

THIRD WIN FOR WOOLFITT

QUALIFYING

After an initial opening lap skirmish with Paul Dobson's Locost, it was win number three for Paul Woolfitt's Spire GTR, as the Championship returned to Oulton Park.

Woolfitt comfortably took pole position after the morning's qualifying session, well over two seconds clear of Dobson. "I was on old tyres and had both understeer and oversteer, so I don't know if it was the tyres or whether it was down to me," he said. It was considerably close for second on the grid however, with only 0.256 secs splitting Cadwell winner Dobson and opening Oulton round winner Andrew Southcott in his Class B MG Midget Lenham. "It was very tail happy and was leaking some gearbox oil too," said Dobson. "I had an oil pump issue and we think the pressure was down, it was handling well though," Southcott added.



Guy Carter in his mighty TVR Tuscan

Ric Wood qualified in his Nissan Skyline and was fourth best, but then opted to swap to his Holden Commodore. Guy Carter's TVR Tuscan was next up, "it was the usual TVR reliability, a few sideways moments but great fun," he reckoned. Alongside Carter was Richard Hall's Caterham, "I didn't find it slippery at all, but maybe I wasn't fast enough," he said after securing one of his best grid positions.

Paul Rotheroe's Citroen Xsara headed row four and for the first time this season had out qualified defending champion, current leader and class rival Jamie Cryer. "I was really happy with my new gearbox and I can now start changing the car too," said Rotheroe. "I was struggling for rear end grip and was finding it very, very slippery," Cryer replied, after his Ginetta G20 was only 12th best.

Rotheroe had Marshall Groves' Vauxhall Vectra alongside, another to be running with a new gearbox. "I have been working on the car until we left for Oulton and it felt brilliant. I was on old tyres and now just getting used to the car properly," said Groves.

The Lotus's of Mark Primett and Patrick Smyth completed the top 10. "Well it felt quick but the back kept stepping out. I passed quite few drivers but they still put in better times than me, so my times were actually nothing special," said Banks Europa driver Primett. Elan driver Smyth was somewhat more optimistic, "so far so good and we got through qualifying without a problem."

It was a remarkable result for race debutant Ben Roberts, who managed to set 11th best time in his Honda S2000 BMW M3. "I have done trackdays but never raced, a little bit nervous," he explained, as he lined up with the Champion Cryer alongside. It was an all Ginetta seventh row with Connor Modro's

G40 and Ian Bamber's G20. "It's good as I'm starting to get closer to the others in the class now," said Bamber.



Bod Buckby in his Caterham 310R

Bod Buckby's Caterham was next up, "all in one piece so that's good. But good weather, good car, so nothing to complain about," he reckoned. Class F leader Graeme Smith was trying slicks on his Mazda MX-5 for the first time. "It wasn't faster straight away, but I think there is plenty to come," he admitted. "Looking at the times I think I am unlikely to have anyone to race with," admitted Toyota MR2 racer Peter Koukoulas, while Helen Allen's Fiesta

Zetec outqualified husband Brian's Ford Puma, by 1.81 secs.

Matthew Jones was another debutant in his Ford Focus. "It's my first race after trackdays, but I normally work as a medic at the circuit," he explained after his car was only finished on the eve of raceday. Finally Bob Claxton was out again with his VW Golf Gti, but was responsible for a red flag stoppage during the session, when he lost a front wheel.

RACE

Both Southcott and Claxton were missing from the grid as it formed up and there was another casualty when Brian Allen pulled off on the green flag lap. "There was oil leaking onto the exhaust so it was safer to park it," he explained.

As the lights went out though it was Woolfitt and Dobson rocketing away to lead down the Avenue. "He got me and then I got him into Island. He got me back again on the exit and then I led again into Brittens," said Woolfitt after they crested Hilltop nose to tail.

But after leading the pursuit through Cascades, Primett was in trouble when they got to Island. "The throttle had stuck open, I braked and it push me around and I was left facing the traffic," he said. Carter's TVR was right behind him, "I was flat out when he spun and was facing me, I clipped him but luckily managed to carry on," he explained. Smyth only just avoided contact too, "I managed to stop but flat spotted a tyre," he said.



Cryer had exited Shell in third, but couldn't hold off Wood's Holden into Knickerbrook, with Carter in fifth, from Rotheroe, Groves, Smyth, Roberts and Modro. Both Primett and Buckby almost stopped in the Knickerbrook chicane, "I was just being careful," said Primett. "My clutch stuck, so I had to kick it to free up," Buckby added.

The top three had begun to spread out, while Cryer came under attack from Carter in his quest for fourth. They exchanged on the way into Knickerbrook and on the way out, before Carter finally made it stick into Druids on the second lap. Behind them Rotheroe, Groves and

Smyth had been fairly equally spread, while the battle for ninth between Roberts, Hall and Modro had closed up considerably.

With Carter clear in fourth, Cryer had the battle for sixth closing in on him, with Smyth ousting Groves along Lakeside. Smyth then began to close on Rotheroe again, with both edging close to Cryer. Groves had started to fall back in eighth, while behind him Modro tried to dive bomb Roberts for ninth and careered over the grass at Knickerbrook.

Cryer was under tremendous pressure but not for much longer. "I had a cracking start and tried to get way, but Paul came back and challenged me. Then I had been looking in my mirror and it took a while for me to realise that he wasn't there," said Cryer. "The engine's gone bang I think. I had lots of goes at Jamie and was ready to have another go when the engine went," Rotheroe confirmed. Smyth had also gone, "there was a knocking sound and vibration so I pitted," he said, while Primett pitted "for everyone's safety."

Woolfitt took his third win of the season by 10.378 secs from Dobson, with Wood the only other runner on the lead lap. "We had a swap on the first lap and then he got away, but I had better grip than in qualifying," said Dobson

With Carter fourth, Cryer was therefore left with a comfortable to drive to the flag in fifth, with Groves completing the top six. Hall was able to consolidate seventh after Modro's excursions. "I had to take to the grass to avoid Mark's first lap spin at Island, but my car had been awful off the line, then it was Ok," said Groves.

"One of my best qualifying sessions and then an awful start, added Hall. "I was going well until my brake pedal went long, then it cleared and then no brakes, so I went off at Lodge and Knickerbrook," Modro explained.

Bamber was right with Modro at the flag as he completed the top 10, while Buckby finally escaped from Smith to consolidate 11th. Koukoulas had a solitary run in 13th, while Jones and Helen Allen completed the finishers.

Championship Positions

1	Jamie Cryer	35	
2	Graeme Smith	32	Joker Played
3	Jon Woolfitt	30	
4	Paul Dobson	23	
5	Ric Walker	18	
	Paul Rotheroe	18	
	Guy Carter	18	
8	Ian Bamber	17	
9	Tim Foxlow	14	
10	Stephen Riley	13	

Next stop Croft August 6th/7th

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