



Sports/Saloon Car Championship – Rounds 4, 5 & 6 - Anglesey

ROSE TREBLE AS SAKER'S DOMINATE ANGLESEY WEEKEND

It was a Saker one-two in all three CNC Heads Sports Saloon races at Anglesey at the end of May.

In a dry but busy qualifying session Paul Rose took pole by 0.994 secs over Danny Bird's Spire GTR. "I only really got one clear lap though, but that was a good time," said Rose. "It was very busy and I lost my brakes and went straight on at Rocket, but no damage," Bird added.

Steve Harris' Saker was third best, "not one of my best sessions as I couldn't get through the traffic," he explained. He had Dave Harvey's Stuart Taylor Locosaki qualifying alongside, "brilliant, my best time ever around here and no issues," he confirmed.

With his Vauxhall Tigra now fully repaired after its Cadwell shunt, Luke Armiger headed row three. "It was alright actually," he reckoned. Garry Wardle's Porsche 997 was alongside him, "we have had the gearbox re-programmed to paddleshift, sorted the brakes after testing and I feel a lot more confident now," he said.

Tim Foxlow's Ford Escort RSR finally made it out after missing the opening rounds. "It was nice to be back, but we had some engine problems to overcome. So far so good though," he said after qualifying seventh best. He had Paul Dobson's Mazda powered Locost next to him. "We came in as I had a misfire, it was a wire off the fuel pump," he explained.

Alastair Chilton's MK GTi and Paul Rotheroe's Citroen Xsara completed the top 10. "We have a proper set-up now and it felt like a new car, so very happy. A bit of understeer still though," said Chilton.

Rejoining the Championship and heading row six was Allan Davies' BMW M3. "Just working my way back in for the first time since 2014," he said. Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 was fractionally behind him, "the tyre pressures were way too high so it wasn't good at the rear. We also had the starter motor stuck on, so I had a strange noise," he added.

"OK so far," was Mike Hurst's answer after his Seat Leon Supercopa shared the next row with Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza. "I lost the brakes five laps in and was left foot on the brakes to try and get the pedal back," he explained. Philip Morris was back too after his huge shunt at the Oulton Park opener. "The car was OK but not where we were," he said. Only 0.382secs separated Morris from team mate Dan Crossley.

There was a bit of contact between Foxlow and Nick Bartlett's BMW M3. "It was a definitely a could do better session," said the M3 driver. Richard Roundell also had problems with his Vauxhall Vectra. "One of the seat mounts broke on the second lap, so had to hold on tight," he explained.

The top 20 was completed by a pair of MK's. Stephen Keenan's Indy and Dave Chilton's GTi, both a few 10^{ths} up on Steve Rowles' Honda Civic Type R.

But after qualifying 22nd James Aukland was forced to withdraw his Ford Capri, "the propshaft was rattling and felt like it could come through the floor, so I decided to stop before it did," he said.

David Jones and Connor Modro's Ford Focus's were next up, from Clive Dix's Ford Puma, Ian Bruce's Honda Civic, Helen Allen's Fiesta Zetec S, Peter Koukoulas' Toyota MR2 and Brian Allen's Ford Puma completing the qualifiers, with Chris Maries failing to make a lap in his Honda Integra Type R. "We put a bigger radiator in after Cadwell. It warmed up Ok but as soon as I left the pitlane it shorted out," he explained after finding moisture in the distributor cap on his return to the paddock.

RACE 1

It was dry but overcast for Saturday's race, but had drama's at the start when Bartlett was pushed off the grid and rejoined later.

Bird made the best start, leading through Turn One from Harvey, as Wardle went side by side with Harris, followed by Armiger and Rose.

Harvey went on the attack and ousted Bird into Rocket, before they swapped again into the Corkscrew. Harris had managed to shake off Wardle, as the Porsche driver also lost out to Armiger and Rose on the opening lap, while Foxlow, Dobson, Chilton Jnr and Rotheroe completed the initial top 10.

But Rose was on a charge taking Armiger on lap two and Harris on the exit of the Banking Hairpin a lap later, before ousting Harvey through Church. But Harvey fought back however and briefly retook second place, before Rose consolidated.

Wardle made it passed Armiger for fourth too, which for a while left both drivers running solo. Behind them Dobson had ousted Foxlow for seventh, but when the Escort driver was caught and passed by Chilton into Rocket, he was soon onto Dobson's tail too.

By the end of lap five, Rose had started to close in on Bird's lead, with Harris into third through Turn One at Harvey's expense. Despite Dobson, Chilton and Foxlow continuing to run nose to tail, Thomas couldn't close the gap from a solitary 10th. Behind him however a four car train was led by Keenan, from Rotheroe, Morris and Hurst, with Cryer closing on them.

Rose finally got the lead on lap seven, but Bird continued to stick with him until his dramatic exit at the start of the final lap. "I had a lot of wheelspin at the start, but had to chase hard to catch Danny and got him on the inside up to Rocket." said the victorious Rose. "I was

having a good race with Paul after the early exchange with Dave Harvey. But I had started losing my brakes and fell back, before I heard a noise and had to pull off," Bird explained after finding a front hub had collapsed.

Harris was therefore a clear second, with only Harvey remaining on the lead lap. "I got off the line really well at the start, but took a few laps for my tyres to come in and got Dave through Church," said Harris. "I had started to close on Steve again but not close enough to have a go though," Harvey added.

Following Bird's demise, Wardle was left in a solitary fourth after taking Armiger on lap 10, "I had a good start and the car went well, I got Luke then he repassed and spun," he said.

Armiger was still left in a solid fifth, but had Dobson closing at the flag. "I was on super soft tyres and they were wrecked. It was bit boring as nothing went for me," he reckoned.

In sixth Dobson was able to survive a threat from Chilton, "Alistair did get down my inside a couple of times, but I got him back, but still had a misfire," said Dobson. "I kept losing power in the slow corners, but did swap a couple of times with Dobbo," Chilton replied.

Foxlow's strong start had continued to keep him in a challenging position, despite losing a couple of places early on. "I was holding them the first few laps but I think the yellow flag at the end saved my eighth place," he explained. Thomas had reeled him in and as they exited the Corkscrew he was poised to challenge until he saw the flags. "It had been busy at the start and I had some chasing to do. Once I got clear after about four laps I started to close and was ready to go for it until those flags," he admitted.

Hurst completed the top 10 after carving his way through a fairly intense battle. "Happier now, but still not enough power as it should have," he explained.

He had been chasing Morris' Golf and finally got by two laps from home, while Morris dropped back after hitting Dave Chilton hard in the rear under lappery.

Rotheroe and Cryer were not far behind, "I had a bad start and it took a while for me to catch up. But I couldn't get Paul in the world's widest Citroen," said Cryer.

Roundell was 13th after an early duel with Rowles. "Then I got fuel surge and he got away," said Rowles. Morris rejoined to finish 15th, with a lap up on Modro, Bruce, Dix and Helen Allen, while Koukoulas and Brian Allen were the final finishers.

Apart from Bird, Dave Chilton retired with extensive damage after his hit with Morris, Keenan had to head for the pits with suspected turbo failure, Maries had more radiator problems, Davies went straight on at Rocket and damaged his radiator, while both Jones and Bartlett were early casualties too.

RESULT

1 Paul Rose (Saker RAPX-S1) 19 laps in 22m08.160s (79.82mph); 2 Steve Harris (RAPX-S1) +29.387s; 3 Dave Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 Gary Wardle (Porsche 997); 5 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Paul Dobson Locost 7 Mazda); 7 Alastair Chilton (MK GTi); 8 Tim

Foxlow (Ford Escort RSR); 9 Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza); 10 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Supercopa).

Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris; no other finishers.

Class B: 1 Armiger; 2 Dobson; 3 Foxlow; no other starters.

Class C: 1 Harvey; 2 A.Chilton; no other finishers.

Class D: 1 Wardle; 2 Thomas; 3 Hurst; 4 Philip Morris (VW Golf GTi) no other finishers.

Class E: 1 Paul Rotheroe (Citroen Xsara VTS); 2 Jamie Cryer (Ginetta G20); 3 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 4 Steve Rowles (Honda Civic Type R); 5 Connor Modro (Ford Focus); 6 Ian Bruce (Honda Civic); 7 Peter Koukoulas (Toyota MR2); 8 Brian Allen (Ford Puma).

Class F: 1 Clive Dix (Ford Puma); 2 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); no other starters.

Fastest lap: Rose 1m08.166s (81.85mph).

RACE 2

There had been showers and more threatened as the grid assembled for the first of Sunday's races. With Auckland still absent, he was joined by Keenan, Dave Chilton and Jones on the sidelines, leaving 26 starters.

It was a delayed start however when Bird had to be pushed off the front row after he was stuck in gear and Alastair Chilton was forced to pit on the green flag with an oil leak.

When the lights did go out Harvey had the lead from Rose, Harris, Armiger and Wardle, but Rose charged ahead at the Banking Hairpin, with Harris pressing Harvey for second.

Armiger completed the opening lap in fourth, from Wardle, Dobson, Rotheroe, Thomas, Cryer and Foxlow.

Harris was into second through Turn One on the second lap and made slight inroads on Rose's lead, as both Saker's were totally dominant. "I had a better start than the first race, but Dave still beat me away, so I got him around the outside at the Hairpin. I totally wrecked my wets on the drying track though," said Rose.

"Once I had got Dave it was fairly comfortable. I couldn't catch Paul, but did close on him in some bits though," Harris replied.

Although Harvey retained a solid third and remained on the lead lap, he lost grip too when his wet tyres became worse for wear.

For Armiger it was another lonely race to a race-long fourth. "I got Garry Wardle into the Hairpin on the first lap, but the rest was boring again for me and I spent most of the race admiring the view," he admitted.

Wardle struggled with his wet tyres and having lost out to Dobson on the second lap, he was forced to surrender sixth to Thomas too a couple of laps later. "I just had no grip and didn't

want to overdrive," Wardle admitted. "My wets were Ok for the first five laps or so, but had to look for places to cool my tyres after that to just bring it home," Thomas replied.

Dobson retained a clear fifth, from Thomas and Wardle, but once again it was fight behind that saw most of the action. Rotheroe had started well again, but after Foxlow had taken Cryer on lap two, he closed in on the Citroen and got by into Rocket on lap five. Hurst had Cryer in his sights and took 10th into the Hairpin on laps seven, before charging into ninth at Rocket a lap later to demote Rotheroe too.

While Rotheroe then had Cryer challenging, Hurst reeled in Foxlow and secured eighth on lap 12 as they went up to Rocket. "I struggled to get Paul's Citroen, but had some really good dices and was pleased to see how respectful everyone was at the start in tricky conditions," said Foxlow. "The wet suited me and I felt like I could have won," Hurst reckoned.

Cryer's efforts to complete the top 10 came to nought after a late spin. "I got really close to Paul and nosed ahead a couple of times. Then I got greedy and spun exiting the Banking Hairpin," he admitted after coming in 11th. "A brilliant start but after Jamie spun I was able to back off a bit," Rotheroe added.

Rowles was in 12th for the whole race, Paul and Jamie were just too far ahead for me to join in, but no problems and not often I can say that," he admitted.

Morris had been next until Crossley bravely dived inside the final turn on lap 11 to secure 13th, with Morris eventually losing out to Bartlett too, three laps from home. "I got him at Peel, we went in side by side," said Bartlett.

Maries lost out to Bruce on the last lap for 17th, while Davies struggled on "useless road going wets" to fend off Dix for 18th place.

Modro, Koukoulas and Helen Allen all made it home too, while Roundell retired from 17th with a front puncture and Brian Allen pitted after four laps.

RESULT

1 Rose 17 laps in 21m20.299s (74.09mph); 2 Harris +5.238s; 3 Harvey; 4 Armiger; 5 Dobson; 6 Thomas; 7 Wardle; 8 Hurst; 9 Foxlow; 10 Rotheroe.

Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris; no other starters.

Class B: 1 Armiger; 2 Dobson; 3 Foxlow; no other starters.

Class C: 1 Harvey; no other finishers.

Class D: 1 Thomas; 2 Wardle; 3 Hurst; 4 Dan Crossley (VW Golf GTi); 5 Morris; 6 Allan Davies (BMW M3).

Class E: 1 Rotheroe; 2 Cryer; 3 Rowles; 4 Nick Bartlett (BMW M3); 5 Bruce; 6 Chris Maries (Honda Integra R); 7 Modro; 8 Koukoulas.

Class F: 1 Dix; 2 H.Allen; no other starters.

Fastest lap: Rose 1m13.294s (76.13mph).

RACE 3

The threat of a drying track made a few drivers risk slicks for the final race of the weekend, a decision they were all soon regretting.

Morris and Armiger both headed for the pitlane after the green flag lap, but Armiger did join in again briefly.

The slick shod Harvey got away first, but only briefly, with Harris, Thomas, and Rose in pursuit.

Harris was ahead exiting the Hairpin with Rose chasing him, while Thomas and Wardle surged ahead of Harvey though Church.

The Saker duo were long gone by the end of the second lap, as Thomas, Wardle and Foxlow settled into the top five, with Hurst sixth into Turn One as they started the second lap.

It was five laps before Rose and Harris finally swapped and eased their way through the rest of the race, but Thomas held onto third by a whisker from Wardle, as his manifold split at the start of the last lap. "Great fun he only got me at the Corkscrew when I hesitated at backmarkers," said Harris.

"I had put the anti rollbar back on and seemed to have got used to the tyres. The braking felt better too especially when I was chasing Ollie," said Wardle. "The manifold had split in two places so there was zero boost and I just had to defend," Thomas replied.

As Harvey continued to slip down the order a four car battle developed for seventh, with Maries keeping, Rowles, Cryer and Bartlett behind.

Into Turn One for the fifth time Bartlett tried on the inside of Cryer, as both went for Rowles too. But the ongoing battle allowed Chilton to join in too.

Through Church on lap eight Bartlett took Maries and Chilton through Church, with Cryer trying to follow. But the BMW drivers charge continued to gain momentum taking Foxlow for seventh on lap 11.

Hurst had gone well clear in fifth but had Bartlett closing at the end and as Foxlow eased out of the fight Chilton, Rowles and Cryer all went by, leaving the Escort driver to take his class win and 10th overall. "I made the right tyre choice, led the class and decided to take that and not look at overall," Foxlow admitted. "I felt like it was on rails, I just kept my foot down and gained from the lines I could take," Bartlett explained.

"I got rid of my aggression and felt comfortable out there, but the power delivery wasn't that smooth though," Chilton added.

"It was a good race with Chris early on, three finishes and no problems," said Rowles. "I got a great start then Chris arrived, but it took me a while to get into it," Cryer replied.

Maries, Roundell, Bruce, Davies and Harvey were next home, all two laps down, with Rotheroe, Dix, slick shod Dobson, Morris, Koukoulas and Brian Allen the rest of the finishers, after Modro and Crossley both went off on the last lap. "Those wets did work well, they were off a Ginetta," said Maries.

RESULT

1 Rose 17 laps in 21m34.052s (73.30mph); 2 Harris +7.873s; 3 Thomas; 4 Wardle; 5 Hurst; 6 Bartlett; 7 A.Chilton; 8 Rowles; 9 Cryer; 10 Foxlow.

Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris +7.873s; no other starters.

Class B: 1 Foxlow; 2 Dobson; no other finishers.

Class C: 1 A.Chilton; 2 Harvey; no other starters.

Class D: 1 Thomas; 2 Wardle; 3 Hurst; 4 Davies; 5 Morris; no other finishers.

Class E: 1 Bartlett; 2 Rowles; 3 Cryer; 4 Maries; 5 Roundell; 6 Bruce; 7 Rotheroe; 8 Koukoulas; 9 B.Allen.

Class F: 1 Dix; no other starters.

Fastest lap: Harris 1m14.717s (74.68mph).

The next round of the Championship is back at Oulton Park on June 23rd.

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