

Sports/Saloon Car Championship – rounds 4 & 5 Anglesey

WATSON & ROSE SHARE ANGLESEY SPOILS

Garry Watson's Westfield took a third successive win of the year as the CNC Heads Sports Saloons made their first visit of the season to a summery Anglesey, but a serious oil leak put him out of race two as Paul Rose's Saker took the victory spoils.

It was desperately close after first qualifying with only 0.461s covering the top three. Watson led the way, "there was no front end grip, so it just wouldn't turn in," he reckoned. Rose was second best, the car was good enough but it was a very busy session and I just managed to get a good lap," he added. Like Watson, third placed Joe Spencer found traction problems with his Stuart Taylor Locosaki. "I got one clean lap but very little grip," he said. Alongside Spencer was team mate Dave Harvey. "I was surprised by my time as I was struggling a bit through the Rocket Complex," he admitted.

Heading row three was Steve Harris in the second Saker, "the intercooler had split and I had



no power," he explained. Alongside him was seasonal debutant Luke Armiger in his Vauxhall Tigra, "my new undertray was rubbing against the tyres so I had to pit," he said. Danny Bird was next up with his Pell Genesis, "it was awful turning in but I did keep up with a Saker for a lap in heavy

traffic," he emphasises. Paul Dobson's Mazda RX7 completed the fourth row, "loads of oversteer on old tyres. I thought they would be OK but they weren't" he admitted after a number of lurid moments.

Ilsa Cox was still struggling with a misfire on her Seat Leon. "It seems to be in the fast bits and we had changed the high pressure fuel pump, which should have solved it," she explained. Alongside was Les Kirk's Fisher Fury, which just edged out Mike Hurst's Seat Leon. "The ant-rollbar snapped again" said Hurst. Chris Maries qualified next to Hurst, now sporting a Mazda engine in his MK Indy. "The throttle stuck open, so I pitted. Happy with that though," he confirmed.



Another new car making its track debut was Oliver Thomas' Subaru Impreza. "It was five times faster than my brain though and

we lost the power steering fluid as it blew all over the screen,” he explained. He had Steven Parker’s BMW Compact alongside him. “New tyres, handling OK and a change to be fastest in the class,” he said as all 10 class E cars qualified in one group.

Graeme Laslett had a “good session” as he qualified his Lotus Elise second in class, while it was “OK so far” with Piers Grange’s Escort. Jason Hennefer was doing his best with warped discs on his Honda Prelude, while Jamie Cryer had 0.6sec in hand over father Kevin in their Ginetta G20’s. “I had new front tyres and it seemed to upset the balance a bit,” said Jamie. “Gremlin free but felt quicker,” Kevin added. Paul Rotheroe’s Citroen Xsara completed the top 20, followed by debutant Gareth Pilling in his Honda Civic Type R. Richard Roundell was back with his Vauxhall Vectra after missing the Croft rounds, followed by Nicholas Bartlett’s BMW M3.

Paul Sampson qualified his Volvo Grand National Coupe next, but withdrew after the session, which left Dave Chilton to complete the 12th row with his MK. David Bird’s Honda Civic took class F pole and had Ralph Underwood’s TR7 V8 between him and class rival Clive Dix’s Puma, while Vic Lord struggled with his Lotus Elise cutting out on him. Helen and Brian Allen’s Fiesta’s shared the penultimate two with Garry Wardle’s Ginetta G50 on the back after missing the session with a fuel system problem.

RACE ONE

With Colin Flynn’s Metro a no show, 31 cars lined up for Saturday’s race.

Watson, Spencer and Harvey flew into the first turn as the race got underway, with Rose holding off Bird for fifth. But out of Church Rose used his pace and surged through into second to chase Watson up to Rocket. Spencer was third, from Harvey, Harris, Dobson, Armiger, Bird, Thomas and Cox, but at the front Rose was pushing hard for the lead.



Into Rocket for the third time Rose was almost through on the inside as they turned left. But Watson held his ground and the lead as the top four began to go clear. “I knew if I held the line I would have the inside for the next corner, so couldn’t make a mistake,” said Watson.

Armiger was into fifth as Harris struggled and eventually pitted after six laps. “The intercooler repair blew on the first lap, just no power,” he said. Dobson was sixth from Bird, Cox, Maries and Hurst as Thomas started to lose ground, “it went into limp mode for a few laps, then I just went for it,” he explained.

By lap seven Wardle had climbed to 11th and was poised to challenge Maries, “then I spun at the Corkscrew and had to do it all again,” he said. Grange had the head of class E as Parker,

Rotheroe and Hennefer battled behind and Roundell headed another three way fight with Jamie Cryer and Laslett. But Cryer was soon retiring to the pits, “the throttle cable snapped, but I had a good start,” he confirmed.

Watson kept control during the second half to record his third win of the season. “It was a pretty good start and I just went for it. I couldn’t back off though as I knew Paul would be there, “ he said. Rose was able to concentrate on his chase for the lead as Spencer was unusually off the pace. “I tried on Garry a couple of times and had a slight tap from Joe on the first lap at Rocket. I had an intercooler problem though and just not enough power on the straights,” he replied.

Down in third Spencer had a lonely race. “The nature of the track doesn’t seem to suit me and it was hard on tyres,” he said. Both Harvey and Armiger had similarly solitary races into fourth and fifth. “I thought I was going to race with Paul’s Saker as I got him at the start and he sailed by,” Harvey explained. “The first few laps were OK and then I was on my own,” Armiger added.

Dobson just held onto sixth from Bird. “The tyres overheated so I backed off and then Danny appeared,” said Dobson. “That was great and nice to pass a Saker too (before it broke),” he replied. Maries was set for eighth until he spun at the Corkscrew on the final lap with an oil leak. Thomas therefore moved up but had Wardle reeling him as they took the flag.



Cox had lost out to Wardle too a couple laps from the end and was still struggling with her undetectable misfire. Hurst was next home, “I ran out of road chasing Maries mid race and lost a bit of power after that,” he said. Kirk was closing on Hurst too at the end after a dramatic comeback. “I had a massive off on the first lap trying to stay with Maries through Church on cold tyres. I went off, shot across the track and spun again,” he explained.

Grange headed home the competitive class E runners, despite a small oil leak. Parker was never far behind though, “it worked better not being so aggressive,” Parker reckoned. Rotheroe was next home but had lost touch with his rivals during lappery. “I had a good start but then lost them a bit,” he said. Hennefer also faded but was still fourth in class, “the brakes were vibrating and my tyres were worn out,” he explained.

Kevin Cryer demoted Roundell for fifth in class in the latter stages. “I had pressure from Jamie at the start and Kevin at the end,” said Roundell.



Dix topped class F and completed the top 20, after trailing rival David Bird early on, “he got me into Turn One,” said Bird. Chilton, Helen Allen, a struggling Bartlett and Brian Allen completed the finishers, with Laslett retiring after his throttle stuck close, Lord went out with his cut out problem and Underwood with a brake/clutch fluid problem and no gear availability.

RESULTS

1 Garry Watson (WestfieldSEW) 19 laps in 22m20.367s (79.09mph); 2 Paul Rose (Saker RAPX) +1.388s; 3 Joe Spencer (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 4 David Harvey (Stuart Taylor Locosaki); 5 Luke Armiger (Vauxhall Tigra); 6 Paul Dobson (Mazda RX7); 7 Danny Bird (Pell Genesis); 8 Oliver Thomas (Subaru Impreza); 9 Garry Wardle (Ginetta G50); 10 Ilsa Cox (Seat Leon Cupra).

Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Wardle (Ginetta G50); no other finishers.

Class B: 1 Watson; 2 Armiger; no other finishers.

Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Bird; 4 Kirk (Fisher Fury); 5 Dave Chilton (Mk Gti); no other starters.

Class D: 1 Dobson; 2 Thomas; 3 Cox; 4 Mike Hurst (Seat Leon Cupra); no other finishers.

Class E: 1 Grange; 2 Steven Parker (BMW Compact); 3 Paul Rotheroe (Citroen Xsara); 4 Jason Hennefer (Honda Prelude); 5 Kevin Cryer (Ginetta G20); 6 Richard Roundell (Vauxhall Vectra); 7 Gareth Pilling (Honda Civic Type R); 8 Nicholas Bartlett (BMW M3).

Class F: 1 Clive Dix (Ford Puma); 2 David Bird (Honda Civic); 3 Helen Allen (Ford Fiesta Zetec S); 4 Brian Allen (Ford Fiesta XR2i); no other starters. Fastest lap: Rose 1m09.385s (80.42mph).

RACE TWO QUALIFYING

Watson’s hopes of another win were dashed when his qualifying session was cut short. “I was on new tyres but stuck in sixth gear and didn’t get a clean lap,” he explained after pitting only three laps into the session. With both Saker’s now with new intercoolers, they were back on the pace, with Rose on pole and Harris third, as Spencer managed to split the pair. “So much better, I struggled for clear laps but finally got one.” Rose explained. “I could just feel the power again,” Harris added.



Spencer was happy to be on front row though too, "I got some good laps in, felt more like it," he said. Harvey completed the second row, with Armiger heading the third ahead of Watson. Although Danny Bird was seventh best he thought he was quicker. "It felt like it but I wasn't," he said.

Dobson was next up conserving tyres on this occasion, while Wardle was using up his old rubber. "Sliding about all over but saving the new ones for the race," he explained. Wardle had Kirk alongside, "a loose exhaust and a bit slidey, but OK," Kirk reckoned. Laslett had sorted his throttle problem to head the next row for class E pole from rivals Grange, Thomas, Jamie Cryer, Rotheroe, Hennefer and Roundell.

Hurst was down in a lowly 18th after his anti rollbar broke again, while Piling headed the next row from Parker. "I didn't push it as I had the oil pressure light on," said the BMW driver. Kevin Cryer was way off his best after gear selection problems and had Chilton alongside him. Dix topped class F from Helen Allen, Bird Junior and Brian Allen, while Maries set a time but withdrew after losing oil pressure.

RACE TWO

Spencer got the best start with Watson quickly taking Harvey for second through Church as Rose, Armiger and Harris exiting the Banking Hairpin for the first time. Rose was into third at Rocket and inches from Watson's gearbox as they completed the first lap. Harvey was fourth with Harris closing, followed by Armiger, Dobson, Bird, Wardle and Thomas as they completed the first lap.



Rose charged into second out of Church a lap later, while down in seventh Bird had taken Dobson in a duel that was to rage for the entire race. Into Rocket for the fourth time Rose made his move for the lead as they took the left hander, but on this occasion Spencer stood his ground and retained his advantage.

A lap later Rose made his attack considerably earlier and surged ahead before the climb to Rocket. Harris also made it passed Harvey for fourth on the same lap, while Armiger was on his own again as the Bird and Dobson duel found Wardle closing on them.

Spencer stuck with Rose and when yellow flags were out on lap 10, Rose backed off and Spencer flew back ahead as soon as he saw green. Rose fought back straight away and went through at Church, retaining a growing lead for the remaining seven laps. "I had a much better start and almost got Joe at my first attempt. I don't know what happened when Joe got back ahead, as there were yellow flags and it made me cross", said Rose who claimed his win by over four seconds.

"I was surprised to keep the lead as long as I did, but I made him work hard for it. He got me much earlier though the second time, he was ready for the move when we came out of the Hairpin," Spencer admitted. Watson held onto third until he suddenly peeled off into the pitane four laps from home. "there was oil coming from the rear axle all over the rear tyres," he explained.

Harris therefore clinched third, "much better but it just wouldn't go at the start," he said. Harvey and Armiger were on their own again in fourth and fifth, but sixth went down to the wire. "What a cracking race with Danny. I had turned the power down to preserve tyres and had a great battle," said Dobson after numerous exchanges. "Then I watched Dany and Garry in my mirrors," he added.

With Wardle joining in too near the end, Bird had to fight to recover seventh, which he did successfully on the last lap. "I eased off halfway too as my oil temperature was high, but we stayed just as close and Garry caught us," said Bird. "I slowly reeled them in and I got Danny into Rocket, but he got me back at the Corkscrew on the last lap," Wardle replied.

Thomas was set to complete the top ten until Hurst caught him and claimed the place on lap 12. "The power steering had gone after the belt came off and I was losing my brakes," he said after pulling off three laps from the flag.



Hurst therefore retained a clear 10th with Grange taking another class win from 11th. Parker was delighted with second in class, "I amended the tyre pressures and finished strongly, starting to catch Piers at the end too," he said. For a while Rotheroe had been second in class, heading an increasingly growing train of challengers. "My tyres delaminated, I was sliding and then

went off at Turn One," he explained, after dropping to eighth in class behind Laslett, Jamie Cryer, Roundell, Hennefer and Kevin Cryer.

Bird led class F until the last lap when his Honda pulled off with overheating and handed Dix his second win. Chilton was next home with Helen and Brian Allen completing the finishers,

Pilling had retired after three laps and Kirk recovered from a terrible start to climb from dead last to 13th only for a rear wishbone to break on his eighth lap.

RESULTS

1 Rose 18 laps in 21m14.490s (78.80mph); 2 Spencer +4.474s; 3 Steve Harris (Saker RAPX); 4 Harvey; 5 Armiger; 6 Dobson; 7 Danny Bird; 8 Wardle; 9 Hurst; 10 Grange.

Class A: 1 Rose; 2 Harris; 3 Wardle; no other starters.

Class B: 1 Armiger; no other finishers.

Class C: 1 Spencer; 2 Harvey; 3 Bird; 4 Chilton; no other finishers. starters.

Class D: 1 Dobson; 2 Hurst; no other finishers.

Class E: 1 Grange; 2 Parker; 3 Graeme Laslett (Lotus Elise); 4 Jamie Cryer (Ginetta G20); 5 Roundell; 6 Hennefer; 7 Kevin Cryer; 8 Rotheroe.

Class F: 1 Dix; 2 H.Allen; 3 B.Allen; other finishers. Fastest lap: Rose 1m09.122s (80.72mph).

All photographs by Peter Scherer

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