



North Western
Centre

CNC HEADS SPORTS/SALOON CHAMPIONSHIP 2024

ROUNDS 7 & 8 – CADWELL PARK – 10TH/11TH AUGUST

MODRO DOUBLE IN WEEKEND ATTRITION

QUALIFYING

Reigning Champion Jon Woolfitt's Spire GTR and Championship leader Connor Modro's Westfield Aero topped the qualifiers, as the CNC Heads Sports Saloon Championship made its annual trip to Cadwell Park. "It was all good, I got two clear laps and that was enough," said Woolfitt, who took pole by over four seconds. "It was a nice clean session for me too and I got my best lap on the final one," Modro replied.

There was another 2.8 seconds gap to third place, with Simon Allaway's Lotus Esprit V8 fractionally ahead of Paul Masters' Westfield. "My gearing felt wrong for here and maybe there was a plug lead off, but it was very difficult," Allaway explained. "It was my first time at Cadwell and I had a little off at the Gooseneck. But the set up was OK, so no changes for the race," Masters added.

Jamie Cryer's Ginetta G20 was next up, relishing his favourite circuit. "I had a lot of traffic, but felt there was more to come I hope. I need to keep up more with the faster lads, but love this place," he said. Marshall Groves' Vauxhall Vectra completed the third row. "Overall a good session, but I had a bit of an engine oil leak and I was concerned it was coming through the clutch," he explained.

Richard Hall's Caterham was seventh, "alright but not brilliant and slower than I had hoped for. It was better than testing and I stayed on," he said. Alongside Hall it was welcome back to Thomas Frankland's Renault 5GT Turbo after his Croft roll. "Lee Bull and I both had slicks, it was running well and matched my previous best here," he confirmed.

Steven Parker's Fiesta ST was ninth, but had Lee Bull's Renault Clio, Paul Dobson's Fiesta and Mark Primett's Banks Lotus Europa close behind, with just 0.7 secs covering all four. "I kept my best slicks for the race, but it felt under sprung and I need to get braver," Parker admitted. "It was OK but I wasn't too happy with my time. I think it was a bit too stiff at the rear, so I need to make some adjustments," Bull added.

For former Champion Dobson it was a temporary one-off return, before son Louis takes over his Fiesta at Anglesey. "I had been away for two seasons, but it was good to be back," he said. Primett's session was restricted to three laps though after a problem. "I came in as it was under fuelled. I had no real front end grip either, so need to adjust the geometry," he explained.

Riccy Walker and debutant Ryan Nelson's Mini Challenge cars spent much of the session in close formation, before Walker took a 1.7 secs advantage on his last lap. "I had good grip but didn't get a space quick enough, so it took me until the end of the session to get clear," said Walker. "My first race ever, so I have a lot to learn," Nelson replied.

Having previously been out in his TCR Audi this season, Gary Wardle debuted a VW Golf GTi. "It's a trackday car, so a one-off for me, as a friend of mine is due to race it at Anglesey. I got pushed off though and damaged the radiator and then the fuel pump failed when we got back to the paddock," he explained. Matthew Jones' Ford Focus completed the eighth row, "apart from a bit of vibration at the end, it was all good," he said. Alek Modro was back too with his Fiesta, "I didn't know where I was going, as it's a while since I had been to Cadwell and I couldn't remember it," he admitted.

Iain Gorrie's Lotus Elise and Cavan Taylor's Renault Clio completed the 19 car line-up. "The car is fine, but I am still very rusty. I am improving but not by my own standards," Gorrie admitted. Taylor was happy though, "I pushed on a bit at the start, and it was better than I expected, so yes fairly happy," he concluded.

RACE ONE

All 19 cars made it to the grid for the opening race of the weekend. As the lights went out Woolfitt led Allaway, Modro and Cryer into Coppice, before Modro snatched second into Mansfield. "I had lit up the rears off the start and Simon got me, then I attacked at the Gooseneck and got him back," said Modro.

Masters had also made it past Cryer for fourth, but by the end of the opening lap the top five had gone clear, with Groves in sixth, followed by Parker, Frankland, Hall and Primett. Groves was in trouble though, "I was having total brake failure. I pumped them but was sideways and then spun at Park," he said, after dropping to 13th place. While Woolfitt and Modro consolidated their places at the head of the field, Allaway had Masters closing in on him, with Cryer doing his best to stay in touch too.

Following Groves' demise, Primett managed to get clear after taking Hall on lap three, as Parker fell back too. "It went into crash mode when I hit the rumble strips at the Gooseneck and cut the engine, so I had to learn to drive around it," he explained. Having dropped to 10th behind Frankland and Nelson, Parker was still embroiled in a five-car scrap for ninth, with Bull, Groves and Dobson looking to challenge.

But on lap five Woolfitt's engine went bang and left Modro well clear of the rest. Wardle and Alek Modro were parked up too, "we tried to repair the fuel pump but it failed again. It cut out when my foot was down, then it was Ok, but went again completely," said Wardle. "I had a driveshaft pop out just after the Mountain," Alek added. Hall and Frankland had just managed to go clear in seventh and eighth when the safety car was called out to recover the casualties. After two laps it was green again, but Groves had also returned to the paddock. "My lack of brakes got worse, then I nearly hit Dobbo under the safety car and thought I had better come in," he said.

Modro was soon clear at the restart, "after I had seen Jon pull off I just had to drive around," he said after taking victory by 8.3 seconds. Allaway retained a comfortable second. "I got off the start well and it felt better than in qualifying, but the gearing was a problem again, as it really didn't suit here, so I just went for a finish," he said.

Cryer had done his best to hold on to Masters from the restart, but had to give best. "Great, but it seemed to take me a while to get confident after the restart though," Masters admitted. "I was determined to make Paul work for it, a mega race," Cryer added. Primett's hold on fifth came to a premature end just a lap from home, "after the safety car I got low fuel pressure coming out of Barn

and had to pull out. It was shame as I had made places sensibly,” he said. Hall and Frankland therefore completed the top six, after they had been very close at the restart. “I think I dosed off when they waved the green flag. He did get a bit close, but I managed to pull away where it counted, despite it cutting out in low gears,” Hall explained. “I had just got clear of the pack when the safety car came out, then Ryan was a bit close at the restart. I nearly lost it once at Charlies, but managed to hold on,” Frankland added.

Nelson retained a solid seventh, “after the safety car my seat insert came out and was in front of the pedals, so the gap ahead increased, but I still loved it,” he confirmed. Bull managed to take Parker a lap from home to secure eighth, after spending his earlier laps duelling with Dobson, “Happy with that, beating Dobbo, but I had it on straightline speed,” he said.

Parker had Walker closing in too at the flag, “I think I need the confidence to challenge more, but I was Ok after the safety car,” Walker admitted after completing the top 10. Dobson, Jones, Taylor and Gorrie completed the finishers. “I had a bit of a moment at Charlie’s before the safety car, a bit late on the brakes,” said Jones. “My tyres went off early and it just got worse,” Gorrie added.

RACE TWO

With Woolfitt, Wardle, Alek Modro, Hall and Gorrie all absent, 14 cars left the assembly area, but it soon reduced further, as Groves returned to the paddock on the green flag lap. “The engine or subframe was loose as I could feel the movement. It was undriveable so I had no choice,” he said.

Modro shot off at the start, while Masters was doing his best to hold onto Allaway for second, but lost out to Cryer and Primett. There was not one but two more casualties though, with Frankland pulling off before clearing the grid, “as I went for second gear the clutch cable went,” he explained. But Nelson had also expired on the opening lap too, “It just cut out on me,” he added.

So out came the safety car as Modro led Allaway, Cryer, Primett, Masters, Parker, Bull, Dobson, Jones, Walker and Taylor.

As it went green for lap four Cryer lost out to both Primett and Masters, but at the front Modro was soon in the clear again. “Connor just went, I couldn’t respond to that,” said second placed Allaway. “Mark was too quick for me at the restart. I was quicker on the twisty bits but he had me on the straights and then Paul got me into Park,” said Cryer.

The top five went clear fairly quickly again, with Parker in sixth, from Bull and Dobson, while in ninth, Walker had managed to demote Jones. Masters was close enough to threaten Primett by the end of lap five, but their duel allowed Cryer to join in again and it was nose to tail between the trio.

Primett was in trouble again and peeled off into the paddock on lap eight, “it was the steering, the track rod end had play in it and it was getting looser. So it became safety first,” he explained. So Modro made it two wins out of two, but he had backed off too. “The oil temperature started to increase, so I had some concern. It was fine otherwise,” he said after taking the flag 1.540 secs up on Allaway. “That was much better, I had pace and I think it was me yesterday, not the car,” he admitted. With Primett gone Masters completed the podium. “I was losing out to Mark in a straightline, so Jamie stayed close until I managed to take him,” said Masters.

Parker was a solitary fifth. "I didn't get fault alerts and I had softened it up a bit. I was consistent, but had no one to race with," he said. Behind him Bull had a long pressure from Dobson. "I had him on the straights again, but glad he didn't have any more power, or he would have had me," Bull admitted. "I nearly had him a couple of times under braking, but the only place was at the hairpin and he was expecting it," Dobson replied.

Walker came in ninth, but didn't get off to the best start. "I was watching the lights, put it in gear and then missed them going out. It was hard to get past Matt as he was good on the brakes, but I finally got him at Park," he said. Jones' race ended a lap from home, "the CV joint had gone, it was shuddering badly and I couldn't even limp it home," he explained.

Taylor therefore completed the finishers. "I had been chasing Matt and took a look at the Hairpin, but he defended it. It was good staying with him though until he pulled off," he concluded.

See the results at

<https://www.tsl-timing.com/file/?f=BRSCC/2024/243231nws.pdf>

Next round Anglesey, September 7th.

Published by Peter Scherer for BARC NW, August 12th 2024.