

He just winged it!!

Saturday 06th August saw the 6th round of the SW Adair Tyres Northern Ireland Sprint Championship take place at Kirkistown Circuit. Our 6th round also tied in with rounds 15,16,17 + 18 Of the SBD Motorsport British Sprint Championship which ran as usual at the August round of our Championship.

As always, its great to welcome our fellow sprinters from the British Championship who always bring some exotic cars to Kirkistown as well as plenty of craic over the course of the weekend. Indeed, speaking to some of the drivers on the Saturday they all love coming here to sprint because of the fast nature ok Kirkistown as well as the fun nature and atmosphere around our paddock. One person even told me that they would be here more frequently if it was not so expensive to cross the big puddle that lies between us and the mainland. Perhaps Boris`s bridge would have benefited us?

Right from the offset Rob Dwane

Robert Dwane Proved once again to be the man to beat on the day and showed that anyone who wanted to catch him had a massive bridge to cross as he took off like a rat up a drainpipe and set what would be his fastest run of the day with a 107.04 sec run. Robs win now moves him 6 points ahead of second placed Tim Woodside who is now 19 points ahead of third placed Jim Hutchinson. Terry Holmes pushed hard all day and took second place and maximum British points with a 110.29 sec run in his 3.5l Lola Tegra Judd. Third went to Pete Goulding in his more modern 1.6 Turbo charged Eco boost engine Mygale. Fourth overall and second in the local championship went to the hard charging Tim Woodside in his 2.7 Pilbeam. Tim once again was the man to watch as he went fast, very fast indeed whilst still having superb fun in the car by driving it like he had stolen it!! Fair play Tim your mad lol!!

Third in our championship and an amazing 10 overall went to Ryan McGimpsey in his 1.3 Jedi!!! Yes, you read that right a 1.3 Jedi. Ryan was going so well that everyone was glued to his times to see how far up the entry list he could get compared to the bigger cars. Indeed, I had the privilege of seeing a preview of a series of superb photos of Ryan at the Hairpin where Ryan literally was on 2 wheels, and I mean his inside 2 wheels off the ground as he rounded the hairpin. No one can say he wasn't trying!!

Other outstanding drives of the day include Ethan Falkner who took second in class 14 a mere 0.2 secs ahead of the hard charging Brian Fitzmaurice who almost had a full days racing at last. Ethan pipped Brian in his last run, but it could've been different only for a lot of misfortune which poor Brian suffered on his last run. Brian was set off behind a far slower car which he dutifully caught at the chicane. The timing records for that run show that he was over 1 second up on his fastest run when he caught the car in front. Brian got a re-run which he went for and was even quicker again, however as he entered the front chicane the car in front had touched the marker cone, sending a slither of it onto the track. Brian was too close to that car to get him safely stopped or the offending bit of debris moved and he touched it in no more, sending it up past his gear selector rod which it touched and loosened meaning poor Brian couldn't change gears. When will this fellas luck ever change? He was definitely showing potential in this new car and when he gets some more seat time he

will definitely be a serious contender in the top 5. Watch this space and mark my words!!

Class 9b had a bit of a resurgence when John Stewart the local racer came to play in his 1.3 Radical as did Ricky McGimpsey who debuted his new 1.3RGM alongside Sheryl McBride. John Stewart proved to be the person to beat, but when Ricky perfects his RGM he's going to be another top 5 overall contender. How long before it gets the "turbo Sam" treatment?

We also have to mention the rare fact that there were no Strains at this event. This is the first event in recent history which has been Strain free. The reason for this is that Johnny finally, at the third attempt due to covid, got to marry his new wife Laura. A massive congratulations is due to both Johnny and Laura and on behalf of everyone involved in the SW Adair Northern Ireland Sprint Championship I must wish you all our congratulations as well as a long and happy future together. Rumour has it that Laura's going to show Johnny how to drive her new blue 205 next year season. It will look familiar to us all.

We must also give a quick shout out to local Motorsport legend Ken Colbert who had an unfortunate day. Ken did however, remain there all day and was seen out and about round the paddock offering advice help and support to the fellow drivers as well as myself. I hope your feeling better now Ken and see you on 24 September!! I did speak to Ken a couple of times over the days after the event and he wished to report and pass on his sincerest thanks to all the medical crew, marshals and fellow competitors who assisted him and looked after him on the day. Ken was also very very complimentary of the HANS device which he was wearing and he said that in his opinion that they should be mandatory for everyone, due to how effective it was for him. Now there's a valuable piece of advice from a very experienced legend of the sport who should be listened to!! So if your in one of the roadgoing classes which doesn't require the use of a HANS device, pay some attention to an experienced expert and wear one. Its true what they say, it may save your life!!!!

During the course of the day I had a chat with Mazda man Paul Magill about his little MX5. Paul told me that he uses the car for sprints, Hillclimbs, auto tests, Targa Rallies as well as for the occasional nip down the road etc. This just shows how versatile these little cars are and why they are so popular in motorsport circles. We also discussed running the car and Paul advised that his car is completely standard although he has added harnesses and a seat for safety and over the last couple of years the only maintenance, he has had to do to the car is to keep it regularly serviced, with regular oil and filter changes and just a good check over after each event. Now I'm sure your asking why I mention this?? Well, the reason is to show just how economically possible it is to compete in our championship on a clubman's budget with a car that can be competitive whilst still being used on the road as a daily, or occasional commute. Paul does admittedly use the car for auto tests and targa rallies too but this only further confirms that entry level motorsport like this is still achievable for clubmen!!

In terms of the Categories, we will start with the Road going category which once again proved the old TV advert to be very very wrong. Once again, the car Infront was a BMW, not a Toyota. Conor Hamill again took the class win on the day but

Crawford Ewing Jr Pushed him hard in the Megane and was only a mere 1.16 secs behind Conor. Third went to Aaron Vance in his new BMW and he was only 0.89 secs behind Crawford. Crawford Ewing was actually leading the Roadgoing category after the second run but Conor managed to find some more time in his third run. Perhaps it took until the third run for Conor to fully digest his large fry which he had for Breakfast. If he had only had a soda he would've been quicker all day lol. (That's me getting a slap in the lug the next time Conor sees me). Conor now has a 6 point lead at the top of the category from Crawford Ewing with Andrew Robb third. Crawford and Conor are dead equal on the number of rounds completed so it's a straight fight between these 2 fellas for the title. Don't rule Crawford out!

Modified Category championship honours on the day went to Ryan Murray after he finally got his Subaru going to its full potential after so much heartache of late. Ryan is one of the quiet men in the paddock but by glory does he like to push the Subaru on. Ryan finished 20th overall and when you remove the 9 British Championship contenders above him that equates to 11th overall in our Championship event. That's some going! Second in the modified chase went to Garry Campbell who finally seemed to make it all click and was flying. Garry finished an amazing 24th overall with a 129 sec run. Whilst Garry was delighted with this result he was even more delighted to have beaten his son Dan Campbell who finished 27th overall and fourth in the modified category in his Starlett with a 131.48 sec run. Shane Bell was the meat in the Campbell sandwich in his Subaru and he finished 3rd on the road but as he isn't championship registered Dan Inherited points for third. I have to be careful how I word this as I don't want to offend any of the Campbells, but Garry was flying, and I mean flying however Dan was having gearbox issues so whether these results reflect future performance is a delicate question which only the Campbells can answer, but I can confirm that I've never seen Garry smiling as much as he was at prize giving!! It may have been a long run home in that lorry on Saturday night lol. In terms of the category championship Stephen Colbert has a 1-point lead over Daniel Campbell who is only 1 point ahead of Third placed Oliver Cormican, who leads fourth placed Ken Colbert, again by 1 point. Its safe and fair to say that the Modified Category is very very close at the top and I personally don't fancy predicting a winner here!

In the specialist Category Jim Hutchinson ponce again took the category win in his RSR Escort with a 124.06 sec run however Andy Hawthorne pushed him hard to set a 126.57 sec run in his Westfield. Andy actually beat Jim's second and third timed run times however Jim was having fuelling issues but that's no excuse on either persons behalf. Third went to Scott McMullan who finished 1.05 secs behind Andy Hawthorne but more importantly for him a mere 0.31 secs ahead of David Hawthorne. In terms of the category Championship Jim Hutchinson is 6 points ahead of Scott McMullan , with Steven Hawthorne third 4 points behind Scott and 1 point ahead of David Hawthorne. This is going to be an interesting run in for the second placed spot! From a personal perspective I d like to thank Jim Hutchinson publicly for something which he did for Joanne and I which meant a lot. Thanks again Jim!!

In the Heaslip Ladies Challenge Sheryl McBride blasted to a challenge win for the second time this season. Sheryl had an amazing drive, no doubt assisted by the new plugs fitted by a fellow competitor for her during the day. Sheryl was flying and finished up 34th overall which is a superb result for her. On corrected time she won the category by 4.28 secs from Emma Campbell who was also going very well. Third

on the day went to Kathy McDade in her Honda Civic which just doesn't have the oomph Kathy is looking for. Perhaps she needs a bit more fairy dust in her tank? Amy Hawthorne took fourth but her overall performance has been masked by the fact that she has a new car and therefore her performance indicator factor has been reset to 0. She has 1 more round to achieve her third score and I predict that she will jump back into contention again when she has a performance factor to reflect her performance. Amy does however have the bragging rights of being the fastest female Hawthorne after she eclipsed her mum Nicky Hawthorne by 2.48secs in the road and 7.45 secs corrected. Again, Nicky's time was affected by this being her first event in the new Clio so with a few more events under her belt Nicky will be a bit more competitive on corrected times. Challenge trophy wise Emma is still in charge at the top with a 7 point lead from Kathy McDade who has a slender 1 point lead over Sheryl McBride. Dropped scores will come into effect shortly and Sheryl has already dropped 1 round so far so this may well change the outlook of the championship. I look forward to seeing how this challenge trophy pans out this year as each and every one of the girls has been steadily improving and it is getting to the nitty gritty bit of the season now!

In the most hotly contested Category Karl Johnston took the title of fastest mini in the west once again, however Gary Milligan pushed him hard, but simply wasn't fast enough to catch Karl. However Gary did pip Gerry McGarrity who finished third, and to Gary, beating wee Gerry is like winning the lottery!! I can guarantee that there was some banter between those 2 fellas after that result, and of course Id never stir the pot lol.

Our next event will be the seventh round of the SW Adair Tyres Northern Ireland Sprint Championship at Nutts corner circuit on 24 September. This round is hosted by North Ulster Car Club. The NUCC always put on a good event at Nutts Corner and with this being the seventh round, any rounds after it will start to affect people's championship standings as dropped scores come into the equation. See you all then

Now for the class battles:

Class 1 – Road Cars up to 1700cc

Paul Forsythe, fresh from his trip to Knockhill took control of the class again and just simply wouldn't let go. Paul took a fabulous class win in his seriously quick Peugeot 106 with a 5.21sec lead over second placed Stephen Donnelly in his Ford Fiesta. Third went to Alan Wallace in his Honda Del Sol who finished 2.16 secs behind Stephen. Kathy was the fastest of the rest finishing fourth. Championship wise Paul and Alan are tied on points with 21 each. Paul has 1 dropped score so far and Alan has none so this spices things up. Third is still Adam Brogan who we haven't seen in a while and he is tied with Kathy McDade on points. Its safe to say that Paul must have learnt something from his recent trip to Knockhill!!

Class 2a – Road cars over 1700cc

As per the main report, Conor Hamill was the man to beat again today, and Crawford Ewing nearly did!! Crawford, who has really come to terms with the Megane was leading the class, and the Roadgoing Category after the second run, but Conor smashed it on his third run take the win by a mere 0.16 secs from Crawford. Third

was Aaron Vance who is still trying to tame his beast of an M3 and so far he is doing a good job at that. Crawford Ewing Snr finished fourth in the Megane he was dual driving with Crawford Jnr. Ian Thompson, Tom Lawther and John Hamill rounded the class out. In terms of the championship Conor Hamill has a 6 point lead over Crawford Ewing Jnr and Andrew Robb is third, 3 points ahead of Aaron Vance.

Class 2b – Road cars Mazda MX5

As if anyone ever doubted, he wouldn't be, Paul Magill once again proved to be the man to beat in his Mazda MX5 today, but George McMillan is coming to terms with his Mazda and pushed hard to finish a mere 1.58 secs behind Paul Magill. Third on the day went to Craig Ewing with Barry McCann, Robert and then Callum Fitzgerald rounding out the class. Championship wise Paul Magill tops the table from Adam Brogan with Barry McCann third.

Class 3 – Road cars specialist Production cars 4wd

I'm not sure what Alfred Robb said to offend his class 3 friends the last day out but he scared them all off and none of them came to play this week. Alfred therefore took an undisputed class win in his Toyota Yaris which sees him extend his class championship lead ahead of the Grady brothers. For the record as anyone who knows Alfred will confirm, Alfred is a gentleman and there's now any he offended anyone. I just had to clarify that point!!

Class 5 – Road cars specialist Production cars

Class 5 sadly is now reaping the benefits of the ridiculous Motorsport UK regulations on tax which saw only 2 competitors competing on Saturday – Richard Munnis and James Perry. Richard once again won the class in what he sadly announced would be his last event of the season. Such a shame. Richard has a substantial 16 point lead in the championship over Andy Hawthorne with Davis Buick third. It's possibly too early to confirm but I'd be certain that Richard cannot be beaten in class 5 this season, however due to the unnecessary bureaucracy and expense bestowed upon us by those in charge we will never find out if he can be beaten. A grass roots class, in a grass roots championship for clubmen, being ruined by the need for car tax which does nothing for performance but is just a financial bridge too far. RIP Class 5, it was good knowing you!

Class 6a Modified Cars – Series Production cars 8v

Karl Johnstone took his 6th win of the season in class 6a in his mini. Karl also took the last remaining record held by David Evans as well. Chris Nichol pushed Karl hard but couldn't find the 2.4 secs needed to beat Karl. Gary Milligan returned to the fold and took third a mere 0.19 secs behind Chris Nichol and fourth went to Jonathan Smith in his escort. In terms of the championship Karl has a monstrous 11-point lead over Chris Nichol with Gary Milligan third ahead of David Evans and James Schofield.

Class 6b Modified Cars – Series Production cars 16v

Dessie Martin finally got a class win in his Honda Civic and he set his fastest time in his first run. However, James Lightbody, or “Jimmy” as he prefers to be called, was second and pushed Dessie Hard in his mini finishing a mere 0.37 secs behind Dessie. Andrew Kernohan took a well deserved third in his clio a mere 2.48 secs ahead of Amy Hawthorne who is still finding her feet in her new clio. Amy was getting faster and faster each run and found nearly 3.5 secs over the course of the day as she beat her mum, Nicky. Sadly, Ken Colbert didn't have a good day and didn't make it past first practice, but Ken has vowed to be back again in September. Championship wise Ken leads the class from Dessie Martin, Stephen Colbert and James Lightbody in that order, but with only 3 points between second and fourth its all to play for. Sadly, since this event Jimmy Lightbody had an unfortunate argument with a stone wall at Garron Point Hillclimb in his mini as he was pushing hard. James was completely unhurt and took severe banter abuse from David Evans at the time and he is hopeful that he will be back out again at the next event. Here`s hoping he gets it fixed in time because its been great watching Jimmy and Dessie fighting all season, besides Dessie only goes fast when someone`s pushing him on!!!!

Class 7 Modified Specialist Production Cars 2WD.

Andy Hawthorne once again showed that, despite David Hawthorne's claims, Andy is the fastest Hawthorne!! Class 7 was an epic class all day with good close racing and battles galore up and down the class. Andy took the win by 1.05 secs from Scott McMullan who is driving out of his skin in his new car. Scott beat David Hawthorne by a mere 0.29 secs and Steven Hawthorne was a further 0.83 secs behind David. It was good to see the Boyces back out again in their Dax Honda where Graham took family honours ahead of Craig but sadly it was an unfortunate day for various days for Robbo (aka Ian Robinson, Trevor Roberts and Mark Hewitt who all had various niggles with their respective motors. Interestingly the quote of the day came from a class 7 driver Steven Hawthorne who, completely out of nowhere, during the meal in the restaurant afterwards could be heard over every other conversation in the room saying “he just winged it!!!” obviously this made everyone both curious and laugh but if my memory serves me correctly, its not the sort of story we should publish here lol. Championship wise Scott has a 3 point lead over Steven Hawthorne, with David a further 5 points behind and Andy 6 points behind David. Dropped scores need to be factored in here, as well as marshalling rounds etc so David has a game in hand over Steven and Scott so this will tighten things up but wont be a game changer yet!!!!

Class 8 Sports Libre cars Special Saloons

Class 8 was once again dominated by RSR Escorts and once again Jim Hutchinson was the man to beat in his beautiful example. Jim who is now third OVERALL in the SW Adair Tyres Northern Ireland Sprint Championship took the class win and 15th overall, (but more importantly 6 overall of our championship) in his RSR. Rory Stephens made a welcome return to the championship and assures me he had no campervan or trailer dramas on his recent trip to St Guenno, and Rory took second in class a mere 6.22 secs behind Jim. Obviously, Rory brought some extra special red wine home from France with him as he is getting faster and faster in his RSR as he gets more comfortable in it, which is great to see. Third again went to Richard O`Mahoney in his RSR. Id a great yarn, and no end of banter with Richard senior at the event and he promises some development of the car, which sounds very

interesting indeed. Could Richie be the man to take the lead at the top of class 8 in the future?? Watch this space!!! I was also trying to coax him into allowing Richie Jnr to do a sprint in the RSR But he is reluctant to do so as not even Bill Adair could carry new tyres quickly enough to Richie Jnr in this car. Anyone that's seen him in his escort will agree!!! Championship wise Jim Hutchinson has an 8 point lead over Richie O`Mahoney, with Rory Stephens a further 9 behind Richie and 1 ahead of Patrick Roche, who reportedly will be back again soon in his RSR.

Class 9a Sports Libre cars Saloons and GT`s

Class 9a once again was a class for the Campbells with three quarters of the field and indeed the top 3 all being called Campbell. Garry Campbell, as mentioned in the main report was the fastest Campbell with a 129.82 sec run, which was 1.66 secs faster than second Placed Dan Campbell. Emma Campbell was third 28.32 secs behind Dan and a mere 0.46 secs in front of Jason Frazer. At one point Dan and Garry Campbell went out line astern and one caught the other on their first lap. This lead to a fabulous second lap with Garry behind Dan (I hope that's the right way round) chasing him down which was superb to watch. Those 2 wee Starlets can boogie!! Championship wise Jason and Emma are tied at the top with Dan 3 points behind Emma and Garry 7 points adrift in fourth. Can Dan and Garry improve on their positions this season? With dropped scores to be counted this is going to be an interesting championship battle to watch unfolding.

Class 9b Sports Libre cars closed wheel Racing cars

Class 9b was unusually well supported today with 3 cars out in the class. John Stewart who is more commonly found racing in his Radical PR06 joined Ricky McGimpsey in his new RGM and Sheryl McBride on the time sheets. Sadly Ricky had some issues which meant that he never set a time in the timed runs, but John and Sheryl definitely did. John took the class honours in his car on a 129.82 which saw him 23 overall, whereas Sheryl set a blinding 141.96 to put herself 34th overall. Sheryl is really starting to feel at home in the car and is more relaxed in her driving, this and a few tweeks made to the car on the day seriously helped her out on her climb up the time sheets. Championship wise Sheryl Now has a 25 point lead and therefore is unlikely to be beaten in the class championship this year.

Class 10 Sports libre Cars – small capacity Rally cars

Once again Raymond Johnston was the man to beat in Class 10 in his Mk2 Escort as he took a class win from the hard charging Alan Roddy in his saxo. Once again class 10 was reduced in numbers however hopefully this is a temporary glitch as the main class 10 protagonists all had an excuse for not being here today. Championship wise Alan Roddy further extended his lead at the top over Dermot O`Hagan and Andrew Strain remained third just ahead of Raymond Johnston. Dropped scores will kick in in class 10 soon which will make this class interesting as the season progresses as Dermot has 2 dropped scores and Andrew has not dropped 1 so it will tighten at the top.

Class 11 Sports Libre Cars – large capacity Rally cars

Class 11 was also slightly under powered today with only 2 competitors out – Derek Robinson and Martin Flannigan. As with class 10 some of the other more regular competitors had an excuse not to be out today so we will forgive them just this once!! Derek pushed hard in his sunbeam which he seems to be getting more comfortable in every day but he had no match for Martin Flannigan in his very rapid BMW Compact, which sounded amazing at it left the line. You just cant beat the note of a BMW 6 cylinder at 7000 rpm!! Championship wise Derek has 1 hand on the class title but with Stewart Strain hoping to return he may just wrestle Derek's hand off it, only time will tell!!

Class 12 4WD sports Libre Cars

It was great to see 2 less regular competitors going so well today when both Ryan Murray and Shane Bell came to take on the might that is Oliver Cormican. Sadly, Oliver had another mechanical woe which deprived us of seeing how Oliver would deal with the 2 Subarus however neither Ryan or Shane slackened any in their quest to Show Oliver that they were more than able for him. Ryan won the class with a 128.51 sec run which put him 20th overall and 11th NI Championship man in the overalls and Shane pushed his Subaru hard to get down to a 131.1 which put him 26th overall. The traction these 2 cars have off the line is fantastic although Id hate to be a drive shaft having to balance so much grip against so much power. In terms of the championship Oliver is still miles Infront of the rest but now that Ryan has finally overcome his major mechanical headaches, he could mount a last gasp assault on the title and I cannot wait to see this battle unfold. 1 Thing that I will predict is that the car that wins this class will be 4wd. After that, Im not making any predictions lol.

Class 13 Formula Racing Cars

Once again Henry Campbell was the man to beat in class 13 Today and Henry drove a blinder to pull a 135.73 sec run which put him 30th overall. Second in class went to John Whitley who, as always had a great weekends craic in his Formula Ford. Championship wise Henry Campbell leads the way leads the way from Mike Todd with Stephen Wishart and John Whitley joint in third.

Class 14 small Capacity Racing Cars

As mentioned in the main body class 14 lived up to its usual hype of being a great wee class. Ryan McGimpsey took the win ahead of the hard charging Ethan Faulkner and Brian Fitzmaurice. George Stevenson rounded out the class in fourth in his force PT. A massive shout goes out to regular class 14 competitor Tom Devany who is sadly feeling under the weather at present. Hopefully, we will see Tom back at an event soon, and if your reading this Tom everyone here is thinking of you and wish you well!

Class 15 large Capacity Racing Cars

Class 15 cars were few and far between today for various reasons but it was a quality entry rather than an entry of quantity. Rob Dwane took the class honours, as well as

FTD and event honours in his OMS ahead of Tim Woodside in his Pilbeam. Sadly, Robert McGimpsey had some mechanical issues which meant he was parked up early and didn't manage a timed run. As always, the class 15 cars put on a fabulous show and Tim Woodside was fantastic to watch as he once again mistook his Pilbeam for a mark 2 escort and drove it like an escort in the forests!! Championship wise Rob leads class 10 and the overall Championship, with Tim Woodside second and Steven Gault third.

Class 16a Historic Road Cars

Gerry McGarrity once again was the man to beat in his wee green mini. Gerry only made 1 timed run which was all he needed to take the win and the points. Jago Brett finished second in his beautiful wee Lotus ahead of Bill Blair who has reclaimed his mini after Andrews outing in it in July. Bill took points for second in the class championship as Jago isn't registered. Fourth on the day but points for third went to Mervyn Getty who wrestled the "the big girl" (his MGB Sebring) round slightly quicker than his main opponent and friend Vincent Rodgers. These 2 fellas are the epitome of the championship as they are the best of friends until the lights go green, then they are each other's biggest opposition before becoming the best of friends again as they cross the finish line.

Class 16b Historic Saloons and Sport scars

With Robert Coulter not competing Trevor McIlroy had a clean run to take his maiden class win in his new car, although he was pushed hard by Arthur Ovens who finished second in his MG Midget. In terms of the class title, Robert Coulter still leads the way.