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moleracing 2018 season – report 2 of 4 – spring update

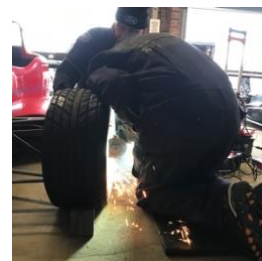
Croft

With Snow forecast all week, this was always going to be an interesting event! However, it was the rain in the end that caused the event to be cancelled before the first timed run was even posted!

A walk of the track the previous evening was very useful as it revealed where the puddle and standing water was, as in the morning with the rain and more water down, it was all wet and these areas of deeper water were not obvious.

Over the winter I had reviewed my wet tyre strategy, and on the basis that when you are not on slicks, an intermediate tyre is perhaps optimum for 80% of the time and a full wet tyre only 20%, so I went for intermediates. However today I could have really used a full wet and the inters were not clearing the water fast enough and I had several moments but was pleased with 2nd fastest overall in practice 1.

Nick Algar, in my 2-litre class started his 'off season preparation' when he unloaded the car to the garage! Numbers changed and wets on it appeared to amount to! And that's when the wheel nut seized and eventually the only way to get it off was to drill and grind it away! The spare also jammed and so he packed it away in the trailer!



Naser, who has helped me develop the aero package on the car over the previous 2 seasons arrived to help, and we softened the car further and adjust bump and rebound to give us the maximum chance of grip. I dropped slightly to 4th overall, which I was still pleased with considering the size of the field and the big V8s in play. We then changed some other areas in preparation for Timed run 1, which considering the conditions, we thought this may be the only run of the day that counted.

However, a road car had a big off in P2, and then Graham Porrett, in the TEGRA V8 shared with Terry Holmes, spun at high speed and brushed the Armco. Not much damage – but scary none the less.

A little later, the Clerk of the Course declared the meeting abandoned on safety grounds. This was disappointing as some good points were on offer, but on reflection later in the afternoon while driving home, a good decision and I felt that I hadn't pushed hard yet and an 'incident' was highly likely when the chips were on the table!



Photo credit: Mixed Bag Photography

Aintree



I hadn't driven Aintree for a few years and this club event fitted the long gap between British rounds and allowed a little practice and keeping familiar with the car.

Pre-event banter on social media the night before made me realise that the gears I had fitted – which allowed a top speed of 140mph were not going to be enough, so when I arrived at 7:15, it was a full ratio change necessitating the rear wing off, central floor, exhaust, anti-roll bars, gear actuation, then the rear casing to get to the ratios. A large hammer was needed as I hadn't changed for a season or two and then a cluster of bits fall out! Figure out what's what with a diagram on the laptop and then rebuild, not forgetting to put the oil in again!



I was never going to win the event with British 'Big V8' runner John Graham there as this is his local event, but I was pleased to come 2nd from some 136 runners and set a new PB. Car all in one piece and an enjoyable day had by all!

Llandow Sprint

In order to keep my eye in and get a bit more practice, I entered a club event at the Welsh circuit of Llandow, just west of Cardiff that I haven't been to for 14 years. 100+ entry, and lots of local experts – well that's my excuse and I'm getting it in early!

The course was run over 1.75 laps and was just over 70 secs long, reaching speeds of 130mph in the tight confines and banks. There were elements of every type of bend and it was a good learning experience, that I intend to repeat and do some more events there. Braking for a 30mph right angled 'bus stop' from 130 could be left as late as 50m before the corner – however, as much as the data showed this, every time I tried to, my head took over control of my right foot and I braked early at around 65m.

It was an enjoyable day and Dave Simms and I pushed each other all day and he came out on top by a few hundredths in the end. A video of my run can be seen here on this link

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UBiZ1TyXbY&t=4s>

Pembrey

The British championship round at Pembrey a few days ago was one to put down in the 'learn from this and don't let it happen again' column. Lesson 1, the new Michelin tyres are softer than Avons, so need constant cleaning to avoid getting too far out of condition, from which they are almost impossible to recover from. Lesson 2, check your car before every event. After a tricky Saturday, which included a backwards spin at around 100mph, I found both upper front hub mounts loose by 10mm, meaning camber went from -3 to +5 degrees as I was driving at up to 140mph! I've also learnt in lesson 3 that with new brake discs at the start of the season, the



front rear balance changes event by event. And finally lesson 4. If your nose tells you there is a strange burning smell, don't ignore it and fob yourself off saying "it's a hot day – must be clutch or brakes", investigate! The fuel pressure sensor leg of the loom was touching an edge of carbon and cut through causing a small fire right next to the high-pressure fuel lines, but the car only ground to a halt and no permanent damage occurred.

So, a 9th place in the run off Saturday and my first missed run off for some 10 years on Sunday despite qualifying for a place, means I've plummeted down the table – but plenty of events to get my act together. Great battles at the top between Heather and Colin in the shared Gould where the daughter came out top of the standings by hundredths each day. Nick Algar nearly broke the long standing 2 litre record set by SBD's Craig Sampson. And we were joined by a new 'big car' an 800bhp V10, 500kgs all up! driven by Stewart Robb snr.



This Saturday we are out at Abingdon – a fun club meeting where I have never won, car is repaired and I'm up for it! **Steve**



Photo credit: Kim Broughton

British Sprint Championship 2018 – After round 3		
Heather Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	37
Colin Calder	3.5 Gould55 Nicholson McLaren	34
John Graham	3.5 Gould55B Nicholson McLaren	29
Steve Broughton,	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	22
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	20
Stewart Robb	5.0 Pilbeam MP88 B-01	19
Chris Jones	1.0 Force TA	16
Nick Algar	1.3T DJ Firehawk	16
Simon Bainbridge	2.5 SBR Chrono V8 TT	15
Graham Blackwell	1.6T Mygale VVTi	11
Terry Holmes	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	10
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	6
Pete Goulding	1.6T Mygale FF200	7
Grahame Harden	1.0 Jedi	3
Chris Bennett	1.0 Force TA	1
Mark Anson	1.0 Jedi Mk1 GSXR	
Steve Brown	1.6 JKS JR01	
Graham Porrett	3.5 Lola Tegra Judd	
Nick Houston	1.0 Jedi Mk 2	
Glynn Sketchley	1.3T Force PT	
Piers Thynne		
Bill Gouldthorpe	1.6 SBD OMS CF08	
Carole Torkington	1.6 SBD OMS CF08	
Jeff Wiltshire		
Paul Horrox	2.1 Juno SSE	
John Louden	1.7 Westfield SE	
Martin Pickles	1.0 Jedi Mk1 GSXR	

British Sprint Championship 2018 – 2 Litre class after round 3		
Steve Broughton,	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	139
Matt Hillam	2.0 SBD Dallara F3 RB01	132
Steve Miles	2.0 Van Diemen RF96mm17	127
Nick Algar	1.3T DJ Firehawk	91
Glynn Sketchley	1.3T Force PT	

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