

The view from the back of the Peter Morgan Memorial Race Meeting 22 May 2016

The morning dawned bright and sunny, rather to my disappointment – some rain might slow everyone else down, never mind I thought.

In the assembly area I was alongside Russell. His car was so loud I couldn't hear Gromit's engine, nor myself think; how does he concentrate? I let him pass me before we had even got onto the circuit proper, as there was no chance of staying in front.

Qualifying was not as terrifying as last time I was there, but still quite hairy with 38 cars out on the circuit; am I getting braver, yes I thought! As Donington is quite long I thought I would have a few laps before those fearsome Class A cars caught me. I was quite surprised when I saw Keith looming in my mirrors towards the end of my second lap. I consoled myself with the thought that the race would be more comfortable.

Pole positions were taken by Tim A and Phil G, and the rear of the grid positions were, as usual, taken by me and Peter R. In discussions with John Bevan about the start, he suggested that he push me into the gravel; he obviously didn't realise there isn't any on that straight – Ha!

Race 1 was great fun. I tried to hang onto John's tail for a while, but he and Mary gradually disappeared and I was left in splendid isolation. Although I enjoyed myself, it would be more fun to have someone to play with in Class E. Tim A took the laurel wreath followed by Henry and Steve Mac. Back of the grid battle was won by Paul B from Malcolm, and Alex Laidlaw won class R – well done Alex!

I don't know what happened in Race 2 (sorry about that you A&B boys) as we were all too busy recounting our experiences of Race 1; where I could have gone faster or what happened to me stuff. Race 2 was won by Keith from Phil G and Russell in third. Billy won Class I.

Race 5 was different for Team Bailey, as I graciously (not!) allowed Chris to drive Gromit. I haven't had the experience of watching before, but of course Chris has. It was very exciting! I was enthralled by the competition Chris had with John and Mary, so much so that I didn't know Tim A had won again, followed by Henry and Tim P. Unfortunately Steve Mac was penalised 10 seconds for a false start. Mary won the back of the grid race ahead of Chris and then John; I was so impressed with Chris! Perhaps I should let him race more often? Hmmmmmmmm.....no

Again I missed Race 6 as we were so excited recounting Race 5. I think it must have been a good one, because Keith started on pole, but finished third behind Phil G and Russell. Billy won class R again, and Elliot took Class B. The Techniques Cup for 4 cylinder cars was won by Brett, with Phill T second.

We then had the new experience of the 'Family Race'. TeamBailey had practised our handover during qualifying; 'we' could do better Chris said. He had to use it as qualifying for his race as well as our qualifying for the FR. We were racing with the Jim Tucker competitors and the Sports v Saloon, so my capacity for confusion was potentially huge. TeamPaterson were on pole, followed the Baines 'Boys', with Chris being in his first Morgan race. We were at the back, following Bellingers, Carters and Houses.

A new experience and really good fun; I recommend it, and would love to do it again. With the pit stops there appeared to be battles all over the circuit. At one point Chris was dicing with the Baines and House cars.

TeamPaterson crossed the line first followed by TeamBellinger, who won the JimTucker trophy. TeamPaterson also won the FR on handicap. Amazingly TeamBailey were second – we like handicap races!!

A most enjoyable and fun time was had by all I think, certainly by TeamBailey. Thanks to all the organisers, and volunteers/workers on the day; we really do appreciate it. Sorry we cannot make Silverstone, but I am already looking forward to TyCroes.

Michele Bailey
24 May 2016