

A Sunny Day at Silverstone.

Bentley Drivers' Club race meeting 6th August – a report by Bob Bull

Once again the Bentley Drivers Club laid on a superb meeting run under glorious sunshine, and with all of the usual ingredients. Lack of officialdom, friendly atmosphere, good grids and close racing.

Race two on the program was the AR Motorsport Morgan Challenge race and the field contained many of the regular contenders. Well all those that had found their way back from Anglesey.

Making one of his rare appearances was Oliver Bryant with his well known Plus 8 as used by Dad Bryant, and not surprisingly set it on pole, him being a quick lad in a very quick car, while Will Plant was also making a rare visit in a car used by his Dad, was another quick boy in a quick car, lining up in third spot with the ever present Keith Ahlers in between. Russell Paterson, Tony Hirst, Ed Mercer, and Elliott Paterson were close behind.

Thirty four cars lined up for the start making a colourful spectacle especially in the sparkling sunshine, and with the impressive roar of the big V8's dominating they all rushed off to Copse Corner for the first lap. Ollie lead across the line with Keith determined not to let the blue car get away and Will hanging on in third, and so it went for the 19 laps. Slowly Bryant eked out a slender advantage over the Ahlers' V8 by a fraction of a second a lap stretching to 12 seconds at the finish while Keith slowly fell into the clutches of Will Plant who from a deficit of 4 seconds was never more than a few feet behind over the last five laps, however, Mr Ahlers is too experienced to let a young whippersnapper get the better of him. The gap at the chequered flag a mere 0.542 seconds though.

Behind this trio there was action aplenty although Russell Paterson held a somewhat lonely fourth spot ahead of an equally untroubled Philip Goddard, but then we had Elliot Paterson, Andrew Thompson, Tony Hirst and Ed Mercer unclear of just who should be next. Eventually Paterson Junior established youth at the head of affairs, the quartet providing the dice of the race.

Tim Parsons won Class 'R' in 12th and Steve McDonald took bragging rights in Class 'C' by beating the diminutive Tim Ayres by 0.112 seconds. Phil Tisdall had been at the party until his +8 expired after 12 laps, joining John Emberson and Ian Sumner in the dead car park. John had been involved in a hectic struggle with Elliot prior to the Roadster crying enough.

John Henry Williams won Class 'D' in a creditable 16th spot leaving many (potentially) faster Morgans behind in the process, while Kelvin Laidlaw took Class 'I' honours, and Chris Bailey acted as red light but still claimed the Class 'E' silverware.

Not amongst the prizewinners Craig Hamilton-Smith drove well getting better all the time, my Driver of The Race.

All-in-all a most enjoyable event as Morgans both look and sound like proper cars with the drivers visibly working the wheel, so unlike modern Formula 1bolides and their spaceman occupants.

Out of the cars it was noticeable that baggy shorts were popular amongst the men thus displaying a fine line in calves, while the ladies looked spiffy as always.

On a slightly sour note - James Gilbert had kindly brought along a copy of the latest MOG magazine for me that featured my pictures from the MG Live meeting, however, this mysteriously disappeared from my car during the meeting.