

## Snetterton Saturday 9 April 2016 –

### The Facts as observed by Bob Bull

After a long Winter break the competitors for the 2016 Morgan Aero Challenge series gathered at a cold and wet circuit set in the bleak Norfolk countryside, at a place called Snetterton. Not all of the usual suspects were there, however, the cast list included several names not familiar to your scribe, so a nice mix of cars and colour schemes took to the track for two rounds of the Challenge. Qualifying was wet and the field was not as settled as one might have expected, many of the more powerful Class A cars did not care too much for the conditions, and so on pole position was a Class 'B' Roadster with young Elliot Patterson demonstrating mastery of the slippery bits, as he recorded the fastest time. One Class A machine that did not mind the rain quite so much was the Red Plus 8 of Russell Paterson who seemed pleased to be upstaged by his 'kid'. Andrew Bentley put his Class 'D' + 4 on the second row ahead of Tony Lees' Plus 8.

Young Elliot, who looks very much like a figment of J K Rowling's imagination, toddled off into the distance looking perfectly at home in the miserable conditions, while Father Paterson (paternal not religious) appeared equally comfortable, albeit some distance further back, with the depressing outlook. No doubt coming from way beyond 'Oop Norf' they are well used to such weather, as I believe it is compulsory in Crieff.

Behind the Scottish duo the rest of the field had different opinions on what constitutes 'racing'. Andrew Bentley, and Tony Lees preferred to do it alone keeping well apart, while behind Williams H, and Parsons T were less than half a second apart at the flag, and Tim Ayres, Tony Hirst, Simon Baines, and Phill Thomas were covered by less than two seconds as they crossed the line. The rest you can read about on Mary's web site - - well if you care that is. On the opening lap John Milbank was a little too enthusiastic over the kerbs and thus found himself all over himself in the middle of the pack, to the consternation of those following behind. Chief sufferer was Andrew Thompson who had nowhere to go and pitted at the end of the lap with a damaged car and a severe case of cramp in his leg! I did not realise that driving a Morgan can make you limp.

Peter Rafter also pitted to have a bent car straightened out before resuming to finish last at two laps, but this was better than John Emberson who "Missed my braking point and slid into the Armco, damaging a wheel." A call at the pits resulted in Techniques guru, Brian Gateson advising retirement, but he was probably glad of the business. Jeremy Knight was another retiree on the first lap, but I did not manage to discover the reason, however, he was seen kneeling beside his Plus 8 between races, either praying or seeking a good excuse in the cockpit. I know not which. To avoid litigation I should mention that Michele Bailey won her class, and finished a lap ahead of Compo Rafter who was in a Plus 8. Wow!

Race two was not dissimilar to the first attempt though run on a relatively dry track, even so Kid Patterson once again was untroubled in the lead while Russell halved the gap to his errant son, but then he did have a lot more cc's to play with. The difference in grip was emphasised by Tony Lees' Plus 8 overcoming Andrew Bentley's mere 2.2 +4, though not by very much. Phil Goddard also liked the conditions a lot better making his way up from 13<sup>th</sup> on the grid to an eventual 5<sup>th</sup> spot, pipping Henry Williams' little 4/4 (1600cc) by just 0.018 of a second. Tony Hirst came home alone next up, but Simon Baines and Phill Thomas had only the proverbial fag paper between them in as close a finish you could hope for.

One of the most striking features of both races was the battles between Stuart Anderson and Peter Cole which, lasted throughout the day. Watching from the Revett Straight the additional speed of Bumble was

obvious as it pulled a gap over Peter's Roadster, however, come the bent bits and the black and yellow car was constantly hustled by the silver and yellow one. Great stuff.

Kathy Sherry and Sharlie Goddard were another squabbling pair with only fractions between them at the end.

Standing alongside the straight the sound of the Mogs at full beans was awe inspiring especially when V8 swept past +4. Very impressive.

The prize giving was un-exciting in the main; however, the last award made certainly caused most people to perk up. I did not hear precisely what the criteria were for nominations were, but the number of names mentioned read like the cast list of Star Wars. It seems that the recipient of the bottle of bubbly had extremely big ba...! Er. Was well endowed in the nether regi....! Oh! How can I put it?

Ah! Mucho cojones?

Quotes;

Tim Ayres: It was wet!

Michele Bailey: I wish I was a duck.

Russell Paterson: I'm so chuffed with the lad

I would like to make it quite clear that neither, Simon or Kathy Sherry said anything whatsoever of any note, particularly regarding financial matters, repair bills or companies set up in Panama.

I was not supposed to write a report for this meeting but merely to stand around in pouring rain taking pictures. Having heard that Michele was going to write something I felt it my duty to record events on track. After all who cares what colour lipstick Katy was wearing, and didn't Catherine's hair look nice? This is a man's world. Isn't it?

Missing in action: Mary, Jack, Billy, Keith, Alan, John. Sorely missed.