

Snetterton Saturday 9 April 2016 – the gossip

A new race season saw the Morgan racers arriving in force for the pre race day testing on the Friday. Not having had my car on the track for six months I arrived bright and early to line up in collecting area at 9.00 am sharp. Unfortunately the East Anglian weather did not co operate and the bright early morning had turned to a thick mist and practice was delayed for an hour and then the rest of the day was fine.

By late afternoon many had arrived either to test or just to unload and socialize. Largely the same faces and cars as last year but a few changes.

The factory Aero Racing had teamed up with Wolverhampton College who had a large number of students to support Craig Hamilton – Smith and Tony Hirst. Looking very professional in matching jackets they even had the interlocking tile flooring in their tent. Having survived his first race at the very wet Brands last year, driving the factory MMC car, Craig has moved on to a Morgan Babydoll (painted in a rather nice blue and white – perhaps the colours of his favourite soccer team ?). I assured Craig that East Anglia is generally dry and the weather would not be anything like Brands last year !! Tony was fresh from his acting on the West End stage – a ‘limited run’ neatly timed to finish in time for the start of the racing season.

From a distance Stuart Anderson’s car (Bumble) looked unchanged in its lively black and yellow colours but I then noticed it had ‘lost a door’ and morphed into a new Morgan ARV6. Malcolm Dearnley (a face from long ago) appeared from the far north in his green 1965 4/4. In conversation he reminded me that I had sold him some wheels – it must have been about 40 years ago.

The second oldest car on the grid was the 1959 +4 driven by Andrew Bentley. (Barry Sumner’s Black Sheep 1953 +4 was the oldest – but with a few changes from 1953 original spec !) For those who don’t know Andrew, a brief google helps explain what happened later. From his website -

‘A passion for speed, control and accuracy has always been the driving force in everything I do.’

A few ‘hitches’. One car was towed in after testing and detailed analysis decided – it had run out of fuel. Cant tell you who or I wont get the future gossip. Barry Sumner was seen towing his car around the paddock just prior to official practice, and repairs involved giving it a hefty kick, but it worked and finished both races. Phill Thomas had his helmet confiscated at scrutineering as he had self- fitted the HANS clips (there is some confusion as to whether this is allowed). He borrowed a helmet from Richard Thorne and had a great race with Richard taking some of the credit for his ‘go faster’ helmet.

So – I will leave one of Mary’s other scribes to report on race day although I do have a heading. Instead of ‘Rain sorts out the men from the boys’ it would be ‘Rain sorts out the boy from the men (and women)’

Leigh Sebba