

Brands Hatch 29th May 2017 - A view from the other side of the Armco...

By Simon Scott

Having now returned to the other side of the Armco barriers after my exploits in Classes E and R, this was my first meeting as a Morgan spectator/groupie! Must admit It was great to catch up with "the gang" at Brands. And I was very impressed by the racing. I am not convinced it was always that exciting from inside the cockpit but maybe my memory is already fading!

The Morgan racing comprised one race for Classes C, D, E and R, another for A, B and H and a combined race at the end of the day. Interesting cars to be seen in the pits were Russell Patterson in 99OK (Matthew Wurr¹'s immaculately prepared former car), Simon O-G in his new ARV6 resplendent in the same livery as his former Class R car and John Bevan making his first tentative steps in "my" beloved Roadster, S6 LWT.

I know from my own experience that, with the Class A and B cars out of the way, the chance for an overall race victory is something that excites Class C and R runners in particular, so the first race was always going to be something to watch. It did not disappoint! Jack Bellinger and Mary Lindsay had a hum-dinger until Jack unfairly gained a weight advantage by jettisoning his rear number plate! Brought back memories for me of a memorable dice with Mary at Assen. Kelvin Laidlaw would have been proud of son Alex chasing down and passing Peter Cole. And John Bevan seemed to be having great fun at the back in my old car. Up front, that smoked salmon man named Tim Parsons was as impressive as ever, taunting Phil Tisdall by backing off in the drizzle before driving off into the distance again to win.

In the "other" race Dominic House seemed to have held off the challenge of Simon O-G until an off track moment exiting Paddock Hill. Greg Parnell in his roofless Aero fought hard with Craig H-S in the factory car, whilst Tony Hirst on the other side of the factory garage was an early retirement with mechanical gremlins. Roger Whiteside and Tony Lees seemed to be enjoying themselves, dicing hard whilst Russell Paterson and the fast starting Phil Goddard vainly chased Keith Ahlers who looked comfortable up front, securing another outright race victory. Slightly bizarrely, the last time I had seen Keith was in March, about half an hour before the start of the Australian Grand Prix in Melbourne, when we both happened to be standing a few feet apart whilst watching the air displays! Small world

The combined race provided an excellent spectacle, making up for the reduced numbers entered for the meeting. With Keith non starting, Phil Goddard nipped into an early lead with Russell chasing him down, before spinning and re-joining at Druids. Unbeknown to Russell, he need not have chased as hard as Phil was

adjudged to have jumped the start and was handed a 10 second penalty which even allowed Paterson junior through into second place - making it a very happy conclusion for all those from Revolutions... reward for a very long journey down from Scotland. Further back, Tom Dailey, my old sparring partner from Class E, had an impressive race in his Class H car, passing Jack Bellinger and Peter Cole with daring moves at Paddock Hill before losing the place again by being too kind to the leaders when they rocketed past. Simon O-G was obviously having a difficult time getting to grips with his new steed, almost spinning exiting Clearways one lap before pirouetting in the same place on the final tour. In the midst of all this excitement, there was also a handicap race which always baffles competitors and spectators. All I can report is that someone won and probably has no idea how or why! But my hearty congratulations go out to that skilled driver!

I hope all my erstwhile racing rivals continue to have a great season. I will watch out for the results with great interest!

Simon Scott