

Snetterton 29 September 2018

A report by Michele Bailey

Well, there I was alongside Philip Goddard on the start line at Snetterton! I needed to concentrate to get my very best SpeedMog start, which was proving difficult as all I could hear was the roar of the Plus 8 next to me.....

But back to the beginning. The day dawned bright and clear, and we had to scrape the ice off the windscreen before leaving for the circuit. My sandals and cropped trousers were not such a good idea. We arrived at the circuit to find everyone wrapped up in hats and coats as they prepared the cars for the final races of the season. As the sun rose higher so did the temperature, fortunately. However I still needed some extra layers under my race suit to keep warm as we would be the first out on circuit.

30 cars lined up in the assembly area for our 20 minutes, which seemed to go smoothly for all, despite the low sun at various points around the circuit. Keith was on pole with Philip G alongside. Behind them were Andrew and Dominic, followed by Simon OG and Phill Thomas. Leigh appeared to have abandoned the Back of the Grid Club, which was made up of a quartet of white/ivory cars; me and Richard Fearn at the back, with Alan and John Richards in front of us.

The final race of the season was also the Championship decider; all 4 contenders were close together on the grid, with Brett and Tim P alongside each other on row 5, and Tony just in front of them.

The race proved to be challenging from the start to the finish. Simon OG just made the first corner before engine problems put him out. Poor Andrew hit Philip G and finished his race very quickly; a combination of Andrew's excellent start (following his foray out at the Club Sprint a few weeks earlier) and Philip G missing a gear change. The start is always interesting at Snetterton, as everyone charges down to Riches whilst jostling for position, before the hairpin at Wilson. It is definitely safer at the back of the grid. Alan started from the pitlane as a result of the bonnets not being fastened, so I had plenty of room in front and got off to a good start ahead of both Alan and Richard, although they regained their places relatively quickly.

Keith's engine blew around lap 6 depositing oil on the racing line round Coram. It caught most people, some of whom spun twice. Chris Springall had just overtaken me, and did well to hold onto his car. The race was flagged early and the results were:

1st Philip G also winning class A

2nd Dominic also winning class G

3rd Phill Thomas also winning class J

Other class winners were

Tim Parsons - R

Brett - D

Tony - S

Tim Ayres - C

Sharlie - H and

Ian - E

Driver of the day was Peter Cole.

This meant that Tim Parsons won the Challenge, and Tony had the most points – well done both of you.

Our second race was a pit stop race on handicap. It was a mixture of 1 and 2 drivers. The second drivers had qualified with the Sprites; other than Chris who does race Gromit sometimes and Alex Laidlaw who has raced the roadster, it was an opportunity for drivers to become accustomed to their steed for the race.

Those who had raced in the Challenge race had to start the race and, there I was alongside Philip Goddard - on the start line at Snetterton! I have no idea how it was worked out, but it was interesting to say the least. We had four starts, from a waved Union Jack, separated by 100 seconds. Philip and I were in splendid isolation at the back. Welcome to my world Philip! On pole was Barry and Jack, alongside the Houses, followed by the Richards family car, and Ian . He was followed by the Rafter/Rivers car, and the Sebba/Sargeant car with Paul Bryan behind them.

I did concentrate very hard and got a good start ahead of Philip, probably something to do with how much harder it is to get a Plus 8 off the start line. After a couple of seconds Phil roared past and I was in splendid isolation at the back. We had agreed that I would stop as soon as the pit lane opened, and we managed a pretty good changeover with the help of Iain Leviston - thank you Iain.

I adjourned to the pitwall to watch the proceedings. It was exciting to watch although I had no idea who was winning. Andrew was scything through the field, as was Philip G. Phill Thomas appeared to be having a good race, as was Peter Cole, and the Laidlaws.

The results on scratch were:

- 1st Andrew
- 2nd Philip G
- 3rd Phill Thomas

The results on handicap were:

- 1st Andrew
- 2nd Peter Cole
- 3rd the Laidlaws

Drivers of the day which went to the Rafter/Rivers combo.

Thank you to Katy for organising this for us – it was a hoot and very enjoyable.

I am already looking forward to 2019!

Michele Bailey 1 October 2018