

# A Holiday Abroad –Rounds 6 and 7 of the Aero Challenge.

Spa Francorchamps 22<sup>nd</sup> – 25<sup>th</sup> June

## A Report by Bob Bull

With summer upon us, and the sun shining what better time to take a break and get away from it all - in Belgium?

Clearly this was what the lads and lassie of the Aero Challenge thought as they gathered at Spa for two rounds of the Championship, with a race on Saturday, and after a night's debauchery, another on the Sunday. Well that was the plan, but for one poor soul it did not quite work out that way, as Alan House suffered a bad case of incontinence, and left a trail of oil behind his aged Plus 4, causing a deal of consternation to those following him in Friday practice. The end of his weekend as far as the Challenge went, another unfortunate was Simon Orebi Gann who found his dog had died! Oops! That should read engine had died (silly me). One wonders about the standard of preparation of some of these drivers, as Tim Parsons found his engine would not rev properly. Fancy travelling all the way to some foreign country to race and not have a car capable of doing so. The mind boggles.

Things did improve just a little come the first race for while House the Elder remained for the duration of the weekend, pitbound, and SOG had a reoccurrence of his dying do ... engine, Tim at least had discovered his missing RPM for the race.

While Ollie Bryant ran away at the front of affairs his position vis a vis points was/is unclear as far as your scribe is aware, but Roger Whiteside found his V8 the ideal chariot for the fast Spa Francorchamps circuit and lead home the rest of the field clinching Class 'A' in the process. Tony Lees came next in his Class 'B' Morgan, and House the Junior kept him honest by finishing just over a second in arrears (Class 'G') A fine effort.

John Emberson a Spa specialist took 'B'. Difficult not to, being the sole entrant! Simon Baines took fifth place with Thomas P, and Parsons T next along, then came Peter Sargeant, Jack Bellinger, Tim Ayres, Brett Syndercombe, Tony Hirst, and Craig Hamilton-Smith all in a tightly packed bunch taking the flag with less than six seconds between them. At one point they went three abreast up the notorious Eau Rouge terrifying the BHM man somewhat.

Simon Sherry pipped a dozy Leigh Sebba by a whisker (ask Leigh if you want an explanation), Simon OG (presumably handicapped by his expiring engine), Greg Parnell, Richard Fohl, Peter Rafter (going faster), Richard Thorne, plus James Sumner filled up a few spaces, while Paul Bryant beat the interloper, Mike Bell, making a welcome appearance in his FIA spec car.

Other names in the results were S Lockett, C Springall, S Goddard, I Sumner, P Goddard (?), and B Sumner.

The surprisingly lowly position of Phillip is explained by his having becoming embroiled with a Crossle in this mixed series race, and required a pit stop to replace two wheels, meaning a starting position for race two rather further from the front than he is used to.

During the race Mr Emberson found that he had mislaid one of his gears, and managed with what was left in the box, Mr Ayres used U Tube to learn his way around Spa, and given Phil Thomas's habit of posting videos of his own progress on the site, Tim might pick up a few pointers for next time.

Richard Fohl ticked the circuit of his bucket list! Having travelled from the US of A he must have a pretty big bucket. Simon Sherry while not alone in 'exceeding track limits' was the only one penalised, having 15 seconds added to his time. I wonder who he upset?

Race 2 or Round 7 if you prefer.

One has heard of a, so called, barbecue being enjoyed during the evening of Saturday, but with the race starting at an early hour AM, one wonders how much sleep was lost, as the contestants retired to their hotel room, luxury motor home, sleeping bag, or hedge for the night.

Father Bryant had taken over driving duties from son Ollie, and duly romped home ahead of all the other Morgans. Roger Whiteside again took Class 'A' (we assume) while Phillip Goddard managed to thrust his similar car into second place from the back of the grid. A fine effort. Tony Lees duplicated his race one feat, this time ahead of John Emberson, Dominic House, Simon Baines, Phil Thomas, Simon O G, and Tim Parsons completing the top ten. Greg Parnell eked out a slim margin to Tony Hirst, Tim Ayres, Peter Sargeant, Brett Syndercombe, Craig Hamilton-Smith, and Jack Bellinger, all of whom hated to be parted from the others, so finished in a tight knit bunch. Well one would not like to be all alone in the wilds of the Ardennes Forest.

Simon Sherry, Paul Bryan, Steve Lockett, and Leigh Sebba clearly subscribed to the same view of sticking together, finishing within five seconds of each other. James Sumner braved the wolves and trolls out on his own, before Peter Rafter – yes! Peter Rafter took the flag well ahead of Chris Springall, Mike Bell, Sharlie Goddard, Ian Sumner, Richard Fohl and Richard Thorne. OK! The two Richards had only managed 4 laps each, but even so, 23<sup>rd</sup> out of 29 is quite a shock result. Almost on a par with England beating Panama in the Footie Championship thingy.

While this report has been compiled from the result sheets, I must praise the input of my undercover agent for much of the detail contained in this article. Naturally I will protect my source, as befits any good journalist, so please do not attempt to discover his name.

Donington is reachable without need for a passport, so I hope to be present in person next time out to ensure continuity of coverage of events in the Morgan Aero Challenge.

While I intend to protect my source until death, if anyone wants to sue me over the facts of the case, I will gladly give them his full name, date of birth, address, and will be happy to stand up in court and place all the blame on him.

Bob Bull.