

VSCC SPRING START – SILVERSTONE 14 April 2019 Back of the Grid Report

Welcome the to the first Challenge race of the new season, with the VSCC at Silverstone, on a bitterly cold day.

We had arrived on Saturday in time to sign on and have Gromit scrutineered, by Ian Patton, fellow Morgan owner and one time SpeedMog competitor. Other Challenge competitors had the same idea, and there were a number of cars already parked up in our garages when we left.

Chris had been working on Gromit over the winter break and had, rather nobly for him, suggested that I do both races – every cloud as they say.

We arrived in good time on Sunday, with the sun shining and the temperature obstinately remaining very low. The fireproof race underwear and the race overalls were good at keeping the frostbite away, but does anyone else find they seem to operate together like Velcro?

We lined up for qualifying with 32 cars, and had 15 minutes to get back into the groove. Keith was on pole, followed by Roger and Philip Goddard, then Andrew T and Andy G. I was firmly at the back, being the only car in Class E. Tom Richards, Peter R (in his pretty red car), Sarge and Paul Bryan were in front. The rest were all in the middle.

Race 1 was interesting! There were a few 'offs' and plenty of pirouetting, and a number of non-finishes. Brett lost his fan belt, which I think I did see on the circuit, and Paul had a cylinder issue. John and Tony L also failed to finish, some more serious than others.

Max had a wobbly moment at the Brooklands complex, a bit in front of me, but managed to hold it, despite going off, and Chris held on to a very wobbly moment, also at Brooklands. He was close, having just over taken me and I was relieved to get passed him with no contact.

I think Keith lead from start to finish and chalked up his 100th win, quite an achievement and well done Keith. Philip G was 2nd and Roger 3rd. There were good battles all down the field – apart from me. The Racing Wolves were continually scrapping; John M, Simon (Baron) Baines and Richard Plant, pursued by Phill T appeared to be enjoying themselves; Greg and Peter C had a race; Jack and Sharlie did too; also Simon S and Kelvin, and then Peter R and Sarge.

Class wins went to:

| | |
|---|-----------------------|
| C | Philip Tisdall |
| D | Jack Bellinger |
| E | me (what a surprise!) |
| H | Richard Plant |
| G | Andrew T |
| J | Andy Green |
| R | Tim Parsons |
| S | Tony Hirst |

Race 2 – still freezing. Other than John M, the non-finishers in race 1 were all starting and consequently were behind me on the start line; I had no doubt not for long. Although I had a good start, (getting past Richard Fearn) Brett, Paul and Tony L all shot passed me before the first corner.

Again there were lots of 'races' throughout the field, which must have been fun for the spectators to watch. The Racing Wolves were separated by less than 3 100ths of a second at the end, with Tony just pipping Craig. Andrew T, John E and Andy Green were only separated by 6 seconds, and it looked like a close race from where I was between Max, Richard P, Philip G, Baron Baines and Phill T. Chris S and Steve L were close behind Peter C. Peter R, Sharlie, Kelvin and Sarge were another race within a race, as were Richard F and John R.

Some very close racing and no incidents or accidents! A credit to the Challenge series drivers.

Keith took another race and Class win, with Roger second and Andrew T third.

Class winners were:

| | |
|---|----------------|
| C | Philip Tisdall |
| D | Brett |
| E | me |
| G | Andrew T |
| H | Richard P |
| J | Andy Green |
| R | Tim Parsons |
| S | Tony Hirst. |

A great start to the season despite the cold. At least the sun was shining.....

Michele Bailey
23 April 2019