

BDC 2020 Back of the grid R2

Although showing as Michele Bailey driving Gromit (car #50) it was me, Chris instead! Since the grid layout from the results of R1 didn't have me shown we decided I would race as Michele rather than turn up in the assembly area, only to be sent back to the paddock as I wasn't on the list. This was the only issue with socially distanced racing and not wanting to visit the organisers.

I thought they had got it wrong anyway and they'd positioned me at the front of the grid as I was surrounded by Philip 'The Commander' St Clair Tisdall, Ollie Bryant, Sharlie Goddard, John Millbank and Mark Butterworth (a new name to me but in a +8 so clearly at the wrong end of the grid). Ultimately Philip didn't start as he'd been unable to resolve some electrical issues and Ollie was now in the hot seat vacated by Bryant Senior.

However I was also at the rear of our usual close company; John Bevan, Richard Fearn and Tony Kilby (both also 'newbies' in Clubsports) and looking forward to some non-socially distanced racing!

What a cracking start Gromit! Whilst the more powerful "mis-positioned" cars tore past, I followed Bret's line and got past John and Richard. Alongside Tony through Copse, it was only his inside line into Maggotts that kept him ahead. For 4 laps and until we started to get lapped I was in hot pursuit of the brown Clubsport. It was only spotting an opportunity as Tony was getting lapped ahead of me that I was also able to take a tighter line and get past coming out of Woodcote and onto the pit straight (I think it was). Then it was his turn to chase! I managed to pull out a bit of a gap but that was easily absorbed as I slowed occasionally during the following 10 laps to permit the faster classes to lap unhindered, at one point indicating and nearly allowing Tony through as well (good job his car is a noticeable colour)! There's no doubt about it, racing can be exciting – even at the back of the grid! That's especially true when you win your own race.

To me, this is what Morgan racing is all about. Gromit performed faultlessly in 3 races that day (2 Challenge races and the Techniques Trophy) on a tight budget in the standard 'back of the grid' class. Hey, Tony, John and our car were also driven to and from the event! It's easy to see why sometimes the drivers who normally start up at the front of the grid want to come and have more fun and play at the back.

Chris Bailey