

Morgan Challenge at Mallory Park 24th September

A Day at The Races. VSCC Style. (A True Record of Who Done What by Robert Bull)

The penultimate round of the Morgan Aero Challenge was run at Mallory Park as part of the VSCC's Bob Gerard Memorial Trophies Meeting, and a sparse 18 cars turned up for the 20 minute race.

Russell Patterson was the sole Class 'A' car present, and was anxious to take not just the class, but also the outright win. To this effect he put his bright red Plus 8 on pole by over six tenths of a second, ahead of Elliott, Andrew and Tony in class 'B' machinery. Before the race the elder Scot was busy concentrating on his task, endeavouring to get his race head on, as he pondered the start where he opined that he would probably be beaten of the line by the 'B' Boys and end up in fourth place at the first corner.

Come the start and despite his gloomy prognostications he out dragged his lad and all of the rest to lead the way, steadily building a comfortable margin to the rest before the chequered table cloth was waved. Behind, grid order was maintained with young Patterson ahead of Andrew Thompson, Tony Lees and Shane Kelly standing in for TV star Tony Hirst. Nothing could separate the four until the Balvenie logoed ARV6 mysteriously disappeared for a short while. Despite the attention of two eagle eyed snappers any diversion from the straight and narrow was not observed, so one is left to wonder. As it worked out the remaining trio continued to circulate in close order, but with overtaking opportunities being limited nothing changed before the end of events, although over the last couple of laps Andrew made every effort to find a chink in the Champion elect's armour, but to no avail. Mind you the sight of such a frail, bespectacled young lad being bullied by the 'big kids' was disturbing to the onlooker.

Behind the trio Phil Thomas and Craig Hamilton-Smith played with their dollies all by themselves with Phil constantly pestered by Craig who wanted to be the first driver in a BabyDoll (No! No! He was not wearing pyjamas, what sort of mind do you have?) The proverbial sheet of Bronco could not be fitted between them at the finish, with Dominic House a lonely 7th having no one to play with. Stuart Anderson bumbled his way around for eighth spot, having spent most of his time badgered by Tim Parsons paler yellow model before a recovering Shane Kelly interposed the works ARV6 in between making Stuarts job a little easier. Our 'entry followed behind for a Class 'D' win beating sole 'C' entry, the indefatigable Tim Ayres, neither bothered by competition. Greg Parnell used the speed of his Aero 8 to defeat a persistent Peter Cole, who only just scraped home before Alex Laidlaw. Yet another sheet of unwanted Bronco.

Paul Bryan, Michele Bailey, and John 'Mr' Bevan completed the field, with all starters finishing what they started.

There is little doubt that Morgans fit nicely into a vintage scene, and provided some close and colourful action, let's hope that the association continues next season.

Next up is Snetterton, and one wonders if more of the 'challengers' might turn up for a final blast before packing things away for the winter, well that is if they are not gracing the Birkett with their presence.

It was nice to see former Champion, Richard Plant visiting driving a rather stunning Austin Healey that I remembered seeing in it's hey day driven by David Shale.

One of the more interesting sights in the paddock was Michele Bailey apparently knitting a new crash helmet for Chris, although tea and chocolate pot spring to mind.

The usual prize giving ceremony saw the usual multiplicity of pots handed out, and everyone getting to kiss Katy even her husband. Such public displays of marital affection are rare in these less mannered times.

A pictorial record of events described here will be displayed on a public forum before long.