

## The Supposed Happenings at Oulton Park, Saturday May 18<sup>th</sup>. 2019.

Being a report prepared from eye witness accounts by someone who should know better

As Oulton Park is such a long way from the outward boundaries of the known world, I judged it prudent to send a cub reporter to the VSCC meeting rather than risk the dangers of the long and arduous journey to Cheshire myself. Therefore this account of the vicissitudes suffered by those drivers intrepid enough to enter for the Aero Challenge, is compiled from the versions of events by individuals who were actually present. (Well those who claimed to have been there in person)

It will come as no surprise to here that a mere twenty competitors were prepared to make the effort to compete in the two rounds of the Aero Challenge on offer although some apparently had good reason other than common sense not to be there.

Qualifying saw Keith Ahlers annex pole position for race one ahead of perennial challenger Philip Goddard, and the rapidly improving Roger Whiteside all, of course, in Class 'A' V8's, while it was almost inevitable that Andrew Thompson would plant his ARV6 next to Roger on row two. Sadly James Sumner damaged his Moggie in qualifying too seriously to repair in time to race, however, the lad himself was unhurt to every ones delight.

Once underway Philip took an early lead ahead of Keith as he often does from the start, but his moment of glory lasted less than two laps before normal procedure was established. Roger held down third with Andrew a lonely fourth. Excitement was provided by Kelvin Laidlaw and Chris Springall who duelled over 12<sup>th</sup> spot before Chris paid an unplanned visit to the Armco, retiring from the rest of the day's proceedings. How serious is the damage has not been revealed to date. The MMC pair, Club Sport mounted, fought an internecine battle for class honours and sixth place, as Simon Baines had a firm grasp on 5<sup>th</sup>. position. Not with standing Tony crossing the line first the class went to Craig, as Mr Hirst had gained an unfair advantage by jumping the start. To say 'jumped the star' maybe a tad harsh, as it was only a very small movement, but it was enough for a ten second penalty to be added to his time, sufficient for C Hamilton-Smith to win the class. Well cheats never prosper they say.

Phill Thomas came along next a whole second ahead of Uncle Jack Bellinger, and Brett Syndercombe completed the top ten. Steve Lockett, Kelvin Laidlaw, Sharlie Goddard, Peter Sargeant, John Richards, Peter Cole, Paul Bryan, someone in a pretty red cart, and Richard Fearn all saw the chequered flag. Sharlie could not quite overcome Kelvin being only 0.300 in arrears, but the rest left a respectable margin between themselves. As they should of course.

I suppose for the sake of completeness I should provide a mention of the second Morgan race although the finishing order was almost a replica of the first. Ahlers/Goddard/Whiteside/Thompson/Baines, all as before, and it was left to Tony Hirst to change things by not making a bog of his starting procedure, and thus holding off a charging CH-S to finish 6<sup>th</sup>. Craig a frustrating 0.69 of a second behind Tony. It can't be long before Mr Hirst has to jump a few more starts if he wants to remain Team Leader. The same lack of imagination persisted with Phill Thomas in front of Jack Bellinger/Brett Syndercombe/ Steve Locke ... whoa! It was Kelvin Laidlaw next, where was Steve? Broken brakes had brought about his demise it seems. Then came Sharlie .... Ooops! Where was the good lady? A non-starter it appears so it was Peter Sargeant promoted to 12<sup>th</sup> spot. (Note to self; don't get complacent.) So everybody else moved up a couple of places without the bother of having to pass anybody which is the easiest way to improve one's position.

Oulton Park provided joy for some, but gloom for others, we hope that the damaged cars are swiftly back and ready for action at Mallory Park next month, but those class winners who had three runners in their division garnered the maximum points score, but Peter Cole being sole Class 'R' starter, scored badly with only the consolation of another beer mug to add to his collection.

Steve Lockett was adjudged 'Driver of the Race' for his efforts in race one, although apart from winning Class 'C' (sole entrant as it happens), it is hard to see why he should have been picked out from the herd, probably on the basis of Braggins Turn. Race two also had a 'Driver of the Race' award and it was Richards the Younger, who earned a bottle of alcoholic beverage for his efforts, but Dad probably sequestered it before they got home. You should not encourage drunkenness in the young – now should you?

As an aside from the main story of the day, I note from a perusal of the official results sheets that the age old question of is the Pretty Red Car getting faster, is still undecided. The aged conductor had a faster race time in the first outing, which might suggest that he suffered from fatigue in the second, but his fastest lap was achieved in race two. Confusing eh? Even more confusing is that his quickest circulation happened on his last of the day. Maybe a trip to the conveniences was required, and in some haste.

The compiler of this report makes no claims as to the veracity, or completeness of events as described, and any litigation should be directed to the original eye witnesses. Should anyone publish this account of the Aero Challenge Rounds at Oulton Park they do so at their own peril.

A N Other.  
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