

Strata 21 BCV8 Championship
RACE REPORT ROUND 9.
750 MC Brands Hatch Race Meeting
29th July 2007

Strangely, two of the twenty four entries did not appear. Mysteriously, both Paul Sibley and newcomer Babak Farsain failed to show. Qualifying appeared to be largely routine.

However, poor John Hutson suffered terminal engine failure that left him stranded out on the circuit, which after being recovered John could head off home, early. Of the others, it was 'Birthday boy' Rob Muir seemed to be the worst trouble with over heating (the car not Rob, I think!). Eventually traced to a core plug that had blown out due to the fan belt working loose on the water pump that also eventually caused the cylinder head to crack

..... Brakes were the most obvious area of attention with the other drivers notably Mike Breedon and Andy Young both running the heavier GTs (V8 and C). Mike cured his with the help from 'Up North Racing' while Andy took the drastic alternative by upgrading his callipers and that would move him up a class.

Adrian Beer topped the sheet but was disappointed that he had no one to play with. Phil Walker was pleased with recent changes to his car that put him within a second of Joe. Andrew Riley's form also showed good improvement that meant the big winged cars were all together. Not as close, however, as Class B that saw four cars separated by half a second or seven by a second! It looked promising for the race.

Further back Bob Luff was again alone in Class AB but race sponsor and reigning champion, Rob Muir was on the 'bubble' and equaled his time. Richard McKeon put his BGT second in class ahead of Ken Deamer with Ian Longhurst just pipping Terry Savory.

All was not over however, as Babak Farsain arrived at lunchtime having been seriously delayed en route. Paul Atkinson, Babak's mentor for the day, quickly strode into action. It was suggested that they talk to the Clerk of the Course, who very kindly agreed to let him 'qualify' by doing three laps between the races (Babak having tested on the Friday).

This was a wonderful gesture by the 750 MC team and was hugely appreciated by the drivers. Come the race, well there were two! Well, put it this way it put a new meaning on 'sprint' race.

The first race did not last a mere lap! Poor Ian Longhurst (no capitals this time, Ian) went wide at Paddock, then sideways into the gravel and gently rolled over, fortunately coming to rest on his wheels. Red flag one. Ian was shaken but otherwise unhurt the car had a few reshaped panels. If anyone was 'relieved' by being given a second crack it was Joe Parrington who had made a disastrous start and was languishing back in sixth place and Tom Jones who appeared to make contact in the 'scrum' as they headed into Paddock and had also slipped back a place or so. Conversely, Ian Prior had made a 'blinder' and had passed Brian Cakebread into second in Class B.

However, come the rerun, everyone got away cleanly. Adrian took the lead from Joe with Piers Townsend and Phil Walker who was not so quick away. Andy Young got the jump

on Andrew Riley while the Class B boys had Russell McCarthy, Tom Jones, Mike Harris and Ian Prior all tied together with the proverbial short piece of string. Ian had also made a blinding start and had passed both Peter Samuels and Brian Cakebread. Running next but, again, without a discernable gap between them was the pair of V8GTs of Barry Holmes and Mike Breedon and then Max Cawthorn.

Driving like a man inspired, Rob Muir was next up and Class A leader having squeezed past Bob Luff's FIA car while Richard McKeon was second ahead of Ken Deamer from Terry Savory and Babak Fasain.

The next two laps were very much status quo except Phil had passed Piers and Babak passed Terry on lap 2. Unfortunately, the second red flag appeared after Mike Harris clobbered the tyre wall at Clearways having gone wide. Mike was OK, car slightly bent.

There were hopes of a third chance as the drivers were kept up in the pit area but this transpired it was due to congestion with the next race traffic. No third chance and results declared as per the SSRs after two laps. A long day for not a lot. Looking back, I was told there were six red flags on the Saturday and there were three more before lunch. Lost count in the afternoon!

Brands Bits

'Up North Racing' lost the bonnet to No. 78 just a few miles from home but did not realize until they were several hundred miles away. Two telephone calls later had the original bonnet recovered by Andy, while the Beers bought along a spare.

Bob Luff provided Bars Leeks to Rob Muir that enabled him to win his class. The rescue potion came from Bob's 'miracle bag' that is similar in capacity to the Tardis (Mike Harris has seen a front wing in there! Ummmm....) So pleased was Rob that he 'insisted' that Bob had another piece of his birthday cake! Poor Mike Harris has a reminder of the car's condition before the shunt as it featured on the cover of Safety Fast! leading a gaggle of Class B cars.

Brian Halford