

Ingliston

Charnell's double

CELEBRATING his appointment as boss of the new Mogil Motors branch in Dumfries, Tony Charnell won two races at Ingliston on Sunday in the Mogil Brabham and Lola. A surprised John Calvert won the featured special saloons final after Douglas Niven and Bill Dryden both retired.

MODSPORTS - 10 laps

In a hectic practice for the first race in the Calor Transport Trophy meeting, John Abсалom had three spins in the Ginetta and one lap substantially under his own class record. He led away from the line, with Mike Nugent's Elan and Ken Allen's Clan Crusader close behind.

Dave Morton's Elan began to challenge the Clan, and moved into third place on lap two but by then the two leaders were well ahead. Norrie Galbraith retired his hill-climbs Ginetta on that lap, since it was showing signs of repeating its practice trick of running big-ends.

The leaders started lapping tail-enders by lap five, and in the traffic Nugent closed again on Abсалom. A spin at Caravan dropped Morton several places, although he soon fought his way back again. On lap seven the pressure was off Abсалom, as Nugent's engine started pouring out smoke at the hairpin and he retired the Elan to the pits.

Ken Allen set a new 1150cc class record as he raced along in a lonely second place overall, and Alex Souter just took third before slowing worryingly at the line, much to the discomfiture of Tom Irvine, whose Sprite was right behind.

1. J. Abсалom (1.8 Ginetta G4) 9m 01.3s (67.87 mph); 2. K. Allen (1.0 Clan Crusader); 3. A. Souter (1.6 Lotus Elan); 4. D. Morton (1.6 Lotus Elan).
Fastest lap up to 1150cc: Allen, 55.6s (66.69 mph) new class record. Fastest lap over 1150 cc: Abсалom and Nugent, 53.0s (69.96 mph).

SPECIAL SALOONS under 1000cc - 10 laps

Sedric Bell showed first-time visitor Alex Clacher the way round in practice for the first heat of the Calor Transport Trophy race. They were within a tenth of a second of each other after three laps, when Clacher's Imp dropped its sum plug and both lost interest in further practice, since the oil was spread round several hundred yards of circuit.

At the flag Clacher made a superb take-off from the "wrong" side of the front row, and with both cars screaming their hearts out, it was the Imp which used its better traction to head the Allen-engined Mini into the Esses first-time. John Fyda's Imp was close behind, and the three leaders spent the first three laps in a confident, high-speed blast round the circuit. Bell had the situation weighed up, however, and with plenty of experience of the tight Ingliston course, made the classic inside-line-at-the-hairpin move on lap four. Imp and Mini were side-by-side through the corner, and Bell snatched the lead at the exit.

The oil fogs came out at the grandstand after a Mini retired in sore straits, but Fyda was now aiming at Clacher, whose engine was perhaps losing a little of its edge. On lap eight Fyda pounced at the hairpin just as Bell had done, took second place, then locked up at the Leffthander, went sliding up the escape road, and regained the circuit down in fourth.

The impact was so ferocious that practically no mechanical part of the Imp finished still connected to its neighbour, and the forlorn-looking car was shovelled back to the pits with its entrails hanging out.

1. S. Bell (1.0 Allen Mini) 9m 29.1s (65.16 mph); 2. A. Clacher (1.0 Imp); 3. D. Fisher (1.0 Imp); 4. I. Forrest (1.0 Imp).
Fastest lap: Bell, 54.8s (67.66 mph).

FORMULA FORD - 10 laps

The start of the Rothmans Championship FF round was a curious business. Stuart Lawson's Belmont Garage Hawke and Duncan Hall's similar car should have shared the front row; but Hall's car retired to the pits after the warming-up lap, while Lawson departed very late. From the start, the lead was taken by Kenny Gray, the winner of the 1973 SA Formula Ford championship and of a Driver to Europe award. His Van Diemen was three seconds up at the end of the first lap, and was never pressed.

Behind, John MacGilvray's Crossle held second place throughout, but Wilson's Elden, MacLean's Highland Racing Team MRE and Morrison's Crossle had a good mid-race scrap for third, which was finally taken by MacLean. Lawson tore through the backmarkers after his delayed start, but a locking front brake was no help, and he had to settle for fifth.

1. K. Gray (1.6 Van Diemen RT74-Scholar) 9m 15.7s (66.73 mph); 2. J. MacGilvray (1.6 Crossle 74F); 3. C. MacLean (1.6 MRE 73F); 4. A. Wilson (1.6 Elden Mk 8).
Fastest lap: Lawson (Hawke DL11-Scholar), 53.9s (68.79 mph).

SPECIAL SALOONS over 1000cc - 10 laps

The second Calor Transport Trophy heat brought out the saloons everybody had been waiting for. After a troubled practice, Douglas Niven's Border Reivers V8 Escort and Bill Dryden's SMT Firenza were on the front row for another chapter of their perennial battle. Tony Sugden and John Calvert had their more conventional Escorts on the second row.

Jimmy Veitch's Cooper S was pushed off the grid with a ruined clutch, but everybody else got away well, with Niven powering the big Escort into the Esses ahead of the Firenza. A few seconds later, one of the downfield Minis spun in the middle of the Esses, and the tail-enders scattered like buckshot, with no ill-effects.

Horsepower and aerodynamics have not always been enough to keep the V8 Escort in the lead, but this time it didn't seem to miss a beat as it led the Firenza in the usual dash between two drivers who know each other well. Niven soon got about a second's daylight between him and Dryden, and looked secure in the lead, even as they began to lap slower cars after four miles! On lap seven the Vauxhall engine seemed to falter at Caravan, and the gap widened some more. The fuel-system trouble that has dogged it since Mallory Park last month was clearly striking again. Sugden had led Calvert for the first two laps, but Calvert moved ahead on lap three, and the order stayed the same till the end, with John Myerscough's Thomas Motors Escort TC leading Jim Dryden's Cooper S for fifth place.

1. D. Niven (5.7 Ford Escort-V8) 8m 57.9s (68.93 mph); 2. W. Dryden (2.3 Vauxhall Firenza); 3. J. Calvert (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA); 4. T. Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort-BDE).

Fastest lap under 1300cc: E. Smith (1.3 Cooper S), 56.2s (65.98 mph).
Fastest lap over 1300cc: Niven, 52.7s (70.36 mph) new class record.

SPECIAL GT, SPORTS and CLUBMANS - 10 laps

Just as the modsports races at Ingliston are a benefit for John Abсалom, so the Hartley White GT and sports car championship revolves round Tony Charnell. This time his Mogil Motors Lola was 1.5s ahead after practice, with no machinery in the field to challenge it closely. Tony blasted off ahead of John Abсалom and Eddie Labinjoh in the Fisher Spyder.

Now back with British Leyland power, the Fisher seemed to take a bit of a flyer from the second row. 1.8-litres of modsports Ginetta and 1.1-litres of sports car Fisher were very well matched, and Abсалom just managed to keep ahead throughout, although sometimes pressed very hard indeed, while Charnell's Lola disappeared over the horizon, lapping in under 50s for the first time.

Alastair Mackintosh, the SMRC chairman, took advantage of the changed regulations to race his FF Mallock with racing tyres and safeguards, and had a dice throughout with Peter McNaughtan's similar but regular-Clubmans car. Mackintosh took McNaughtan for fourth on lap two, and they stayed in that order till lap nine, when Peter tried for the inside at the hairpin.

The two cars touched, McNaughtan's was nudged onto the grass and spun out of the race. One lap before, at the same place, John Baird's Mallock had got out of shape leaving the hairpin just in front of Ken Allen in the Russell McIntosh Clan. Ken was forced to skid up right over the top of the Mallock, and neither car survived the shunt in raceable condition.

1. T. Charnell (1.6 Lola T212) 8m 42.1s (71.02 mph); 2. J. Abсалom (1.8 Ginetta G4); 3. E. Labinjoh (1.1 Fisher Spyder); 4. A. Mackintosh (1.6 Mallock Mk 2).
Fastest lap under 1150cc: Labinjoh, 52.4s (70.76 mph).
Fastest lap over 1150cc: Charnell, 49.8s (74.46 mph).

FORMULE LIBRE - 15 laps

Sponsored by the owners of Ingliston showground, the libre event was the majestically named Royal Highland and Agricultural Society Trophy Race, which also counted for the BP Super Visco Championship. Leaping into the Mogil Motors Brabham BT38, Tony Charnell went out to share the front row with outright lap record holder Tommy Reid in the Irish Racing Cars BT38/40. The grid should have been enlivened by a new arrival, the Scott on the racing scene, an ex-Peter Gethin F5000 McLaren for Bob Leckie. However, it non-started after breaking the crown wheel and pinion in Saturday practice.

Tommy Reid did 46.6s in practice, half a second outside his own track record, which the damp atmosphere seemed to place out of harm's way during the actual race. Tony Charnell was on 47.2s, the same as Iain McLaren in the second row, after discovering a boxful of jumbled Croft and Ingliston gears. At the start, it was Charnell who shot into the lead, expecting all the way to the Esses to be overtaken by Reid. But Tommy had seemed slightly hesitant at the start, and the Irish Brabham was second into the Esses.

A tremendous dice was expected, and that is just what followed. Capable of a faster lap, although the two leaders set exactly the same figure during the race, Reid tigered away behind, but simply couldn't press Charnell into taking a slacker line. The two cars were only lengths apart for most of the race, but Tony had spent much of the libre event at the April meeting watching Tommy's line, and knew what to expect. On lap 9 he suddenly had a panic stir-around for gears at the hairpin, and Reid closed tight up.

Reid was his usual unmatchable self through Arena, but Charnell had the edge to the Esses as one of the best libre dices at Ingliston for three or four years continued. On lap 13, knowing there was never going to be space on the inside, Reid suddenly tried the outside line at the hairpin; but this is rarely possible and he dropped back.

Charnell was so delighted at taking his first single-seater win on jumped out of the car waving to the crowd in the two Brabhams crossed the line a fifth of a second apart.

Iain McLaren's Rondel Motul kept a good third place throughout despite a lower rev-limit. Like one or two other drivers, Iain realised only part of the way through that the race had been extended from its "economy" ten laps to the usual fifteen. A practice misfuel that

suddenly cured itself was traced to the fuel pump and the car gave no trouble in the race itself.

1. T. Charnell (2.0 Brabham BT38) 12m 11.4s (76.05 mph); 2. T. Reid (2.0 Brabham BT38/40); 3. I. McLaren (2.0 Rondel Motul); 4. J. Baird (1.8 Ford Escort-BDE).
Fastest lap: Charnell and Reid, 47.6s (77.90 mph).

SPECIAL SALOONS - 15 laps

The final of the Calor Transport Trophy Race brought out the best special saloons from the three capacity classes. The scene was set for another grand Niven/Dryden dice, but mechanical troubles intervened for both. From the line it was Niven followed by Dryden, with Calvert, Sugden, Bell and Clacher behind.

All the way round the first lap the two leaders were only feet apart, but a fully-sorted and reliable V8 takes some holding, even if the SMT Vauxhall seems to have the better of the braking.

The battle continued in its expected course till lap four when Niven came round on his own and Dryden was seen crawling the Firenza to the pits to retire. Afterwards, the fuel-fed trouble was at long last tracked down, after weeks during which almost the whole fuel system including the tank had been changed to a plastic grade in the pump whose keyway had melted under the heat.

Niven was now out of sight in the lead, with Calvert and Sugden scrapping closely over the next few laps for second place. Sedric Bell closed up on this pair with Alex Clacher close behind, and it was then that Bell set a new 1150cc class record. Suddenly on lap ten Niven's car broke a rear wishbone going into the Esses, and amid a flurry of yellow flags the race leader slithered to a halt. On the same lap Sugden dropped back, and the order became Calvert by 4s from Bell, with Sugden piling on the coals to get back in front of the MRE. He was closing right up through the Esses on lap 12 when Bell uncharacteristically lost the place and crumpled into the Armco. Calvert slowed a little towards the end of the final lap, but won without being pressed from Sugden, Clacher and Jim Dryden; a finishing order on which there would certainly have been no bets before the start of the race.

1. J. Calvert (1.8 Ford Escort-BDA) 13m 57.1s (66.44 mph); 2. T. Sugden (1.8 Ford Escort-BDE); 3. S. Bell (1.0 Imp); 4. J. Dryden (1.3 Longman Cooper S).
Fastest lap under 1000cc: Bell, 54.4s (68.16 mph) new class record.
Fastest lap 1000-1300cc: Dryden, 56.4s (65.74 mph).
Fastest lap over 1300cc: Niven, 52.8s (70.23 mph).

PRODUCTION SALOONS - 10 laps

Eddie Labinjoh in Jack Fisher's Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV was on pole for the second round of the Ziebart championship, with Graham Birrell alongside in the Halesfield Motors ex-works Hunter GLS. Jennifer Birrell in the SMT Firenza and Bob Leckie's Roy Thomson Avenger GT were on row two, and there was no chance of any competition outside this group, especially as Hugh Chalmer's Avenger Tiger, although not accepted for points or prize money, was to have been included to make up the thin field, but was a victim of some confusion at scrutineering.

The left-hand front row berth at Ingliston is handy for the first real corner at the Esses, and Graham Birrell went up there dead level with Eddie Labinjoh, clearly expecting Eddie to back off at the psychological moment. In fact, Eddie did no such thing but screwed up his nerves and determinedly stuck to the right-hand line in a way that nobody has done there for years. As the two cars went absolutely side-by-side into the left-right kink, it was Graham who had to stab at the brakes, lifting the Hunter onto three wheels in the process.

When the dust had settled, Labinjoh was clear away, with Birrell a couple of seconds behind unable to do anything about it. The Alfa's 1st shows up well on this circuit, but any thoughts of pursuit were stifled when the Hunter went out on lap four with a half-shaft gone after a touch against the kerb at the hairpin. Next time, in an effort to improve the handling, the Hunter will be running with its front Avons at 45 pounds pressure!

Labinjoh won as he pleased, with Jennifer Birrell finishing 10 seconds down in the car which Andrew Cowan is to drive in the Tour of Britain. Bob Leckie stayed close behind in third.

R.F.

1. E. Labinjoh (Alfa Romeo 2000 GTV) 11m 07.2s (65.58 mph); 2. J. Birrell (Vauxhall Firenza); 3. R. Leckie (Hillman Avenger GT); 4. A. Smith (Suzuki Racer).
Fastest lap up to 1,249 cc: Leckie, 66.2s (65.68 mph).
Fastest lap over 1,249 cc: Labinjoh, 65.2s (66.87 mph).

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