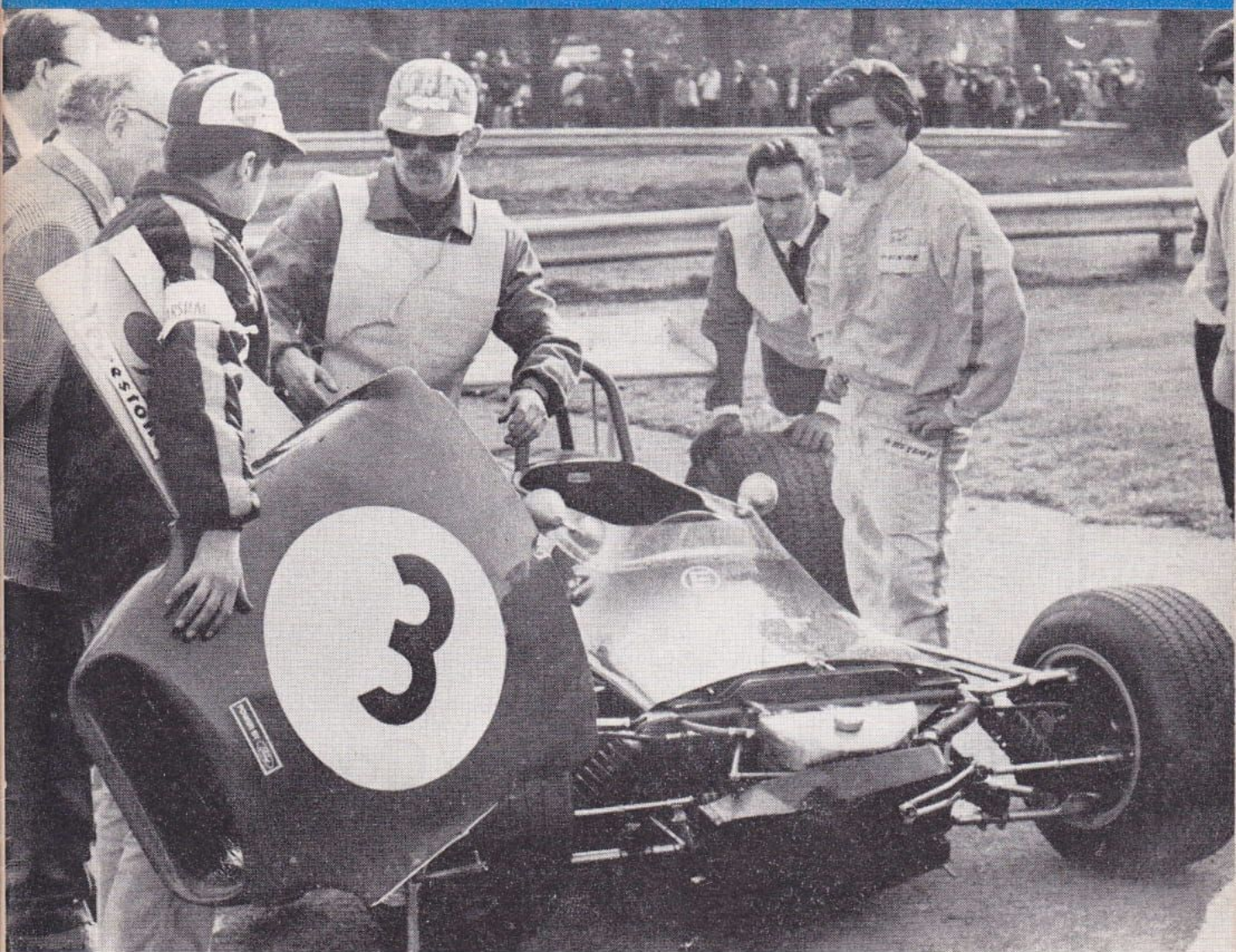




ECURIE ECOSSE

News From The Mews

The Official Journal of Ecurie Ecosse Association Ltd



This sort of thing can happen when trying to pass a wily driver at Ingliston. Tommy Reid is not amused at the sight of his Brabham BT30.

Photo: The Scotsman.

GRAHAM BIRRELL WINS THREE

ALASTAIR BALFOUR

If ever a race meeting belonged to one man, the Burmah Trophy meeting at Ingliston on May 16 belonged to Graham Birrell. Not only did he win three out of the four races for which he was entered, but he smashed two class lap records and came within 0.1 secs. of the outright circuit record—in a GT car!

A disappointingly small crowd of 9,250 turned out for what promised to be an excellent afternoon's racing, with entries from the DART team of two Chevron B19's, the Wiggins Teape Chevrolet Camaro for Brian Muir and Alex Poole's turbocharged 1810 c.c. Complan Mini to whet the appetite. Perhaps the weather, which produced a fall of rain before racing started but cleared away to sunshine for the rest of the meeting, had something to do with this.

Graham Birrell's winning afternoon started with the second event, the Gold Leaf Trophy Race for special GT's, etc. Incidentally the sponsor for this race shows how Scotcircuits are managing to attract the top names in motor racing to take an interest in Ingliston—it is to be hoped they get better support in future from spectators.

Graham's partner for the two DART-entered Chevron B19's—the first time these immensely fast machines have been seen north of the border—was supposed to be John Miles, but neither he nor his car turned up. The only other entrants who looked like giving the Chevrons anything approaching a close race, Dave Farnell's new Lola 210 and Derek McMahon's Royale RP10 failed to start.

Consequently it was no real surprise when Birrell rushed away from the rest of the field, and pro-

ceeded to lap everyone with consummate ease, finishing a lap and a half ahead of Geoff Temple's original Chevron B1 and Eddie Labinjoh's Fisher GT. The presence of the B19 was greatly appreciated and it is to be hoped that Denys Dobbie, the Perth businessman behind the Dobbie Automobile Racing Team, as DART stands for, repeats the visit.

Graham's next triumph came in the Formula Libre event when the B19 showed the F2 dicers what it was all about to come home a good seven seconds ahead of Tommy Reid's Brabham BT30 for the Adam Wyllie Memorial Trophy. In the process he came within 0.1 secs. of Reid's outright circuit lap record of 48.7 seconds.

However, it wasn't as easy as all that. Brian Cullen's BT30 led the field away followed by Reid, Birrell and an abnormally quiet Brian Nelson, last year's Callands Trophy Champion who was suffering from a lack of horses on this occasion. Willie Forbes came charging into the picture at the Hairpin on Lap 1, where he collided with the Chevron and punctured a tyre, causing his retirement.

Birrell was obviously not happy about lying third, and he set about the two Irish drivers with a vengeance, taking Reid under braking for the Hairpin and closing on Cullen. Both circulated in very close company until lap 13 when there was yet another incident at the Hairpin from which Birrell emerged in the lead and Cullen in third place behind Reid. Cullen was not happy about this and immediately tabled a protest against Birrell which was rejected by the stewards.

As if this excitement wasn't

enough, the next race for the Burmah Trophy involved the Camaro and a quick change by Graham from the Chevron to the Wyllie Escort RS1600, the latter now sporting a new Brian Hart-tuned BDA motor which is poking out a remarkable number of horses, probably approaching the 240 mark.

The results of this were soon evident as the Camaro, driven by Brian "Yogi" Muir who holds the current saloon car lap record at Ingliston with the same car, leapt away from the start with the Escort alongside, not giving an inch. However, the Camaro's extra 3,400 c.c. eventually told and Muir just managed to shut Birrell out in the scramble for Bankers'. Behind came Mrs Jenny Birrell in the Wyllie 1970 c.c. Escort TC, Bill Dryden's SMT Viva GT and John MacGilvray's Anglia.

The rest of the race was simply sensational. Graham tore round glued to the tail of the Camaro, and Muir could do nothing about it despite throwing the big car round as it had never been treated before. The Escort nearly matched the Camaro for power and excelled on roadholding, both screaming past the grandstand absolutely flat-out. Something had to give and it was

the Camaro which locked up its brakes at the Hairpin on lap 5 to let Graham slip past. Not only past, but the Escort proceeded to pull away to a six-second lead by the finish setting up a new class lap record of 55.2 secs., 1.2 secs. faster than Muir's old record.

Behind all this excitement Jenny Birrell and Bill Dryden fought it out for third place, eventually finishing in that order. Poor Alec Poole in the Complan Mini was suffering from a sticking throttle, but after a pit stop to cure the trouble he pulled up through the field to finish fifth behind Dryden.

Graham's last race of the day, the saloons final for the Hartley Whyte Championship, was also the one he didn't win. This time a determined Muir put the Camaro firmly in the lead and refused to be harried by Birrell who repeated his tactics of snapping at the American car's heels. Just two seconds separated them at the end of 15 laps, and another 1 sec. behind followed Alec Poole, his Complan Mini now going properly. Jenny's Escort repeated its dice with Bill Dryden, the Viva winning this one when one of the Escort's rear tyres slowly deflated in the last two laps.

SOUTH OF THE BORDER (continued)

and older Jaguar fans. The immaculate ex-team D-type, RSF 302, owned by Neil Corner, was prominent among the potent machinery, but the meeting was marred by the needless dispute over what can only be described as "a technicality". The race was a duel between Corner's D-Type and Gordon Lee in the ex-Archie Scott-Brown Lister Jaguar. Lee started in pole position and during the opening laps they each had their turn in the lead, but the D-

Type gradually pulled away and once again Neil Corner took the chequered flag. Unfortunately the D-Type was a substitution for a Birdcage Maserati. Due to the fact that this substitution was only agreed to verbally—and not in writing — Corner was disqualified and Lee placed in first position and the recipient of the prize. However, the winner on the road and the moral victor remains Neil Corner as far as all those present were concerned.