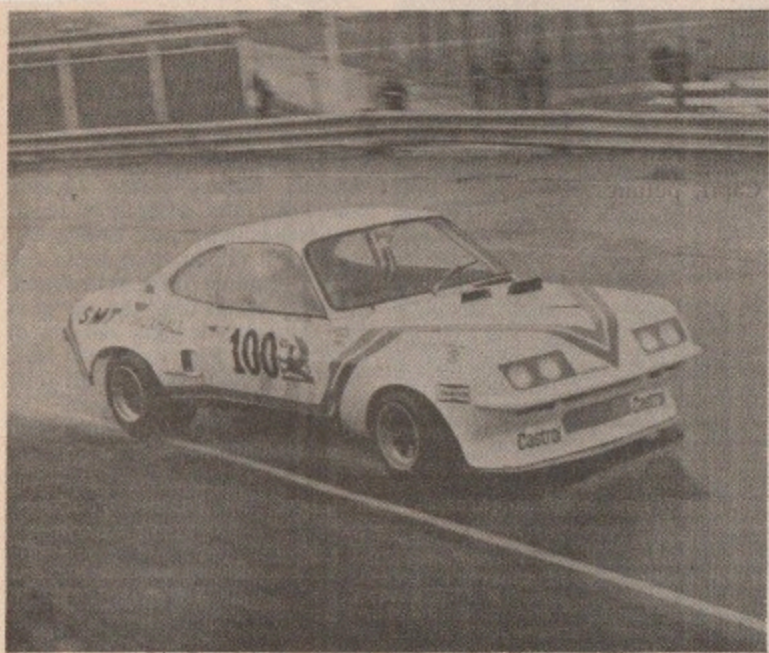




BILL DRYDEN slithers the SMT Firenza a final farewell win.

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Bill quits while ahead

SCOTTISH MRC's Ritchies/Croall and Croall Trophy meeting at Ingliston on Sunday managed at various times to be both dismal and bewildering. Norman Dickson won the Formule Libre race, and Bill Dryden was astonished to win the SMT special saloon final, his own farewell to the circuits.

George Franchitti in Stuart Lawson's PRS tore off into the lead in the opening Formula Ford race. On a damp circuit, though, some midfield drivers lost the place as they manoeuvred for the Esses. Two cars touched, one slewed across to the inside of the track, and in the bomb-burst attempts at getting out of the way Ken Shade's Royale, Jimmy Patrick's Hawke, Robin Simpson's Crosslé and Graham Millar's Dunlon hurtled over the outside verge, to come to rest in various sorry attitudes. Meanwhile, late

entrant Eric Horsburgh in a Tiga took over the lead at the hairpin on lap two, and held it to the end on a treacherous surface.

Douglas Niven's Border Reivers VW-Chevrolet should have been on pole for the special saloon race, with Walter Robertson's S. G. Baker DFVW alongside. However, the Beetle succumbed to the wet on its warm-up laps and started from the back. It was the DFVW which led away, but Bill Dryden in the hastily dusted-down SMT Firenza moved ahead on the first lap as more rain swept across

the circuit, thankful for the set of wet rear tyre's he'd been loaned by Laurence Jacobsen from the latter's Chevron. Niven's stop-start progress forced him to be four laps down at the end, and the DFVW petered out with battery trouble on lap five.

Andy Smith led from the line in the Clubmans race, but was passed into the Esses by John Mackie — who was docked 10 secs for a jumped start — and Jim Stevenson. By lap two, Stevenson was in the lead from John Barr, and the Mallocks stayed like that for the rest of the race, although Barr was almost alongside, and spectacularly out of shape, as they crossed the line.

Jim McGauchay's Imp led all the way in drizzly conditions in the special saloons under 1000cc. Ricky Gauld's MacRitchie Imp from pole position was second away, but slid off at Caravan on the opening lap and was punted out of the race by a car behind.

The Shell championship FF round saw Dave Duffield's Crosslé take off in the lead on a drier circuit. He led from Roy Low's Hawke until lap 10, when Low, under intense pressure from Tom Brown (Van Diemen), spun down to fourth place at Lefthander. Brown was then closely pursued by Keith Lawrence's Van Diemen, and when Duffield dropped to third place with one lap to go, these two had a furious battle all the way around Arena, with Brown all but losing it at the line.

Clive Reeve's Clubmans-B Mallock was on pole for the long-delayed modsports race, and got away ahead of Brian Stevenson in the Bardene Davrian and John Fyda, who fozzled his start in the Agra Elan. John blasted past into his familiar lead halfway round the first lap, Stevenson held second place, Reeves faded to fifth, and Angus Young's Agra Davrian took nine laps to force a way past Duncan Hall's immaculate Europa for third.

The Dicksons of Perth libre race had an optimistic entry list which included Eddie Cheever, Brian

Henton and Kim Mather, none of whom materialised. Cheever's place in the F1 Surtees was taken by Graham Hamilton. Iain McLaren non-started his McLaren M26 after a gust of wind helped him into, along and over the Armco in practice, slightly injuring a spectator.

With a £1000 prize fund from his own company on offer, Norman Dickson (March) won this 30-lap race without any real opposition. However, Andrew Jeffrey (Chevron) made a peach of a start to lead the field away, until Dickson took over on the back straight. Graham Hamilton's Surtees held back Bernie Hunter's Atlantic Ralt until Bernie positively muscled through at the start of lap ten.

Several sets of wet tyres were in poor shape on a drying track, and the Surtees in particular fared badly, being passed at the hairpin on lap 16 by Jim Stevenson's newly acquired F2 March, before being abandoned to the pits four laps later. Dickson called at the pits with one lap to go to complain about his tyres, and was unceremoniously bundled out again. Some drivers were shown the chequered flag on their 31st lap, and Norman himself didn't seem to be given confirmation of the cessation of hostilities until what looked like his 32nd.

It was quite clear that Hans Andersen wrote the scenario for the special saloon SMT Trophy race. Bill Dryden found himself on pole position alongside Ian Forrest's Imp, with Douglas Niven on row eight and Walter Robertson sidelined with a damaged clutch. As the flag dropped, Bill showed he hadn't lost his old touch with the Firenza's double gear-box arrangement, contriving to start in neutral. Forrest made the best of it to lead for the first lap, but the Firenza hit the front on lap two, ahead of Bill Thomson and Jim McGauchay in Imps, with Forrest dropping to fourth. Niven's car was still off-form. He dislodged the front bodywork taking to the grass to avoid another car having

an adventure at Caravan, and soon after that the whole nose cone flew off, giving spectators an unusually intimate view of Douglas's lower extremities!

Halfway through, the rain started sheeting down again, and somebody dropped oil at Lefthander. Being on slicks this time, Dryden started driving very gingerly indeed. McGauchay's Imp made up hand over fist, but on what was probably his last race lap ever, wrong tyres or no wrong tyres, there was no way that Bill Dryden was going to give up his lead. He held on by inches, and one of the real gentlemen of Scottish motorsport bowed out with a very popular win.

R. F.

Formula Ford — 10 laps: 1, E. Horsburgh (Tiga), 11m 03.4s (55.89mph); 2, G. Franchitti (PRS); 3, P. Jamieson (Hawke DL12); 4, A. Cromar (March 708). Fastest lap: Horsburgh, 65.0s (57.05mph).

Special saloons over 1000cc — 10 laps: 1, W. Dryden (2.5 Firenza Ecosse), 10m 29.4s (58.91mph); 2, I. Forrest (1.3 Drameville Imp); 3, J. Pinkerton (1.3 Cooper S); 4, A. Littlejohn (1.3 Cooper S). Fastest lap under 1300 cc: Forrest, 62.0s (59.81 mph). Fastest lap over 1300cc: Dryden, 61.8s (60.00 mph).

Clubmans — 10 laps: 1, J. Stevenson (1.7 Mallock 20B), 9m 53.7s (62.46mph); 2, J. Barr (1.6 Mallock 19); 3, J. Mackie (1.7 Mallock 18BW); 4, A. Smith (1.6 Mallock 20B). Fastest lap: Stevenson and Barr, 57.9s (64.04 mph).

Special saloons under 1000cc — 10 laps: 1, J. McGauchay (Hillman Imp), 10m 43.9s (57.59mph); 2, W. Thomson (ATS Imp); 3, G. Coghill (CG Imp); 4, E. Buchan (Hillman Imp). Fastest lap: Thomson, 62.8s (59.04 mph).

Formula Ford — 12 laps: 1, T. Brown (Van Diemen RF78), 11m 18.1s (65.52mph); 2, K. Lawrence (Van Diemen RF79); 3, D. Duffield (Crosslé 32F); 4, R. Low (Hawke DL19B). Fastest lap: Lawrence, 53.8s (68.92mph).

Modsports — 10 laps: 1, J. Fyda (1.9 Agra Elan), 10m 19.4s (59.86mph); 2, B. Stevenson (1.1 Davrian VIIA); 3, A. Young (1.1 Agra Davrian); 4, D. Hall (1.6 Lotus Europa). Fastest lap under 1300cc: Stevenson, 60.6s (61.29mph). Fastest lap over 1300cc: Fyda, 60.4s (61.39mph).

Formule Libre — 30 laps: 1, N. Dickson (2.0 March 792), 26m 17.4s (70.52mph); 2, B. Hunter (1.6 Ralt RT1); 3, A. Jeffrey (1.6 Chevron B49); 4, J. Stevenson (2.0 March 782). Fastest lap: Dickson, 50.9s (72.85mph). Fastest Atlantic lap: Hunter, 51.3s (72.28 mph).

Special saloons — 15 laps: 1, W. Dryden (2.5 Firenza Ecosse), 15m 36.3s (59.40mph); 2, J. McGauchay (1.0 Hillman Imp); 3, W. Thomson (1.0 ATS Imp); 4, D. Niven (5.0 VW-Chevrolet). Fastest lap under 1000cc: McGauchay, 59.7s (62.11mph). Fastest lap 1001—1300cc: Forrest, 60.9s (60.89mph). Fastest lap over 1300cc: Dryden, 56.0s (66.21mph).