INGLISTON

No to tradition

ACCORDING TO tradition the July Ingliston is always s the slippiest because it's the one immediately after the Royal Highland Show and the track is covered in cattle emissions. Pre-event rain washed all these ways this year, and on a hot race day the surface was the best it has been all year and the racing was fast. What it wasn't on the whole, was furious, with the exception of the FF1600 match and, at the end of the day, a memorably ill-tempered 1600cc Road Saloons event.

Ron Cumming's Custom Office Furniture Stratos was a long way ahead of the **GT/Modified** field by the end of lap one, and that was that as far as any question of the lead was concerned. Brian Fletcher qualified his Pinto-powered Davrian ahead of Chris Wilson's Skoda-Cosworth, but Wilson pushed hard in the early laps and moved ahead on lap four, shortly before Fletcher disappeared. Neil Fisher, who has found some extra speed from somewhere, made a terrible start in the Fishertruck Davrian, but blasted round to relieve Roddie Patersons' Elan of third early on lap nine. Graham Wait, dramatic as usual in his Capri, was top of the modified saloons throughout, any challenge having vanished on lap four when the throttle on Alaster Cunningham's Opel Manta briefly jammed open; in his attempts to slow down he flat-spotted a tyre, and after a visit to the pits simply hirpled round for a finish.

The **Ford Audio Fiesta Challenge** round looked quite promising, but most of the real action took place in the lower half of the field. Up front, Ian Briggs, Brian Farminer and Colin Stancombe were close together in the opening laps, but the gaps between them gradually increased to the point where there were eleven seconds covering them by the flag. Trevor Reeves and Kelvin May, on the other hand, finished almost together after May absolutely flew round Arena and very nearly into Reeves' tailgate. Mike Ireland, third from the back after lap one, had a merry time slicing his way up through the field to complete the top six.

After the **FF1600** race, winner Campbell Chisholm reckoned that if the grid positions earned by himself and Jim Forsyth had been reversed then so would the finishing order. It was certainly a fine battle; Chisholm's Reynard finished the first lap just a fraction ahead of Forsyth's Swift, and from then to the flag there was hardly ever a gap of any description between them. The exception was when Chisholm eased ahead mid-race, but that was negated when the pair met traffic later on, and in the end there was just 0.27s between them. Cameron Binnie was briefly involved in this dice in the Sony Centre/Silverscreen Reynard but lost ground later on, nearly landing in the clutches of Thomas Irvine's Swift.

This should have been the best **FF2000 Sports Cars** race of the season, with Derek Ferguson, Bill Wood and Robert Mitchell qualifying very close together. When Wood and Mitchell got no further than Caravan on the first lap, however, the race became a demonstration run by the Ferguson Seacabs Vision. It all got quite exciting behind, with a four-car Mallock train involving Reg Forester-Smith, Mike Upton, Keith Bowmaker and Grant Stewart. Forester-Smith pitted on lap five, firing on an indeterminate (but clearly insufficient) number of cylinders, which left Upton to pull clear of the others for second place.

With no Angus Gray to play with, Neil Cammie had the **Road Saloons over 1600cc/Sports Cars/Kitcars**, race all to himself in his Westfield. Alaster Cunningham muscled the Manta past Iain Wight's quicker-qualifying Westfield on lap one and was still ahead when Wight got himself involved in a lurid spin to the infield at Southstand (the infield bit being deliberately engineered since the alternative was a visit to the nearby toilet block). Michael Higson, who had spent the opening laps getting used to his own Westfield after some igorous lunchtime alterations, now came on song and caught up with Cunningham, but lost out on the last lap when he outbraked himself into Lefthander. John Peace was fifth - and sports car class winner - after an uneventful event in his Ginetta G27.

With a new record on lap three, Graham Harper was top of the **2CV** runners in the first race. Towards the end Norman Taylor began to class in, and was then handed the win on a plate when Harper suffered the racing driver's worst nightmare, namely running out of petrol on the last lap. Nicholas Runcie was all on his own in second, but Cameron Ritchie had to work hard for third against Neil McDonald.

Now, then, about these **Small Road Saloons**. Alan Keith was first across the line in his Fiesta, having survived a last-corner coming-together with Mike Connon, whose Right Gear Fiesta wasn't even pointing in the Right Direction as it took the flag. That wasn't quite the end of it, though, since two laps earlier Keith had been involved in an incident which saw David Kerr's Carl Dyson/Tynecastle Garage Fiesta mount the barriers at Caravan. Opinions about this one were varied, and pungently expressed, but the official view, after a protest by Kerr, was that Keith had been to blame, and he was removed from the results. Connon thereby became the only rearward-facing winner of the day.

The **1300s** were similarly frantic. David Finlay (Racetrax Nova) and Derek Hastings (Imp) had a close battle which ended in tears at Lefthander on lap seven. James Ritchie's Lynmar Developments Nova inherited the class lead, only to be caught afterwards by a recovered Finlay, who was then excluded for having done so at a point where the surrounding countryside was bristling with yellow flags.

D.F.