

18.10.88

That's entertainment!

NOT everyone enjoyed it much, but the rain undoubtedly jazzed up the final Ingliston meeting of the season to make it one of the most entertaining race days Scotland has had for some time.

Good heavens there was even more than a handful of FF2000s, although an incident on lap six, when Kenny Coleman tried a very brave manoeuvre at the hairpin, reduced the field to the tune of Coleman himself and Irish visitors David and Leslie Wright. Derek Butcher was also involved but recovered from that incident in time to get entangled in another which this time sent Keith Wickham into the scenery. Again Butcher continued, but after all that he could not catch the unscathed leader Robert Mitchell, who won the second race of his career.

Poleman Neil Gammie overshot the hairpin on lap one of the road saloons over 1600cc and sports car race and let Alaster Cunningham's Manta into a lead it never lost. Gammie put up a good fight and drew alongside Cunningham at one point (Cunningham later claimed he "gave Neil a tenner and he drew back again"), but later spun the Westfield. John Peace, up to third after another charge from the back in the Stonecraft Fireplaces Westfield, saw this and put on an extra spurt but was still two seconds down at the finish.

The FF1600 race was brought to a halt on lap one when Jim Forsyth slipped inside Ewen Buchan at Southstand, got it sideways, hit Buchan and reduced his Van Dieman to pulp in the ensuing roll. Cameron Binnie, who had succumbed to Louis di Resta off the line, made a better job of it next time round and had the Sony Centre/Howden Motors/Silverscreen Van Dieman up front at the end of lap one. Di Resta fought hard and enjoyed a brief lap in the lead at half distance, and the whole thing was settled on lap nine when Binnie, by now in front once more, spun at Southstand, Di Resta thus took his first race win ahead of Colin Harper, who was quite happy to stay in contention, knowing he had won the championship.

Two of the leading historians got no further than the hairpin on lap one. Chris Drake, third in his Lotus 16, tried a rather ambitious dive inside Campbell McLaren's E-Type and thudded into same. The Jaguar spun and retired on the spot, while Drake managed one more lap with the deranged Lotus now handling in such an evil manner that it could barely be kept on the track. Grant Stephen missed all this and built up a huge lead in his Elva, while Leventon brought his Cooper Bristol from seventh on the grid to second on the line ahead of Hugh McCaig's Tojeiro. Keith Schellenberg's massive Barnetto Hassan Bentley took the Doune Cup for best pre-war car ahead of previous winner Peter Graham's Riley Special.

And then came a quite staggering Modified race. Ian Bruce lost out to Alaster Cunningham on lap one, but reckoned that his Darrian could retake the Manta later on. And possibly it could have done, only Ian For-

rest was spoiling for a fight in his BMW M3, out for fun after his Touring Car exploits. Forrest simply would not allow Bruce any peace, and actually passed the Darrian during a highly intense period when the leading group (which by now comprised Cunningham, Bruce, Forrest and the Davrians of Olly Ross and Neil Fisher) lapped a crowd of four equally energetic tail-enders on the way into the hairpin. Bruce got back to second two laps from home, but could no longer catch Cunningham. In the Davrian dice, meanwhile, Fisher got ahead of Ross for a couple of laps, but Ross regained fourth and held it despite the fact he crossed the line almost completely out of control and only just avoided hitting Fisher, the backmarker they were lapping at the time.

After which the GT race was dreadful. Four cars fell out early on, largely due to water on the electrics, leaving Ron Cumming, in the Simpson Motors/Claymore Shellfish AC to win by miles from Neil Fisher - yes, the same one, no doubt somewhat breathless by now.

Until he saw the starter begin to drop the flag, Jim McGaughay had thought that the sports car race was being set off on the lights. So although poleman John Fyda made "a very bad start, to be honest", McGaughay, whose Tiga was sitting at 2,500 rpm when the race began, made a worse one, and it was Fyda who led away in his Vision. McGaughay caught up halfway through the race in traffic, only to hear his engine note change. It was nothing serious - just the exhaust coming loose - but by the time he had worked this out Fyda was off into the distance once more. Allen Johns, out in clubmans B with his new Mallock Mk7 which will have a 1700cc engine next year, was fastest in the class, but spun twice and finished second behind the more cautious Mike Upton.

"That's the most difficult race I've ever done," said a still shaking Kevin Tawse after the 1600cc road saloons bash. Tawse got a bad start (which may have led to the early incident that damaged George McDonald's car and got David Kerr disqualified) and had to sit behind Alan Keith for eight laps. Those were real hairy laps, though, with the two Fiestas literally bumper to bumper at times. Tawse finally got past at Clock, where "Alan got snarled up in the backmarkers and I was able to get through." Glen Mortimer followed at a respectful distance in the Peter Flynn Fiesta, ahead of top non-Ford man Iain Cowie, who inherited fourth in his Corolla after Alastair Hart half-spun in front of him at Arena.

Derek Hastings was easy winner of the 1300cc class in his Imp, helped by the fact that Alastair McCarter fouled a plug on the warm-up lap and spent the first few minutes of the race in the pits having a new set fitted to his Mini.

D.F.