

Astra getting faster

EVEN without the GM parade, adjacent autotesting Nova, Thundersaloon Opel Senator demonstration and, gadzooks, a dog-handling display on the start line, spectating at the GM Dealersport meeting at Ingliston on August 11 was, on the whole, a pleasantly diverting way of spending a Sunday afternoon. There were even two record-breaking performances. Olly Ross got his in just before the celestial watering-can went into action, and rally driver Alan Coates took two seconds off the Astra Challenge record, previously held by a Vauxhall Nova.

The pre-lunch FF1600 qualifier went to Ewen Bucham, who finished half a second ahead of Georgie Taylor, with Stewart Roden third in the nosecone-less Scottish-built Rotor.

Olly Ross and Bruce Lyle in the Ritchie Builders and Sprint Tyres Fiestas looked inseparable going into the Esses at the start of the small road saloons race, but it was Ross who kept his foot down longer and pulled ahead for another win. Iain Gardner's 205 GTi was a familiar third, not far ahead of the deceptively quick West End Garage Golf of John Irvine.

The rain caused great confusion for the sports car drivers, who had to work out what tyres to use on the greasy track. As a result, John Fyda

unfortunately had to start from the pits in the Agra Mallock. He reached third place before pitting on lap 9 with fluid emerging from the car. Kenny Allen had an easy race up front in the Lowland Tyres Vision, with Les Duncan and Class B winner Andy Smith well spaced behind him.

Cameron Binnie, Ingliston's own Regenmeister, made the most of the awful conditions in the Silverscreen Van Diemen, comfortably winning the FF1600 final. Roy Low trailed him by three seconds, and Willie Rose came off better in a last-lap tangle with Tom Brown at Lefthander for third place.

The winner of the only other racing round of the Astra Challenge, David Beesley, looked set to do it again at Ingliston, establishing quite

a lead for the first few laps. But Kingsley Ingram, fifth at the start, shot up through the field and was through on lap 9. Even more dramatic was the rise of Alan Coates, who performed some very energetic passing manoeuvres on his way to demoting Beesley to third on lap 14.

Iain Gardner chalked up yet another road sports car win in the Ziggi's Lotus 7, having shaken off Tom McCallum's awesome Data General TR7 V8. Graham McCallum was next in the Strata Bit Porsche, with Ed Chester working his way up to fourth by the end of the race in his Dutton.

With nothing else over one litre to challenge his Claymore Shellfish Esprit, Ron Cumming stormed away in the GT race, only to expire after three laps when a camshaft belt broke halfway round Arena. Ian Forrest's slender lead in the Drambuie Imp became an enormous one when Eric Munnoch spun the Uniform Davrian in dramatic fashion at Southstand. Munnoch stayed in second place, though on three cylinders, before petering out on the last lap and leaving the door open for the similarly sick Bilston Garage Davrian of John Bothamley.

Five laps into the libre race the



FF2000s of Harry Minty and Campbell Chisolm collided in the Esses, a situation which called for the red flags. After the restart Kenny Allen resumed his lead in the event, with Eric Paterson second and Les Duncan just holding off John Fyda for third.

With five Sunbeam Lotuses in the large road saloons race, it was a fair bet that one of them would have the

chequered flag waved at it, and in the event it was that of Hugh Chalmers, after 12 laps in close company with Ian Bruce's Beacon Sunbeam. Ray MacDowall's similar car was third, followed by Neil Gammie's RS2000. After its proud victory a fortnight before, the Ecurie Ecosse Chevette retired in disgrace when Jim McRae found that the gearlever had parted company with the selectors.

D.F.

FF1600 Qualifier — 12 laps: 1. E. Buchan (PRS 79/80), 10m 53.9s (68.05 mph); 2. G. Taylor (Spartan FF80); 3. S. Roden (Rotor JT3); 4. K. Brown (PRS 78/79); 5. I. Morrison (Crosslé 32F); 6. D. Hughes (Royale RP21). Fastest lap: Taylor, 52.8s (70.23 mph).

Road Saloons up to 1600 cc — 12 laps: 1. O. Ross (1.6 Ford Fiesta), 12m 21.2s (60.03 mph); 2. B. Lyle (1.6 Ford Fiesta); 3. I. Gardner (1.6 Peugeot 205GTi); 4. J. Irvine (1.6 VW Golf GTi); 5. J. Fleming (1.6 Toyota Celica); 6. G. Mortimer (1.6 Avenger). Fastest lap: Ross, 60.3s (61.49 mph), record.

Sports Cars — 12 laps: 1. K. Allen (1.7 Vision), 11m 11.0s (66.31 mph); 2. E. Paterson (1.7 Mallock Mk27); 3. L. Duncan (1.7 Vision V85); 4. A. Smith (1.6 Vision). Clubmans A: 1. Allen; 2. Paterson; 3. Duncan. Fastest lap: J. Fyda (1.7 Mallock Mk24), 52.5s (70.63 mph). Clubmans B: 1. Smith, 11m 51.9s (62.50 mph); 2. M. Upton (1.6 Mallock Mk16); 3. D. MacMillan (1.6 Haggispeed). Fastest lap: Smith, 57.2s (64.83 mph). Sports 2000: 1. B. Ness (2.0 Lola), 10 laps; 2. K. Bowmaker (2.0 Lola). Fastest lap: Ness, 64.8s (57.22 mph).

FF1600 Final — 12 laps: 1. C. Binnie (Van Diemen), 11m 46.3s (63.00 mph); 2. R. Low (PRS); 3. W. Rose (Reynard 84FF); 4. T. Brown (Van Diemen RF85); 5. H. Gillanders (Van Diemen). Fastest lap: Binnie, 56.7s (65.40 mph).

Astra Challenge — 15 laps: 1. K. Ingram, 16m 28.1s (56.29 mph); 2. A. Coates; 3. D. Beesley; 4. S. Easton; 5. K. Kirk; 6. D. Furnor. Fastest lap: Coates, 63.5s (58.39 mph), record.

Road Sports Cars — 12 laps: 1. I. Gardner (1.6 Ziggi's Lotus 7), 13m 02.6s (56.86 mph); 2. T. McCallum (3.5 Triumph TR7 V8); 3. G. McCallum (2.7 Porsche 911); 4. E. Chester (1.6 Dutton Phaeton). Over 1600cc: 1. T. McCallum, 13m 10.3s (56.30 mph); 2. G. McCallum; 3. Chester. Fastest lap: Chester, 64.5s (57.49 mph). Up to 1600cc: 1. Gardner; 2. R. Stewart (1.0 Clan Crusader); 3. P. Jeffrey (1.6 Lotus Europa). Fastest lap: Gardner, 63.8s (58.12 mph).

GT Cars — 12 laps: 1. I. Forrest (1.0 Drambuie Imp), 11m 05.6s (62.62 mph); 2. J. Bothamley (1.0 Bilston Garage Davrian); 3. R. Gauld (1.0 Davrian Mk7); 4. M. Dunn (1.0 Davrian); 5. P. Chamberlain (1.0 Imp); 6. B. McLeod (1.0 Imp). Fastest lap: R. Cumming (3.4 Lotus Esprit), 57.1s (64.94 mph).

Formula Libre and FF2000 — shortened to 8 laps: 1. K. Allen (1.7 Vision), 7m 22.0s (67.11 mph); 2. E. Paterson (1.7 Mallock Mk27); 3. L. Duncan (1.7 Vision V85); 4. J. Fyda (1.7 Mallock Mk24). Formula Libre: 1. Allen; 2. Paterson; 3. Duncan. Fastest lap: Allen, 53.8s (68.92 mph). FF2000: 1. S. Robertson (Reynard), 7m 44.6s (63.93 mph); 2. A. Muter (Van Diemen); 3. D. Duffield (Mondiale). Fastest lap: Robertson, 55.9s (66.33 mph).

Road Saloons over 1600cc: 1. H. Chalmers (2.2 Sunbeam Lotus), 12m 58.6s (57.15 mph); 2. I. Bruce (2.2 Sunbeam Lotus); 3. R. MacDowall (2.2 Sunbeam Lotus); 4. N. Gammie (2.0 Ford Escort RS2000); 5. T. Bell (3.0 Ford Capri); 6. A. Gray (2.0 Ford Escort RS2000). Fastest lap: Chalmers, 63.4s (58.49 mph).