

18-9-80

# Leslie cracks own record

DAVID LESLIE, in devastating form with the Hope Scott Ralt, demolished his own outright record in the course of a fine Scottish MRC meeting at Inglinton on Sunday. Douglas Niven won a tremendous GT final, and Andy Smith took top points in both the Clubmans Register rounds, as well as two class records.

Three cars didn't get more than 50 yards from the line in an action-packed start to the opening Wrangler Trophy race for FF1600. Bob Burgess led into the Esses from Duncan Hall, but Hall passed at the hairpin on the first lap and had a clear win. Chic Stenhouse passed Dougie Hamilton for third place on lap three, and these four qualified for the main FF event later in the programme.

Pole position, after a damp practice for the Caledon Coal Company over 1000 cc GT heat, was taken by Walter Robertson's DFVW. But Douglas Niven roasted off to put the VW-Chevrolet comfortably ahead to the Esses. Second place was taken over at Lefthander by Nicky Ellis's Cowgate Elan. Gaps between these cars began to widen, and Niven was already in amongst the back-markers by lap five. But as the race moved into its

final quarter, they all bunched together again. Niven was in trouble with tightening-up steering, and Robertson was making a determined bid to draw level with the Elan. They crossed the line with only 0.6s among them, in the closest GT finish at Inglinton for a long time; and there was something at least as good to come.

Mike Dixon, leader of the Clubmans Register championship, didn't start in the Clubmans A race. Neither did pole position man John Fyda, who had to trickle his Agra Mallock off the grid before the flag dropped accompanied by nasty engine noises. Paul Gibson led from the line with Richard Morgan and John Mackie behind, but second time into Arena, Morgan spun and Mackie collected him. After the furore died down, Gibson had an 8s lead over Jim Yardley in the Beagle. Andy Smith was really pressing, however, taking second place on lap four and setting off on what looked like an unavailing pursuit of the leader. He whittled that lead down lap by lap, setting a new class record, and swept past to finish 2½s clear.

In the second Laidlaw GT heat, for cars under 1000 cc, Bob Leckie just moved first from alongside pole position man Jim McGauchay, but fumbled it and dropped down through the field. McGauchay's FES Imp took the lead from George Coghill's far-travelled Caithness Glass Davrian. Coghill tried really hard to get to terms, and was handed

the lead on lap five as McGauchay spun at Lefthander. Leckie got back up to second, but then burst an oil pipe and abandoned his car to the pits. Ricky Gauld moved up to second place, and McGauchay came back into third.

Several incidents delayed the start of the Shell championship FF1600 race, notably one at the hairpin, where Colin Verity spun his Hawke and Ronnie Whitaker up-ended his similar car on the grass taking avoiding action. Wally Warwick was on pole, but Peter Rose snatched the lead from the start, despite having a bent wheel rim on his Van Diemen from an earlier warm-up lap affray.

Warwick and Keith Wickham made it a Van Diemen 1-2-3, but Warwick took the lead round the first lap. Tom Brown, from the third row, started a very determined charge with the Parks of Hamilton Van Diemen. Rose spun at Clock, then again at the Esses, Brown picked off Wickham then closed right up on Warwick. On lap 11 he made a classic move, on the outside line round the hairpin and out of it, so he was on the inside along the short straight into Lefthander. That's where he slipped through very neatly into the lead. Wickham also outfumbled Warwick, and the one-time race leader dropped to third.

The next race had a real mixture: FF1600, FF2000, Class B Clubmans, and the new Chevron B52 Sports 2000 car, racing in Laurence Jacobsen's hands for the

first time on its home ground. Keith Lawrence's FF2000 Lola had a fine flag-to-flag win, with Andy Smith picking up top Clubmans B points in second place, and another class lap record.

David Leslie had already been under the outright lap record in practice for the *Glasgow Herald* race. He took the lead from the start, and on a cold track with a clear road in front of him for the first 11 laps, he equalled his old record, then steadily lowered it in a fine piece of exhibition driving to 43.9s — 84.46 mph in a year when the £1,000 prize for the first 85 mph lap is no longer on offer! Dave Duffield's Caledon Ralt was second throughout, and although Cameron Binnie pressed Bernie Hunter hard for third place, that's how they finished.

**FF1600 — 10 laps:** 1. D. Hall (Royale RP26), 9m 08.7s (67.58 mph); 2. B. Burgess (Image FF2B/3); 3. C. Stenhouse (Van Diemen RF79); 4. D. Hamilton (Van Diemen RF78). Fastest lap: Hall, 53.8s (68.92 mph).

**GT cars over 1000cc — 10 laps:** 1. D. Niven (5.0 VW-Chevrolet), 8m 23.2s (73.69 mph); 2. N. Ellis (2.0 Elan); 3. W. Robertson (3.0 DFVW); 4. M. Burgess (4.7 Escort-Chevrolet). Fastest lap over 1500cc: Niven, 48.8s (75.98 mph). Fastest lap 1,000-1,500 cc: E. Paterson (1.3 Imp), 54.5s (68.04 mph).

**Clubmans Class A — 12 lap:** 1. A. Smith (Mallock Mk. 21), 9m 44.4s (76.14 mph); 2. P. Gibson (Mallock Mk. 22); 3. J. Yardley (Beagle Mk. 4B); 4. J. Stevenson (Mallock Mk. 20). Fastest lap: Smith, 46.8s (79.23 mph). RECORD.

**GT cars up to 1,000 cc — 10 laps:** 1. G. Coghill (Davrian Mk. 8), 9m 15.7s (66.73 mph); 2. R. Gauld (Imp); 3. J. McGauchay (Imp); 4. K. Coleman (Davrian). Fastest lap: B. Leckie (Imp), 53.2s (69.70 mph).

**FF1600 — 12 laps:** 1. T. Brown (Van Diemen), 11m 13.4s (66.08 mph); 2. K. Wickham (Van Diemen); 3. W. Warwick

The GT final was another excellent affair. Douglas Niven bulleted the VW-Beetle off the line, with Walter Robertson's DFVW and Nicky Ellis's Elan right behind, although Ellis already had a push-start penalty. The pace was furious among these three, and that infected the rest of the field, because there were twosomes and threesomes battling it out all the way down. Robertson tried to haul the DFVW level with the Beetle at the hairpin on lap four, went onto the grass and gave the Elan just enough room to dart through. The first three stayed in that order to the end, but it was a real race all the way, with Niven in top form slotting in and out of backmarkers. A long way behind, there was a great scrap for fourth, which eventually went to Ricky Gauld.

(Van Diemen); 4. G. Stephenson (PRS). Fastest lap: Brown, 54.0s (68.67 mph).

**Clubmans Class B — 12 laps:** 1. K. Lawrence (2.0 Lola T580), 10m 18.0s (72.00 mph); 2. A. Smith (1.6 Mallock Mk21B); 3. D. Winstanley (2.0 Royale RP27); 4. L. Jacobsen (2.0 Chevron B52). Fastest lap Clubmans Class B: Smith, 50.9s (72.85 mph). RECORD. Fastest lap FF2000: Lawrence, 50.7s (73.14 mph).

**Formule Libre — 15 laps:** 1. D. Leslie (1.6 Ralt RT4), 11m 14.8s (82.42 mph); 2. D. Duffield (1.6 Ralt RT1); 3. B. Hunter (1.6 March 80A); 4. C. Binnie (1.6 March 77B). Fastest lap up to 1600cc: Leslie, 43.9s (84.46 mph). OUTRIGHT CIRCUIT RECORD. Fastest lap over 1600 cc: G. McMillan (2.0 March 77ZP), 46.6s (79.57 mph).

**GT cars — 15 laps:** 1. D. Niven (5.0 VW-Chevrolet), 12m 30.0s (74.16 mph); 2. W. Robertson (3.0 DFVW); 3. N. Ellis (2.0 Elan); 4. R. Gauld (1.0 Imp). Fastest lap over 1500 cc: Ellis, 48.5s (76.45 mph), equals RECORD. Fastest lap 1000-1500 cc: E. Paterson (1.3 Imp), 53.7s (69.05 mph). Fastest lap under 1000 cc: R. Gauld (Imp), 53.0s (69.96 mph).

R.F.