



GRAHAM BIRRELL leads in the Anglia from Gerry Birrell with Dave Muter (Mini-Cooper) squeezed between them.

Rollinson's day at Ingliston

SMRC Promotion provides exciting and close racing

By GRAHAM GAULD

ALAN ROLLINSON, making his first appearance at Ingliston circuit this year, soundly thrashed everyone in the manner to which we became accustomed last year and took not only the "Milk for Energy Trophy" for *formule libre* cars but won the up to 1200 cc race also. The cars he used were both entered by the Frank Lythgoe team and were Brabhams. A number of drivers got into difficulty on the tight circuit and local favourite Willie Forbes retired his Lotus-BMW after a practice crash.

Ingliston circuit is no place for the faint of heart and both drivers and spectators can usually go home afterwards and talk of many close shaves. Being such a tight little circuit, it's all go in the races and though there were some nasty looking accidents no one was injured.

With no less than 11 races on the programme the meeting was particularly well run by the Scottish Motor Racing Club and they took just three and a half hours to dispose of the lot. Sponsors of the meeting were the Scottish Milk Board who were boosting milk for energy and they put up the prizes for the "Milk for Energy" *formule libre* races run in two heats of 25 laps each.

In practice the circuit was still damp from torrential overnight rain and there were one or two near things. Ronnie McCutcheon bent his Minisprint trying to pull off a hot lap before practice finished, and then Willie Forbes lost it coming out of the right-hander at the pits and bent the rear suspension of his Lotus-BMW.

Alan Rollinson, last season's uncrowned King of Ingliston, returned and quickly got into the groove and everyone else pulled long faces. Bob Gerard, making his first racing visit to Scotland for ten years, arrived with his young cousin Julian and a Cooper single-seater.

Event one was the "slow" up to 1200 cc touring car race. Ingliston gets so many touring car entries they have to run four races—with the dark horse the third of the Birrell brothers, Ian Birrell, driving a Don Moore 850 Mini. It was Graham Carr (Mini-Cooper) who took the lead from the flag with Birrell in second place and Ken Robertson third in another Mini-Cooper. Charging up from the back came R. C. Little with his Anglia and he steadily picked off the back men, taking both Birrell and Robertson to go into second place. He couldn't quite catch the leader, however, and Birrell held on to take third place.

Event 2 was the first heat of the *formule libre* race with such local stalwarts as Jock

Russell with his Ford V8-engined Russell-Ford, Andrew Fletcher (Brabham F3) and John Millar (Brabham F3).

From the flag it was Alan Rollinson who took the lead and no one knew where he went; like the old homesteader in the Western movies he rode slowly over the hill and away into the distance. Indeed, he almost lapped the field, with Andrew Fletcher holding a strong second place and Jock Russell taking third. Russell was under pressure early in the race when the track was damp from Graham McWilliam (Merlyn) and John Calvert (Brabham).

In the Clubmen's race which followed, Ian Cochran was the surprise winner with his Lotus 7 when Howard Heery was penalized 30 secs for jumping the start in his Chevron-Ford. The Chevron led everyone over the line but dropped to fourth place with his penalty. A. H. Hugh was second in a Terrier.

The touring car race over 1200 cc was a bit of a disappointment this meeting as Tom Christie (Mini-Cooper) hadn't entered so this left Graham Birrell the favourite with his independent suspension Perdal-Anglia. The dark blue Anglia took the lead and was never headed, though Dave Muter tried hard in Arsy Barton's Mini-Cooper and Ronnie Morrison took a good third in another Mini-Cooper. In the race which followed for up to 1200 sports and G.T. cars we had a repeat of the past three meetings at Ingliston when John Corfield ran away and hid from everyone in his Diva GT. In the closing stages Andy Barton caught up in his Mini-Marcos and finished only 2 secs behind with John Nicholson's Lotus 23a third. Bill Turnbull had a bad start but came up to a good fourth with the LWS-Ford.

It was back to the Birrells again in the next up to 1200 cc touring car race which was won by Gerry Birrell in Claud Hamilton's Perdal-Chamois, refitted with the 1200 cc experimental engine after running at the 750 6-hour relay the previous week at Silverstone with a 1000 cc rally engine. Tony Charnell in a Hillman Imp, another member of the winning Scottish Imp team at Silverstone, finished a good second despite some two-wheel work at the Esses. Bill Borrowman (Mini-Cooper) had an eventful race by zig-zagging out of control in and out of the pack on the opening lap and eventually finishing third in the race after fighting up from the back.

The second heat of the Milk for Energy Trophy (*formule libre*) was almost a carbon copy of the first with Rollinson leading from pole to flag and winning by a clear 25 secs despite backing off.

In the first heat Irishman Luke Duffy had collided with one of the barriers in his Cooper and though he started in the second heat he quickly retired. The second heat also saw the debut of Bill Dryden, normally seen driving a Lotus Elan, in the Ecurie Ecosse Ecosse-Climax single seater. He worked his way into sixth before retiring with broken front suspension. Jock Russell had a hard job in third place holding off John Calvert's Brabham and back in the field Jimmy Rae wiped off the front end of his F3 Cooper after a spin.

With his second victory Rollinson took the major trophy and most of the prize money. Then late in the programme he took out the Lythgoe Formula 3 Brabham and pushed Andrew Fletcher yet again into second place. In this race Calvert in another Brabham was consistently fast to take third place with John Miller fourth. Graham Birrell gave the new Ecosse Imp its first turn round and though the car lacked power he showed that it handled well and finished fifth, despite a water leak.

The over 1200 cc GT race was won by Jimmy Veitch in his Diva GT twin-cam which, after a disastrous season so far, convincingly held off first Ian Cochran's Lotus 7 and then Bernie Bleckadder's Elan, which slipped into second place on the penultimate lap.

To give the spectators their fill of excitement the Hartley Whyte Trophy Race for saloons came next, with the fastest 11 saloon cars taking part. Graham and Gerry Birrell in Perdal-Anglia and Perdal-Chamois respectively, jumped into the lead ahead of Dave Muter in his Mini-Cooper and the pair set such a fast pace that they lapped their third brother, Ian Birrell (Don Moore Mini), on about the seventh lap. Then Graham Birrell retired to the pits leaving Gerry in the 1200 cc Chamois in the lead. Behind him there was a Donybrook between Tony Charnell (Imp), Alastair Robertson (Imp) and Ronnie Morrison (Mini-Cooper), with Charnell holding the other two off despite taking the Esses on two wheels. Right in the middle of this John Williamson cannoned off another car and hit the guardrail, sending the Mini spinning through the air, on to its roof and then on to its side. Williamson jumped out unhurt and Ingliston had claimed another victim.

The *marque* race saw a tremendous variety of cars, with Ronnie Morrison's E-type coupé taking the lead but being passed at the end of the first lap by John Milne's MG Midget coupé, which proceeded to run off with the race and win by ten secs. Gerry Birrell (these boys get around) took a stock Elan into third overall ahead of Ian Naismith's Elan.

By now the crowd's appetite had been satiated with enough thrills to last them the three weeks until the next meeting at Ingliston and keeping track of 11 races was becoming difficult. One is left with a final thought: racing at Ingliston is rather like the migration of the lemmings; most of the participants get through unscathed but a lot go over the cliff.