

Ingliston

Evans tunes in to Radio Forth

SCOTTISH MRC's Radio Forth Trophy meeting at Ingliston on Easter Sunday saw Jim Evans' Skoda-FVC annihilate the special saloon opposition, Iain McLaren's F2 Chevron have an easy win in the Libre race, and Jennifer Birrell survive a preposterous incident in the production saloon event only to have her first-past-the-flag Magnum subsequently excluded.

After a very wet practice, only one race was run in slippery conditions. That was the 1-litre special saloon affair, and from the start Ricky Gauld's Stiletto kept ahead on a sodden track.

In the first round of the Dalgleish Baillie Championship for FF2000 and sportscars, Tony Charnell's Lola never quite recovered from practice problems, letting pole-man Kenny Allen lead all the way in his Mallock. Laurence Jacobsen took up second place in his Chevron B23, but Charnell was soon through to second, only to stop later for a brief look round his car. Jacobsen abandoned in the pits, so Philips' Chevron was finally second with Stuart Lawson third in the only FF2000 to start.

Jim Evans's AET Engineering Skoda-FVC simply obliterated the opposition in the second Radio Forth race. His car was 3s up on Douglas Niven's Escort BDG after one lap and just disappeared over the horizon thereafter. After a familiar scrap with Niven's Escort, Bill Dryden's Firenza slipped past on lap seven to finish second. Dave Farrer put on another tremendous show in his 1300 Escort and won his class by a long way.

The opening round of the Edinburgh Flying Services FF Championship saw George Franchitti's Hawke pass Stuart Lawson's similar car for the lead during lap one and hold the advantage to the end. Duncan Hall's Hawke was third until lap

five, when Cameron Binnie went past in his Royale, and that was the way they finished.

To say all is not well in Scottish production saloon racing would be putting it mildly. Jennifer Birrell had her Magnum on pole after a protest about her car's tyres had been entered and then withdrawn. She and Hugh Chalmers (now in a 3-litre Capri) led away from the start, swapping places on lap three when Chalmers nicked ahead at the hairpin. Andrew Small's 3-litre Capri was also in close attendance until the fateful lap 13, on which lap the Vauxhall retook the lead into the hairpin. Small reckoned he saw a gap and fired his Capri across the grass on the apex of the corner straight into the Vauxhall's door. The impact was so hard it shattered the Magnum's window, and forced its door over the driver's seat so that Jennifer had to sit side-saddle for the rest of the race. Yet not only did she continue, she held the lead to the finish.

The opposition wasn't finished with her yet, though, protesting that the Magnum had had its back-plates removed to allow extra cooling for the brakes. As worded, the protest was disallowed, but since the back-plates had been removed, the Vauxhall was nevertheless removed from the results. Under these circumstances, Hugh Chalmers was not overjoyed to win the race.

Iain McLaren had no serious opposition in winning the Heron

to wrest the lead from Spurling took them quickly away from the rest of the pack and they finished in that order behind the winner.

Adding that welcome touch of nostalgia to the saloon racing scene, the small capacity Classic Saloon Championship round looked likely to provide a fine dice between Andy McLennan's nimble A35 and the potent Morris Minor of Bill Stone. But Mike Allington's MG Magnette almost upset things by whistling into the lead on Stebbe Straight and remaining there until its engine blew up on lap eight. That left McLennan a comfortable winner from Stone, G. Pages Minor and the Magnette of Judy Andreason.

Dave Clewley put in a tremendous performance to win the MG T-type thrash, his 1947

Libre event, even though his Chevron's gearing wasn't quite right in the dry. Stuart Lawson made an impossibly quick start from the second row to lead away but later spun out in the arena, so Bob Rollo finished second with his ex-Andy Barton March 75B.

Although Bill Dryden tried to keep his Firenza in touch over the early laps of the Radio Forth final, Jim Evans just ran away with this first round of the Lombard special saloon series. Niven took Jimmy

Special saloons, up to 1000cc — 12 laps: R. Gauld (Stiletto), 14m 05.5s (52.63 mph); 2. D. Ogilvy (Imp); 3. E. Paterson (Mini); 4. D. Fisher (Imp). Fastest lap: Ogilvy, 68.8s (53.90 mph).

FF2000 and sportscars — 12 laps: 1. K. Allen (Mallock Mk17B), 12m 38.4s (58.67 mph); 2. D. Philp (Chevron B26/31); 3. S. Lawson (Hawke DL16); 4. J. Baird (Chevron B23). Fastest lap: Philp, 60.8s (60.99 mph).

Special saloons, over 1000cc — 12 laps: 1. J. Evans (Skoda-FVC), 10m 50.8s (69.20 mph); 2. W. Dryden (Firenza); 3. D. Niven (Escort BDG); 4. J. Robertson (Escort). Class fastest laps: over 1300cc, Evans, 53.2s (69.70 mph); under 1300cc: D. Farrer (Escort), 55.6s (66.69 mph).

Formula Ford — 12 laps: 1. G. Franchitti (Hawke DL15), 11m 01.1s (67.32 mph); 2. S. Lawson (Hawke DL17); 3. C. Binnie (Royale RP21); 4. D. Hall (Hawke DL17). Fastest lap: Binnie, 53.9s (68.79 mph).

Production saloons — 15 laps: 1. H. Chalmers (Ford Capri), 16m 28.5s (55.66

mph); 2. A. Jeffrey (Triumph Dolomite Sprint); 3. R. Halley (Opel Kadett GT/E); 4. I. Stirling (Ford Capri). Class fastest laps: over 2000cc: J. Birrell (Vauxhall Magnum), 63.8s (58.12 mph); under 2000cc: Jeffrey and Halley, 65.4s (56.70 mph), class record.

Formule Libre — 20 laps: 1. I. McLaren (Chevron B35), 16m 05.2s (74.74 mph); 2. R. Rollo (March 75B); 3. D. Muter (Lotus 69); 4. A. Sharpe (Chevron B26/31). Fastest lap: McLaren, 47.7s (77.74 mph).

Special saloons — 15 laps: 1. J. Evans (Skoda-FVC), 13m 05.2s (70.84 mph); 2. W. Dryden (Firenza); 3. D. Niven (Escort BDG); 4. J. Robertson (Escort). Class fastest laps: over 1300cc, Evans, 50.7s (73.14 mph), class record; 1001-1300cc: D. Farrer (Escort), 55.0s (67.42 mph), class record; under 1000cc: R. Gauld (Stiletto), 57.4s (64.60 mph).

Modsports — 10 laps: 1. J. Fyda (Elan), 9m 10.4s (67.37 mph); 2. J. Kirk (Davrian); 3. D. Palmer (Elan); 4. K. Coleman (Davrian). Class fastest laps: over 1300cc: Fryda, 54.0s (68.67 mph); under 1300cc: Kirk, 53.6s (69.18 mph).

Robertson for third place on lap three, but the main interest was in watching Evans tear the outright saloon record to shreds, leaving it 1.1s quicker than Dryden's old time.

The programme finished with a modsports race for Hamilton and Inches points, and after all those 1976 problems that befell his Imp, it was good to see John Fyda have a trouble free win with the Aggra Engineering Elan.

R.F.

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