

# Datsun challenge the Gp 2 master

FRANK Gardner scored his customary RAC Championship Group 2 win at Ingliston on Sunday, but not without a strong challenge from the Japanese driver Masahiro Hasemi in his 1.3-litre Datsun Sunny Coupe! The narrow, tortuous 1.03-mile track was soaked with rain and in these difficult conditions Hasemi wove through a quartet of Escorts to close up on the thundering Chevy, which Gardner was driving as if on ice. Hasemi actually got alongside the Camaro at the hairpin, but as he ran his front wheel along the corrugated kerb the steering arm failed, and that put paid to his effort.

The Gp2 contest was the main event on the 12-race programme organised by the Scottish Motor Racing Club, and despite the persistent rain the programme ran to time with the dozen races run in little more than six hours. More than 10,000 spectators turned up to watch the biggest two-day meeting ever organised by the SMRC and this should have pleased the Appleyard motor group which sponsored the proceedings.

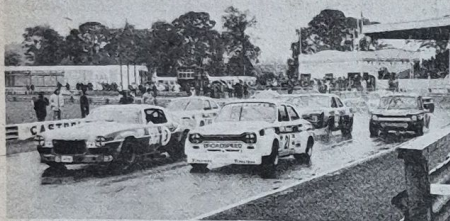
Though rather miniature, the Ingliston circuit has the best facilities of any in Britain, which impressed the Sassenach visitors. The circuit is in a permanent showground site on the outskirts of Edinburgh. The first-time Gp2 visitors were a little surprised to be informed that they would be docked 30 seconds if they visited the grass verges during the races, though the rule wasn't enforced during practice as the muddy patches testified.

pulling out 18 seconds on Mike Nugent's Lotus Elan. Conditions were getting rather slippery and the Crusader was obviously putting its power down better than its front-engined rivals; Nugent had a lonely race too, leaving Don Morton (Elan) to fend off Bill Wood's Midget. Morton had a 10s penalty for a push start, so Wood had third place in the bag anyway.

Overall: 1, J. Blades (1.0 Clan Crusader), 10m 17.2s (60.05 mph); 2, M. Nugent (1.8 Lotus Elan); 3, W. Wood (1.3 MG Midget); 4, D. Morton (1.6 Lotus Elan).  
Up to 1150cc: 1, Blades; 2, R. Halley (1.1 Triumph Spitfire); 3, G. Wilson (1.1 MG Midget). Fastest lap: Blades, 1m 00.6s (61.19 mph).  
Over 1150cc: 1, Nugent, 10m 35.9s (58.20 mph); 2, Wood; 3, Morton. Fastest lap: Nugent, 1m 02.3s (59.52 mph).

## GROUP 1 — 10 laps

This non-championship Gp1 race only drew seven starters, but two of these were Chrysler Dealer



ANDY ROUSE led Frank Gardner's Camaro off the line in the heat and final, but in the main event Gardner powered past to lead.

Sedric Bell made the most of the conditions to win the Special Saloons race (run, like the Gp2, in two heats and a final) in his Mini-Ford, and saloon car exponent Bob Leckie had a very impressive win in the Libre race with his Brabham BT36C, driving only his second single-seater event.

## SPECIAL SALOONS UP TO 1000cc — 10 laps

Sedric Bell ran his heat on slick tyres, which was a handicap as the day's quota of rain was just beginning as the grid formed. Norman Dickson, son of Tommy, led the opening lap in his Sunbeam Imp from Bell and John Fyda's Agra Imp, but once he got used to the conditions Bell went ahead and drew away. Fyda overcame Dickson a couple of laps from the end, the rest of the small field finishing well back.

1, S. Bell (1.0 Mini-Ford), 10m 34.0s (58.44 mph); 2, J. Fyda (1.0 Agra Imp); 3, N. Dickson (1.0 Sunbeam Imp); 4, W. Donald (1.0 Hillman Imp). Fastest lap: Fyda, 1m 01.6s (60.19 mph).

## MODSPORTS — 10 laps

Celebrating the fact that the Clan Crusader will be a regular Prodsports contender next season, Johnny Blades gave his well sorted example an easy flag-to-flag win,



JIM BURROWS takes to the grass as Frank Gardner's SCA Camaro thunders around the outside to lap him and Dennis Leech's Ford Mustang close behind. The Japanese Datsun is not far out of our picture.

£800 to £1050: 1, Mrs. J. Birrell, 12m 09.5s (speed not given); 2, G. Birrell. Fastest lap: Mrs. J. Birrell, 1m 10.8s.  
Up to £800: 1, R. Bley (0.9 Hillman Imp), 7 laps in 11m 15.3s (speed not given). Only starter. Fastest lap: 1m 20.6s (speed not given).

## SPECIAL GT, SPORTS AND CLUBMANS — 10 laps

Johnny Blades made a reappearance at the wheel of his Clan Crusader, but he had more on his plate this time with Tony Charnell's Smart Gropa-FVC to deal with. Charnell went off pole position in a cloud of spray and was away into the distance by the time Blades had passed Eddie Labinjoh's Fisher Spyder on the third lap. Blades made a valiant effort, indeed his driving in three races on Sunday would have made him man of the meeting if there had been such an award, and closed right up on Charnell to finish 0.8s behind at the flag. Labinjoh finished a lonely third, Don Morton's Elan and Mel Ross' U2 being the only others unslapped.

Overall: 1, A. Charnell (1.8 Gropa-FVC), 10m 04.6s (61.32 mph); 2, J. Blades (1.0 Clan Crusader); 3, E. Labinjoh (1.1 Fisher Spyder); 4, D. Morton (1.8 Lotus Elan).  
Over 1150cc: 1, Charnell; 2, Morton; 3, M. Ross (1.6 Malleck U2 Mk1B). Fastest lap: Charnell, 58.8s (63.28 mph).  
Up to 1150cc: 1, Blades, 10m 05.4s (61.18 mph); 2, Labinjoh; 3, R. Halley (1.1 Triumph Spitfire). Fastest lap: Blades, 58.6s (63.28 mph).

## GROUP 2 (Heat 1) — 10 laps

Most of the top RAC Championship contenders went to Ingliston, the notable exception being Brian Muir who was otherwise occupied at the BMW sponsored Brands Hatch meeting. Gardner put his Camaro on pole in 52.2s after removing the rear anti-roll bar, his time more than a second inside existing touring car records. A quick run down the grid in order saw Andy Rouse alongside in the VMW/Esso Uniflo 2-litre Escort (53.4s) then Vince Woodman's VMW/Esso Uniflo 1.3 Escort RS (54.4s), Nick May's 2-litre Escort (54.8s), Alec Poole's 1.3 Datsun Cherry (57.0s), Les Nash's Bevan Imp (58.0s),



ALEC POOLE'S Datsun and David Howes' AM Javelin tangle on the first lap. Howes retired immediately while Poole continued to finish with a punctured tyre.

Mick Osborne's 1.3 Cooper S (58.6s), Geoff Dawkins' 1.3 Carlow Cooper S (59.2s), Jim Burrows' Swiftone 1.0 Mini (59.4s) and Adrian Webb's 1.0 Imp on 60.2s. Lurking at the back was Dennis Leach's 7-litre Boss Mustang, which Leach wasn't on hand to practise on Saturday.

Gardner made a poor start, anxious not to spin the wheels too much on the soaking wet track, and Andy Rouse went screaming off into an unexpected lead which, to everyone's surprise, he managed to keep all the way. At first Gardner was well back, with Vince Woodman's incredibly rapid 1300 Escort snapping at his heels, with Les Nash holding a fine fourth place.



DEREK HUNTLEY'S Escort leads Bill Dryden's Fireza through the Esses during the wet Special Saloon car race.

May split the field when he spun at the Caravan corner, slid gently backwards into the rails and had to be push-started. His Escort was not responding properly to the throttle, and was lapped by half distance. In the second half of the race Gardner shook off the determined Woodman and set off to catch Rouse, getting on his tail with three laps to run. The Escort driver was well in command though, and led home by 0.3s. Woodman was an easy third followed by Alec Poole, who dealt with Mick Osborne in a spectacular passing movement while the Mini was momentarily baulked by May at the McRobert

remained quite stable during this heat, though Hanson made unsuccessful challenges throughout the last four laps, Hasemi finishing some way back ahead of a lonely Howes, and Gunn eventually heading Mowatt. McGovern made no progress through the field, his Imp not handling too well with new suspension, but he did make the final.

Overall: 1, J. Buncombe (2.0 Ford Escort RS) 10m 18.6s (59.94 mph); 2, P. Hanson (1.3 Ford Escort GT); 3, M. Hasemi (1.3 Datsun Sunny); 4, D. Howes (6.4 AMC Javelin).

Over 2000 cc: 1, Howes, 10m 34.6s (speed not given).  
1300 to 2000 cc: 1, Buncombe, only starter. Fastest lap: Hanson, 1m 00.6s (61.8 mph).

Up to 1000 cc: 1, I. Goodwin (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 10m 50.2s; 2, W. McGovern (1.0 Sunbeam Imp); 3, M. Adams (1.0 Sunbeam Imp). Fastest lap: Goodwin, 1m 02.8s.

## FORMULA FORD — 10 laps

Rothmans Championship leaders Graham Cuthbert and Stuart Lawson made off with this event, finishing in points order to consolidate their positions. Lawson led for the first four laps in his Hawke DL10 but a lurid slide in the Arena start/finish area dropped him back behind Cuthbert, who was running in his Van Diemen for the second time. The former Scottish go-kart champion was revelling in the wet weather handling of his new car and put 13s between himself and Lawson by the finish, followed at a distance by Norman Dickson who brought his Crossle out of the rack ahead of David Steedman's Hawke. John McGilvray who is lying third in the championship spun away his fifth place with only a couple of laps to run.

G. Cuthbert (Van Diemen-Scholar 73F), 10m 00.8s (61.71 mph); 2, S. Lawson (Hawke DL10); 3, N. Dickson (Crossle); 4, D. Steedman (Hawke DL9). Fastest lap: Cuthbert, 58.7s (63.17 mph).

## SPECIAL SALOONS OVER 1000 cc — 10 laps

Wet conditions were just what Jim Dryden needed to collect the chequered flag with his Longman 1.3 Mini, beating Derek Huntley's 1.8 Escort by 1s on the road, and by 11s when a penalty had been added for a too eager start. Huntley's penalty left Doug Niven through to the second place on the result sheet, though his Celtic Homes Boss Escort certainly looked a handful: it boasts a 530 bhp Ford 5.7 V8, March F1 suspension, Jaguar inboard rear discs and McLaren driveshafts, and handles well on fast corners according to Niven. There aren't any of those at Ingliston.

It took Dryden half the race to get past Huntley, though the penalty made this academic, and it took Niven almost as long to get past Bill Dryden's SMT 2.2 Vauxhall Fireza which sounded good. Once overtaken Bill Dryden dropped back, almost into the clutches of Frank Gunn's Cooper S.

Overall: 1, J. Dryden (1.3 Longman Mini), 10m 26.0s (61.18 mph); 2, D. Niven (5.7 Boss Escort); 3, D. Huntley (1.8 Ford Escort); 4, W. Dryden (2.2 Vauxhall Fireza).

Over 1300 cc: 1, Niven, 10m 32.2s; 2, Huntley; 3, W. Dryden. Fastest lap: Niven, 1m 01.4s (60.39 mph).

1000 to 1300 cc: 1, Dryden; 2, F. Gunn (1.3 Arden Cooper S); 3, E. Paterson (1.3 Colvend Mini). Fastest lap: Dryden, 1m 01.2s (60.58 mph).

## HISTORIC SPORTS CARS — 15 laps

Fifteen laps was rather much for a handful of historic sports cars, most of them Lotus 11's, but some antics kept the crowd amused. Initially the lead was held by Terry Harrison, a sometime M/V Historic contributor, driving his Lotus II Le Mans, but after two laps he succumbed to Alan Brownlee's Lotus II and then to Miles Hopperton's Lotus II. Hopperton making an excellent climb through the field after an indifferent start.

Once ahead Hopperton streaked away into the distance, while Brownlee dropped back with a rain-soaked engine sounding sicker every lap. Ken Rogers moved up to claim second place from Harrison, while further back John Lucas amused the crowd at Ares by overtaking Hugh Clifford's Tojeiro in a rather rash manoeuvre, spinning his Porsche 356 and making Clifford waltz in unison. Both set off, but Lucas spun again and didn't reappear.

I. M. Hopperton (1.1 Lotus II), 18m 01.0s (51.45 mph); 2, K. Rogers (2.0 Lotus Bristol Mk10); 3, T. Harrison (1.1 Lotus II); 4, D. Stephenson (1.1 Lotus II). Fastest lap: Hopperton, 1m 09.8s (53.12 mph).

## FORMULE LIBRE — 15 laps

"Don't blink, ladies and gentlemen, now you see it, now you don't." The commentator might have summed up the libre race thus, so rapid was the changing scenery on every lap. Giving his Lotus 69 BDF an airing, Johnny Blades leapt straight into the lead from Tony Charnell's Gropa-FVC, but at the hairpin first time round Blades revolved harmless and restarted well back behind the tail-enders, after a push-start.

At the end of the first lap Charnell was narrowly ahead of the Brabham BT36s of Iain McLaren and Bob Leckie, the Singer Cheamo driver acclimatising well in the rain in his second single-seater drive. Behind them were K. Allen whose Chevron B15 later retired against the Armo at the hairpin, Doug Thomson's Ecosse Imp single-seater, and David Steedman's FF Hawke which soon spun down the field.

The two Brabhams dumped Charnell back to third place after three laps, and the Gropa soon departed to the paddock with a waterlogged engine. This left Allen's Chevron in third place until his nonsense, but eyes were turned to Johnny Blades who was making spectacular progress through the field. At half distance he was ninth, after 11 laps he indulged in a quick spin at the pits bend and continued, and by the end he was in third place with the fastest lap of the day under his belt. It was quite an achievement to lap in 56s, for the conditions were no better than they had been all afternoon.

Leckie scored a nice win, beating McLaren (who leads the Ingliston libre championship) by almost 10 seconds with Blades a fine third, then completing the runners on 15 laps were the Formula Fords of A. D. Jeffrey and Harry Acheson. Doug Thomson's fine run in the Ecosse was delayed by a spin at Caravan corner which cost him a likely third or fourth place, instead of which he collected seventh place a lap down on Leckie.

1, B. Leckie (1.9 Brabham-FVC BT36), 14m 38.4s (63.31 mph); 2, I. McLaren (1.8 Brabham-FVC BT36); 3, J. Blades (1.8 Lotus-BDF 69); 4, A. Jeffrey (1.6 Elden Mk10A FF). Fastest lap: Jeffrey, 56.0s (66.21 mph).

Continued on page 27

## Ingliston

● Continued from page 11

### GROUP 2 FINAL — 20 laps

Bill McGovern didn't make the start, his Imp stuttering to a standstill after one (of two) warm-up laps and refusing to fire up again despite the persuasion of George Bevan. Frank Gardner wasn't about to be caught out twice, and although Rouse forged ahead for the first 50 yards Gardner bravely went through on the inside approaching the Esses. And although the rain got heavier, Gardner was there for keeps.

Poole and Howes had a coming-together on the first lap and although damage to both cars was fairly minor Howes retired to the paddock while Poole pressed on with his front tyre touching the wheel arch on right lock. Poole had dropped to the back of the field, while at the other end of the chart Gardner was busy putting some daylight between his Camaro and the 2-litre Escort, followed at a respectful distance by Hanson's 1.3 Escort, Buncombe's 2.0 Escort, Woodman's 1.3 Escort and Hasemi's Datsun. Hanson was going really well, getting to grips with Rouse's more powerful Escort and challenging on occasions, but Hasemi was making ground on the four Ford drivers and there was a flurry on the ninth lap when Hanson and Woodman touched. Hanson dropped back and continued but Woodman made a nasty mess of his Escort's nose against the Armco.

Immediately Hasemi closed up on Rouse and with 11 laps run the Japanese driver was through to second place, setting off in pursuit of Gardner. Normally the idea of a battle between these two would be unthinkable, but it wasn't a normal day. Gardner was delayed slightly working through the queue of back-markers attending Leach, and Hasemi was suddenly right there on the Camaro's tail.

Chilly thoughts must have crossed Gardner's mind, and at the hairpin on the 14th lap the Datsun actually got alongside. But it wasn't hari kari time for the Australian, for as Hasemi ran his wheel along the corrugated kerb something broke on the steering, and his race was over; he did get the fastest lap of the race for his effort though.

Now Rouse was second again, but two laps later his propshaft broke and the Escort clanked to a halt. So Hanson was second, more than 10 seconds adrift of Gardner with four laps still to run, and Jonathan Buncombe was comfortable in third place but not about to challenge Hanson. Osborne was a lonely fourth from Gunn and Nash, while in seventh place (and lapped) Poole crossed

the line almost completely out of control with a deflated front tyre coming off the rim.

Overall: 1, F. Gardner (7.0 Chevrolet Camaro), 20m 10.4s (61.27 mph); 2, P. Hanson (1.3 Ford Escort GT); 3, J. Buncombe (2.0 Ford Escort RS); 4, M. Osborne (1.3 Cooper S).

Over 2000 cc: 1, Gardner; 2, D. Leach (7.0 Ford Boss Mustang). Only finishers. Fastest lap: Gardner, 58.4s.

1301 to 2000 cc: 1, Buncombe, 20m 26.6s (speed not given); 2, N. May (2.0 Ford Escort RS); 3, A. Rouse (2.0 Ford Escort), 15 laps. Fastest lap: Rouse, 58.6s (speed not given).

1001 to 1300 cc: 1, Hanson, 20m 24.6s; 2, Osborne; 3, F. Gunn (1.3 Arden Cooper S). Fastest lap: Hasemi (1.3 Datsun Sunny), 58.2s (63.71 mph).

Up to 1000 cc: 1, L. Nash (1.0 Sunbeam Imp), 20m 57.0s (speed not given); 2, J. Burrows (1.0 Swiftone Mini); 3, I. Goodwin (1.0 Sunbeam Imp). Fastest lap: Nash, 1m 01.6s.

### SPECIAL SALOONS FINAL — 15 laps

Just as when he won his heat, Sedic Bell made a steady start — though on full rain tyres this time — picked off the men ahead and went away to an easy victory. Opposition this time came from Doug Niven's Boss Escort, which with a 400 horsepower "advantage" from 5.7-litres was a real handful on the still soaking track.

Niven led the first four laps, blasting his blue car along the short straights in fine style with Jim Dryden and Bell following in their Minis, closing up through the many corners. Dryden had a 10s penalty anyway for a push start which eventually dropped him from second to fourth place on the results sheet.

Bell dealt with Dryden first on the third lap, closed on Niven and passed him on the fifth, drawing away to the tune of 17 seconds at the end. Soon Dryden put Niven back to third place on the road and Derek Huntley set his sights on the Escort V8 but he never got nearer than two seconds adrift. The Imps of Dickson and Fyda both slowed with wet ignition leaving the Minis of Paterson and Gunn to pick up the remaining unlapped places, scrapping furiously all the way to the end with Bill Dryden's Firenza keeping an eye on them. It was a nice win for Sedic Bell, rounding off a wet but thoroughly enjoyable day's racing.

### M.L.C.

Overall: 1, S. Bell (1.0 Mini-Ford), 15m 11.8s (61.00 mph); 2, D. Niven (5.7 Ford Boss Escort); 3, D. Huntley (1.8 Ford Escort); 4, J. Dryden (1.3 Longman Mini).

Over 1300 cc: 1, Niven, 15m 29.0s (speed not given); 2, Huntley; 3, W. Dryden (2.2 Vauxhall Firenza). Fastest lap: Niven, 1m 00.2s (61.59 mph).

1001-1300 cc: 1, J. Dryden, 15m 37.6s; 2, F. Paterson (1.3 Colvend Mini); 3, F. Gunn (1.3 Arden Cooper S). Fastest lap: Dryden, 1m 00.6s (61.19 mph).

Up to 1000 cc: 1, Bell; 2, N. Dickson (1.0 Sunbeam Imp); 3, J. Fyda (1.0 Agra Imp). Fastest lap: Bell, 59.4s (62.42 mph).