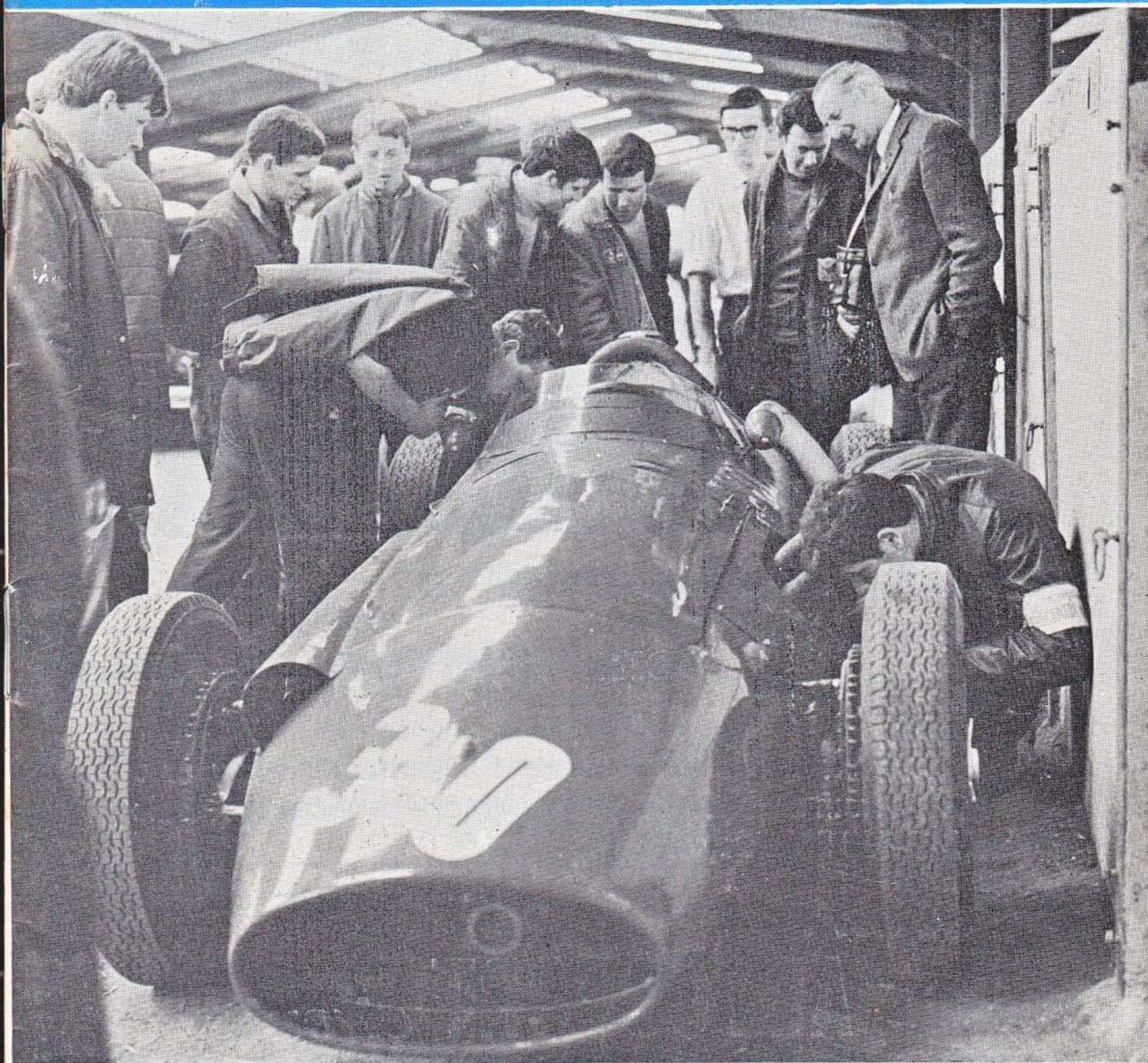




ECURIE ECOSSE

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Best for a long time

Ingliston August 11

by Alastair Balfour

This, the last meeting to be held on the short track, was a real thriller, and no less so for Ecurie Ecosse supporters. Both the Ecosse-Imps turned out, in the hands of the redoubtable Birrell brothers Graham and Gerry, after having modifications to the engines carried out. The fuel-injected car, No. 1 has a new Rootes Group cylinder head and camshaft, and is producing more power. This was reflected in Graham's equal fastest time in practice of 38.6 seconds, the best time ever put up by an Ecosse-Imp.

This, although it was unknown to members at the time, was the first meeting at which the Imps were raced while actually belonging to the Association. It was all the more disappointing when, as had happened before, unseen factors prevented the cars from fulfilling their potential in the main race of the day, the King Hussein Trophy race, run in two parts of 15 laps each.

In the first half Graham, with the newer fuel-injected car, was fifth in the first lap dash, and Gerry ninth. These positions stayed roughly the same until the end, retirements moving Graham up to fourth spot and Gerry to seventh. But in their efforts to go faster both drivers had hit the kerbstones at the edge of the track, and this was to have its effect later on in the second half.

The rest of the first half of the trophy event saw Bill Dryden, his Brabham on form for a change, take the lead and hold it to the chequered flag. Behind him initially were Dave Berry in his very rapid

Brabham F3, Willie Forbes and his Lotus 35-B.M.W., an unhappy Andrew Fletcher with his off-tune Brabham BT18, and Graham Birrell. By lap six Forbes had forced his way into second spot and looked like challenging Dryden for the lead, Fletcher having retired the previous lap. Eleven laps and Forbes was right up with Dryden after lapping some back-markers, but two laps later his gearbox casing split and he had to limp round to the pits and retire.

The danger gone, Dryden, who had earlier spun without losing the lead, coasted to the finish to win by 5.4 seconds from Howard Heerey's Chevron F3, which had come from nowhere. Berry, and Graham Birrell in the Ecosse-Imp, who just beat Aberdonian Richard Scott in a Lotus 41 by a nose for fourth place. Conspicuous by their absence at this meeting were Jock Russell and his new toy, a Lotus 43 with Ford V8 motor, Jock apparently having starting money troubles with the S.M.R.C.

The second heat saw a sad blow to Ecurie Ecosse even before the starter's flag fell. On the way up to the circuit from the paddock it was noticed that a front suspension bracket on Graham's car had failed. This was repaired at once, but too late for the race, so our fastest car was out. As if this was not enough, on the second lap Gerry, who had been in sixth place, came into the pits with the same trouble, and retired. A sad finish to a very promising start.

Bill Dryden won this heat as well, the duel victory giving him

eleven valuable points to the Callands Trophy Formula Libre Championship, for which Willie Forbes is still commandingly in the lead despite his failure to gain any points at this meeting. Dryden had no competition as both Forbes and Fletcher failed to start, so it was left to Richard Scott to come home in second place, just ahead of Tony Charnell's Lola 55 and Ronnie Mackay's Brabham. Howard Heerey retired on lap eight when in second spot.

With four saloon races out of nine events, thrills and spills were to be expected, but despite this the first race, for saloons up to 1,000 c.c., was a procession, Jim Currie's Mini-Cooper 'S' leading home Andrew Bonar's A40 and Emslie's Riley Elf.

However it was a different story in the event for saloons over 1 litre. With Graham Birrell's Perdal Escort—now fully sorted and very very fast—"Sassenach" John Handley's Don Moore-tuned Cooper S, and Davy Muter's similar car in the front row of the grid, exciting things were promised, and happened. From the start the first five cars, Birrell, Muter, Handley, Dryden and Borrowman, tore round very close together. Then on the sixth lap Handley and Borrowman both passed the men ahead of them, the order now reading Birrell, Handley, Muter, Borrowman and Jim Dryden. Handley, who must have the fastest Mini ever to appear at Ingliston, began to challenge Birrell, not bad for 1,275 c.c. as against 1,790! However, the Scot managed to lead past the chequered flag, just 5.4 seconds covering the first five cars home.

Following all this excitement was the Marque Cars event, which produced a laugh on the warming-up lap when a wheel fell off a Turner touring past the grandstands at 30 m.p.h. The three-wheeled car

ground to a halt on the front brake disc and the driver clambered out somewhat shame-faced, wishing he had remembered to check up on the knock-on nut.

Andrew Cowan in Ian Scott Watson's standard Lotus Elan Plus 2 was entered, the winner on paper. However, after one lap Cowan toured into the paddock to retire with unspecified trouble, and Bill Dryden, in the second smallest-engined car in the event, took the lead with a Honda S800. And if this wasn't incredible enough he then proceeded to pull away from second man Tommy Thomson in a Jaguar E type complete with racing mods! Dryden finally won by 13.6 seconds, with another Honda driven by George Taylor in third spot.

The Formula Ford race was won, just, by Harry Gilbert's immaculately turned-out Lotus 51 from Richard Mallock in the "anodised sink unit" built by his father.

Bill Borrowman had a convincing win in the second race for saloons up to 1,000 c.c. in his BOX I Cooper S entered by Moir & Baxter. Behind him until the second last lap of the ten-lap race was Bob Haining in his Imp, who had what looked like a very spectacular blow-up, coasting into the pits with vapour pouring from the engine compartment and the driver holding his door open to let the fumes out.

This let Ronnie McCutcheon into second spot with his Cooper S, and David Stewart took third in another Imp.

The event for Special GT cars saw a good scrap for the lead between John Nicholson and his Jaynick GT—a converted Lotus 23B—and George Silverwood in a Mercury GT. Nicholson eventually took the honours with John Milne third in Bill Shepherd's very fast M.G. Midget.

After this race the Marquis of

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