

MGCC Race Report – Round 3 Donington Park - 31st May 2015

Sunday 31st May saw the MG Car Club head to Donington Park for the second race meeting this month. Just a few weeks after the bumper race weekend at Brands Hatch during the Bank Holiday, everyone was ready for another thrilling day of action, and with changing weather conditions it was certainly eventful. With excellent grids, it was a perfect lead into the next round, [MGLive!](#)



[MGCC MG Trophy Championship](#)

Ross Makar claimed victory after a last lap woe for long time leader Jason Burgess in the opening MG Trophy race.

At the start, pole sitter Paul Luti and fellow front row starter Ross Makar were evenly matched on the run towards Redgate. As the field rounded turn one chaos ensued, when a number of drivers were sent into disarray.

After gaining composure, the race was on as Makar stole control at the front of the field. It wasn't long before he found himself under pressure from Burgess and Jake Fraser-Burns, despite a 15th place start for Fraser-Burns.

A change of positions saw Burgess leap ahead, to control the pace until the very last lap. As he looked set to score his first MG Trophy victory, a spin at Coppice on the final tour allowed Makar to pass in time to see the chequered flag. Burgess held on for second place, ahead of Fraser-Burns in third.

Dan Molloy claimed Class C honours, after surpassing his rivals. Luti had been in control of the class for a number of laps, however found himself immersed in battle mid-race. As Molloy edged ahead, Luti and Andrew Ashton dived into battle, with the pair side by side down the pit straight. As they rounded Redgate it was Ashton who got the advantage, to hold second place over Luti to the flag.

Class D was dominated by John Gil, who went on to claim the spoils, ahead of Paul Bryson and Tim Martin. Driver of the Race was awarded to Makar.

Makar doubled his successes in an eventful race two, after two attempts to start the final race of the day. A good start saw him take the lead as the race began, however after an incident involving Alastair Rushforth and Robin Walker, who rolled his MG ZR 190, the race was stopped.

As time began to run out, the restarted race was shortened to just 12 minutes, however after Rob Perkins and Cody Hill found themselves buried in the Old Hairpin gravel trap, the chequered flag was shown early.

Makar finished just 0.3s ahead of Burgess as the flag fell, following a thrilling outing. Jake Fraser-Burns claimed third place, ahead of Andrew Ashton and Dan Molloy. Ashton also collected Class C honours, ahead of Molloy and Campbell. After starting from the back of the grid, Paul Luti secured sixth in Class C.

Hill had enjoyed a storming race up until his retirement, to sit fourth after starting 24th, and so was awarded Driver of the race. Makar was awarded Driver of the Day for his double victory.

[MGCC Avalanche Motorsport BCV8 Championship](#)

Rob Spencer steered his way to BCV8 Championship victory, as woes befell early leader Simon Cripps.

Cripps grasped the lead as the race began, however he was hounded by Spencer for much of the opening lap. As the field came around to start lap two, Cripps dropped back, after seemingly missing a gear as he exited the final chicane.

With power on his side once more, Cripps was back on the pace, however suffered the same fate further on in the race, despite challenging for honours. Eventually his fault appeared terminal as he was forced to the sidelines after just six laps. The MGB GT V8 driver had suffered clutch issues during qualifying, which seemed to rear its head once more at the worst possible time.

With his chief challenger out of the running, Spencer remained virtually unchallenged to the chequered flag, to finish 3.489s ahead of nearest pursuer Neil Fowler. Behind, the scrap for third was fierce, with James Wheeler and Ollie Neaves each keen to make the position their own.

Neaves had looked set to claim the final podium spot in the closing stages, however after the position changed hands a number of times it was still very much open as they headed onto their final tour. As the pair exited the final chicane for the last time, it was Wheeler who had the edge, a mere 0.025s ahead of Neaves.

Class C honours went the way of Ken Deamer in his MGB GT V8, ahead of Jonnie Wheeler. Mark Scott claimed a Class B victory, while Simon Tinkler collected Class AB spoils. James Wheeler was awarded Driver of the race for his efforts.

[MGCC Cockshoot Cup](#)

Gary Wetton triumphed in a chaotic sole Cockshoot Cup outing. An eventful race saw many others fall by the wayside, as Wetton went on to reclaim the top spot.

A good start from the front of the grid saw Ashley Woodward and the fast starting Phil Standish side by side around Redgate. After a brief slip onto the grass, Standish was forced to play catch up, as he slipped back down the field.

In his absence, Woodward held onto control, as he edged out a gap of more than three seconds. However, after Howard Hunt became beached in the gravel trap at the Old Hairpin the safety car was scrambled to aid his rescue.

With the pace neutralised, Woodward's advantage was erased, as the field toured at a slower pace. At the restart chaos ensued, when Woodward lost out to drop down the order. Wetton immediately jumped back into the lead, which he held until coming face to face with the chequered flag.

Behind, Ian Whitt suddenly came into the pit lane from a top spot, nursing a smashed windscreen. Shortly afterwards, Paul Clackett dropped down the order following a spin at Redgate. With others out of the running, Wetton passed the chequered flag, ahead of David Morrison, who stormed to second place from 16th on the grid, and Woodward who clambered his way back to third. Morrison was awarded Driver of the Race in his bid for second place.

[MGCC Peter Best Insurance MG Cup](#)

Richard Buckley was the man to beat in the MGCC Peter Best Insurance MG Cup outing. After a fifth place start Buckley battled his way to the head of the field to claim honours.

As the race began it was Tom Diment who took the lead, as he led the way around Redgate for the first time. Chased by Ed Davies, the pair headed into a fiercely entertaining scrap, as they each tried to claim control.

A brief slip off track for Diment saw his chances diminish, as Davies sneaked ahead. Before long, Diment's second place also came under threat when Ben White attached himself to the rear of Diment's MG ZR 170. As the pair tussled, another moment for Diment saw him drop from second to fifth place. In his absence, White was elevated to second place.

As others battled, Buckley kept his head above water to finish ahead when it counted, seizing victory in the closing laps. A slightly early chequered flag ended the race before expected, due to a lack of time to deploy the safety car to recover a number of cars.

Davies held on for second place, ahead of James Darby, who moved up from 18th on the grid to finish third. Diment managed a fourth place result after his troubles, ahead of Paul Khouri in fifth place. Driver of the Race was awarded to Richard Buckley this time around.

[Lackford Engineering MG Midget & Sprite Challenge](#)

Paul Sibley dominated the MG Midget and Sprite Challenge once again, to triumph in his MG Midget from a pole position start.

A cautious start from the front row of the grid saw Sibley slip to second behind Andy Southcott as the field rounded Redgate. Before long Sibley launched an attack, as he fought back to reclaim control.

Despite starting 12th on the grid, James Dunkley quickly made his way to second place, to chase Sibley for the duration. As the pair controlled the pace at the sharp end of the grid, it was the battle for third place that remained under scrutiny.

After an entertaining drive through the field, it was Martin Morris who held on for a third place, to finish just ahead of early leader Southcott.

James Dunkley teamed his efforts with an extra award when he was awarded Driver of the Race by our commentary team.

[MGCC Drayton Manor Park MG Metro Cup](#)

A change in conditions from morning qualifying played a vital role in the MG Metro Cup race. A very wet morning gave way to blue skies and a dry track in time for the race, meaning a change in set-up was necessary for the entire grid.

Tom Sanderson overcame a back to back safety car period to claim victory, ahead of Ben Rushworth in the closing stages.

At the start of the race, it was Mike Williams who enjoyed a strong start to lead the way. However, after dramatically slowing through Schwantz, Williams was forced back to third place, handing the lead over to Sanderson.

As Sanderson and Ben Rushworth edged ahead, Williams found himself immersed in battle with Oli Hood, with the pair swapping places a number of times. However, As Williams found himself back in third place, a sudden engine blow out saw him thrown into a spin on his own oil as he rounded Redgate. With his car stranded, the safety car was deployed.

At the restart, Andrew Jolly emulated Williams' off at Redgate, again calling for the immediate release of the safety car. After a quick recovery, the race was restarted for a two lap dash to the flag.

With little time to make a change, Sanderson came through to take another victory, ahead of Rushworth and Hood. Philip Gough claimed a Class B victory, ahead of Justin Marsden and Mark Eales. Meanwhile, Jack Ashton was awarded Driver of the Race, after moving from 17th on the grid to fifth at the chequered flag, before being promoted to fourth after a penalty for Richard Garrard following a safety car infringement.

[Equipe GTS](#)

Tom Smith wrestled his way to Equipe GTS spoils after a tough 40 minute outing. Despite fierce competition from start to finish, Smith managed to hold on ahead of main challenger Rod Begbie.

It was a very even start from Smith and Begbie on the front row of the grid, as they launched themselves side by side towards Redgate. As they exited it was Smith who had the upper hand, as Begbie trailed.

After an entertaining few laps that saw the lead change hands multiple times between the top two, the pit window was open for the mandatory pit stops. With pit stops completed, the race resumed, with a dash to the flag.

Despite the pit stops, Smith held on for victory, to triumph over Begbie after 40 minutes. Brian Arculus claimed third place, Pete Foster fourth, Martin Richardson fifth and Robin Ellis sixth. Arculus was also rewarded with the Driver of the Race award.

[MGCC Motoring Classics Thoroughbred Sportscar Championship](#)

The first race start was quickly red flagged in the Thoroughbred Sportscar Championship, when two drivers were sent off the track at Hollywood. After medics and officials attended to the scene, the chaos was cleared and everyone deemed to be well.

A delay from the stoppage meant the restarted race was shortened to 12 minutes from 20 due to time constraints. At the restart we weren't disappointed, as action came in abundance.

Spencer McCarthy and Simon Cripps used their front row start to their advantage, as they battled for supremacy on the run towards Redgate. As the pair exited the first corner, it was McCarthy who led the way, however Cripps was far from settled in second place. As the pair rounded Schwantz for the first time, they toured side by side for the remainder of the opening lap.

The start of lap two saw Cripps able to edge ahead, as McCarthy trailed in a menacing fashion. Before long, McCarthy was able to sneak ahead once more, to hold the lead for the duration. Cripps chased for as long as possible, under his MGB GT V8 suddenly slowed, dropping him to third place.

As Cripps salvaged what he could, Ian Prior was promoted to second place. Ken Deamer collected fourth place overall and a Class D victory, after a tantalising tussle with Russell McCarthy for class honours. Deamer was also awarded Driver of the Race for his sterling efforts.

Iconic 50's Sports Cars with FISCAR

Mark Ellis remained unchallenged throughout the 20 minute Iconic 50's Sports Cars with FISCAR race, to seize victory.

As Ellis toured, the sun glistened off his MGA Twin Cam. After a strong launch away from the grid, he was able to steer his way from pole position to the top step of the podium, with an eventual cushion of 6.757s back to his nearest challenger.

Behind, Rod Begbie returned to the track for another race, to claim a strong second place finish. Graham Coles collected third place, ahead of Jonathan Smare, who worked his way up to fourth place from an 11th place start. Brian Arculus and Alan Kyson completed the top six. Our commentary team deemed Tim Patchett worthy of the Driver of the Race award.

Driver of the Race and Day Awards.

Race 1. MG Trophy C'ship. (Round 3). (Race 1): *Ross Makar* (3) MG ZR 190.

Race 2. Avalanche Motorsport BCV8 C'ship. (Round 4). *James Wheeler* (99). MGB GT V8.

Race 3. Cockshoot Cup. (Round 2). *David Morrison* (45). MG Midget.

Race 4. Peter Best Insurance Challenge. (Round 5). *Richard Buckley* (20). MG ZR 190.

Race 5. Lackford Engineering MG Midget and Sprite Challenge. (Round 5). *James Dunkley* (12). MG Midget.

Race 6. Drayton Manor Park Metro Cup. (Round 4). *Jack Ashton* (98). Rover Metro GTi

Race 7. FAIRFX Equipe GTS: *Brian Arculus* (7). Lotus Elite.

Race 8. Motoring Classics Thoroughbred Sportscar C'ship. (Round 3). *Ken Deamer* (75). MGB GT V8.

Race 9. Iconic 50's and 60's Sports Cars with FISCAR: *Tim Patchett* (25). MGA.

Race 10. MG Trophy C'ship. (Round 4). (Race 2): Not Presented.

Driver of the Day; Ross Makar.

Very competitive racing and busy grids made for another excellent day on track. After our second race meeting this month it is now all hands on deck as we weave our way towards the biggest event on our calendar, [MGLive!](#) in just three weeks' time. We look forward to seeing you there!

Words by [Leanne Fahy](#)