



MGCC Race Report – Round 1 Donington Park

The highly anticipated MGCC season opener at Donington Park was as successful as expected, and with some high class racing on display we're set for an exciting year.

Rob Spencer continued his strong form from last season, by scoring a **Motoring Classics Thoroughbred Sports Car Championship** victory. As he leapt to the fore from second on the grid, Rob was closely pursued by pole sitter Simon Cripps early on, before Cripps was caught by the Roberts Chicane gravel trap, shortly before the chequered flag.

The **MG Trophy** season opener followed through on the promise of action. As the race began all eyes focused on the head of the field, to see who would lead into Redgate corner. In his newly built MG ZR190, Paul Luti led the way, as pole sitter Chris Bray slotted into second.

By lap two, it was a fierce three-way fight for control, with Luti forced to defend from Bray and Doug Cole. Seeing an opportunity open up, Bray dived down the side of Luti as the pair headed towards the Craner Curves. Unable to hold position on the extremely fast set of curves, Luti yielded, before launching an attack against new leader Bray.

As the trio trailed one another, the positions changed once again, with Luti regaining his lead. His control was soon disturbed, however, when Cole fancied his chances. Able to assert his dominance towards the chequered flag, Cole held on for victory, whilst Luti raced to a strong second place finish, with reigning champion Bray third.

Race two was just as eventful, and with two safety car periods thrown into the mix it was a race worth waiting for. A close encounter for Bray, Luti and Cole again saw the trio sample one another's positions.

As Bray led the way, the safety car halted the action, as Jack Webster's stricken MG ZR was rescued from the bottom of the Craner Curves. The action was again restricted at the restart when Paul Savage found himself beached on the edge of the Redgate gravel trap. The safety car was called upon once more, before a five minute dash to the flag.

With two minutes on the clock, Luti was able to muscle past Bray, as he held on to score the car's first victory. Bray held on for second place this time around, with Cole third for another podium finish.

A magnificent array of MG machines filled the grid for the first **Lancaster Insurance MG Owners Club Championship** race. With Lee Sullivan on pole the stage was set for an action packed 15 minutes.

As those five red lights disappeared, Sullivan launched his MG ZR towards Redgate, with the rest of the field in tow. Side by side with Ben Palmer, Sullivan managed to hold onto his advantage as the field weaved down the challenging Craner Curves.

With the leading duo very much in control of the pace, the campaign for third grasped much attention. Class F runner Simon Kendrick looked comfortable in third place, until a feisty challenge from David Mellor began to disturb his rhythm. Despite the close attention from the chasing Mellor, Kendrick held on for third place, also crowned Class F victor.

Sullivan was again victorious in race two, however under unusual circumstances. A safety car appearance part way through to rescue a stranded car at Schwantz Curve meant the race finished in controlled conditions, as time ran out. Palmer was again second with Mellor third this time.

Rod Begbie turned 40 minutes of racing into an **Ecurie GTS** victory, with his TVR Grantura Mk III pipping Brian Lambert to the privilege.

Begbie held station at the front until the obligatory pitstops saw him abdicate his throne. Lambert temporarily took control when the pitstops came into play, however Begbie snatched the lead when the time was right.

Pete Foster won the battle of the Triumphs in an exciting tussle for third overall and Class 5 victory, ahead of John Andon.

A commanding performance from pole position saw Mark Humphrey begin his 2013 **Cockshoot Cup** adventure with a win, with his MG TF 190 proving to be a strong contender.

A speedy getaway saw Humphrey lead the way around Redgate, as fellow front row starter Gary Wetton slotted into second. Behind, reigning Cockshoot Cup Champion David Coulthard was hot on the heels of Wetton, keen to displace his opponent.

Before long the top two edged away, as the battle for third place ignited. Coulthard came under attack, when the charging Ashley Woodward made it a very close fight for third, as the pair dived for position for numerous laps. Unable to hold off the advances of the chasing MG ZS, Coulthard and Woodward swapped places, however the war was far from over. Determined to regain position, Coulthard made use of a few gaps, but as time ran out it was Woodward who prevailed. Ahead, Humphrey collected an unchallenged victory, as Wetton enjoyed the second step of the podium.

Mike Williams found his way to **Drayton Manor Park MG Metro Cup** victory, despite a brief slip out of contention on the opening lap. After starting on pole position, Williams had the edge into Redgate, however as the tarmac ran out, he was forced to the grass, handing the lead to Tom Sanderson.

With nine minutes left on the clock, Williams found his way back to the front, as he and Sanderson engaged in a fiercely entertaining scrap. As the pair swapped and changed, the flag fell in favour of Williams, with Sanderson runner-up, and Class B victor Thomas Grainger third overall.

Rob Spencer returned to the track for the combined **Peter Best Insurance Challenge and MAG BCV8 Championship**. As the 23-car field thundered towards Redgate for the first time, the lead quartet quickly re-arranged themselves, with Spencer again directing the way.

A four-way fight saw Spencer, James Wheeler, Simon Cripps and Joe Parrington share the spotlight, before Spencer broke away on his own to follow up his earlier win with more success in the BCV8 Championship. Behind, Wheeler and Cripps plunged down the order when an incident saw both sent to the sidelines. Shortly afterwards, Parrington was also forced into retirement, leaving Neil Fowler to inherit second and Babek Farsian third. James Darby scored Class A and PBIC honours.

Paul Sibley battled his rivals and a safety car appearance to triumph in the **Lackford Engineering MG Midget/Sprite Challenge**. Ed Reeve leapt to the fore on lap one, however it wasn't long before Sibley took control.

With debris on track, the safety car was deployed early on, as marshals dressed some rogue fluid. An eventful restart saw Tom Neat exchange fourth for third, which he held until the chequered flag, also scoring Class B honours.

The MGCC will next be on track at Brands Hatch during the 4th-5th May. We look forward to seeing you all there!