

## **MGCC Race Report – Round 4, Cadwell Park**

Sunday 21<sup>st</sup> July saw the return of the MG Car Club at Cadwell Park after a three year absence, for the fourth round of the season. As the sun decided to disappear we were faced with cloudy skies, however the action on the track was as hot as ever.

The Peter Best Insurance Challenge kick started the day's festivities, as the drivers lined up on the grid for the first of their two races. As the five red lights disappeared pole sitter Alan Brooke immediately made good use of his advantage, as he rocketed towards turn one ahead of the chasing pack.

Behind, Neil Fowler slotted into second, after recovering from an accident in qualifying for the BCV8 Championship race. Before long Brooke had definitely asserted his authority, as his Rover Metro GTi disappeared into the distance, as a five car train battled for second place.

As Fowler defended his second place, James Walpole was soon forced to defend his third place, as the hard charging Peter Bramble launched an attack from fourth. As Brooke developed a gap of 7.4 seconds, his lead quickly evaporated when he suffered a bouncy moment across the grass on the penultimate lap.

With Brooke out of the running, Fowler inherited the advantage, which he held until the chequered flag waved to greet him home. Walpole held off Bramble for second place, with James Darby behind Bramble in fourth.

A dash towards the first corner in race two saw Alan Brooke seize the lead. However, as the field toured the opening lap, John Wreghitt swiftly found himself out of action. A brief appearance from the safety car saw the recovery team remove his stricken MGB Roadster before the action resumed.

Already with the upper hand, Brooke again returned to his leading ways. Walpole in second was forced to defend from Darby in third, but as the pair battled they found themselves in sight of Brooke. However, as the end neared Brooke proved untouchable, as he romped to victory, ahead of Walpole and Darby.

Drama hit Kevin Hewer on the final lap of the race; as he headed into the Mountain his engine seemingly gave way, as smoke billowed from his MGB GT. Unable to hold on, Hewer failed to make the chequered flag, handing fourth place to Clive Jones and fifth to Nick Arden.

The first of the MG Trophy races was certainly eventful. As the race began, pole sitter Paul Luti and fellow front row starter Chris Bray headed towards the first corner side by side, before Luti got the edge.

The top two soon pulled out a substantial gap to their pursuers, as the battle for third ignited. Jake Fraser-Burns' defence from Doug Cole in the opening few laps was soon put to the test, however after a bit of pressure Cole promoted himself to third and set about chasing the lead duet.

With just six laps completed drama struck when Andrew Colebrooke's MG ZR 160 collided with the tyre barrier very heavily. After a very brief appearance of the safety car, the red flag was thrown as officials attended to Andrew and his stricken car. With the premature end to the race came victory for Luti, with Bray classified second and Cole third.

Having reclaimed his spot at the front of Class C moments before Colebrooke's incident, Andrew Ashton was crowned Class C victor, ahead of Tom Butler.

The second MG Trophy race brought more excitement, with thrilling battles in both Class B and Class C.

It was a reverse situation at the front this time around, with Bray leading the way from Luti and Cole. As the top three broke clear of the chasing pack, the pressure was on for Bray to defend as his rivals kept him on his toes. Before long it became a two way fight, when Cole slowly crept into the pits and into retirement.

Luti tried his utmost to advance on his second place, but was unable to slip by Bray, contained by the narrow tarmac underneath them. The pair battled ferociously to the chequered flag, but it was Bray who held on for honours.

Class C was a hive of activity, with Butler scoring the victory, and third overall, this time around. Alastair Rushforth held on for second place, as the battle for third place kept everyone guessing. Andrew Ashton and Sarah Budby roared around the Cadwell Park circuit, as they shared the tarmac lap after lap. As the final lap approached it was Budby who outpaced her rival for third, with Ashton fourth.

The action at the front of the BCV8 Championship definitely grabbed the attention of the fans, when Rob Spencer and pole man Ian Prior roared around the fast and twisty circuit nose to tail for the full 20 minutes. With mere millimetres separating the two MGB GT V8 machines, it was Spencer who grabbed success, despite Prior's best efforts.

As the race got underway, it was Spencer who leapt to the fore as Prior slotted in behind. The pair chased one another lap after lap, with the gap between them virtually nothing. Eventually their fun came to an end by the appearance of the chequered flag, to crown Spencer as winner, just 0.5 seconds ahead. James Wheeler finished in a solitary third place, ahead of Ken Deamer and Mark Scott. Neil Fowler returned for his second race of the day, however after obtaining severe damage to his MGB GT in qualifying this morning he raced in his MGC, from the back of the grid to sixth place.

Mike and Williams and Tom Sanderson provided great entertainment during the sole Drayton Manor Park MG Metro Cup race. As the race began, a flying getaway from Sanderson gave him the lead he desired, as Williams, Neal Gardiner and Dick Trevett headed into turn one side by side.

After trailing Gardiner, Williams was close enough to make his move on lap two, when he elevated himself to second before closing in on Sanderson. With the top two engaged in a fierce tussle, the battle for supremacy was certainly on, and it only became more ferocious as we neared the chequered flag.

A brief grassy moment for Williams in the closing stages brought intrigue to the top two, as we awaited the outcome. However, as the pair negotiated back markers they were closer than ever. As the final lap arrived, Williams saw his chance to better his position, when he dived past Sanderson and into the lead. The pair eventually finished 0.8 seconds apart, with Trevett third, Thomas Grainger fourth and Jonathan Woodcock fifth.

The Ecurie GTS race brought more intrigue to the track as Malcolm Gammons battled his way to his first win of the season. Pressure in the early stages of the 30 minute encounter came in the form of Rod Begbie's TVR Grantura MKIII, as the latter kept the battle alive.

As early challenger Mike Harris fell by the wayside, it became a two way fight for honours. Gammons held the control for much of the outing, until Begbie saw his opportunity in the second half of the race. With a daring move around the outside into turn one, Begbie grasped his chance to leap ahead of Gammons; however after a bit of a moment at the top of the Mountain section of the circuit for Begbie, Gammons regained control.

With just a few laps to go, Begbie disappeared from his second place, after a mishap at the Hairpin. An appearance of the safety car saw the race pace neutralised, before a one lap dash to the flag. With his chief competition out of the running, Gammons succeeded to score victory, ahead of John Yea and David Russell-Wilks, making it a trio of MGB Roadsters in the top three.

After a number of retirements, there were just eight cars who took the chequered flag, with Richard McKoen, Craig Taylor, James Marsden, Graham Bates and Colin Newbold completing the line-up.

A restarted outing for the Thoroughbred Sports Car Championship saw Rob Spencer chased all the way to victory once again by Ian Prior.

Spencer got the jump on his rivals in the first getaway, however after Mark Campbell found himself engulfed by the tyre barrier, the safety car was released. After trailing the safety car for a number of laps the red flag made another appearance, whilst officials repaired the surrounding barrier.

After a speedy repair job, the race was restarted, with Spencer and Prior very much in control for the duration. With six laps completed, the chequered flag was shown, separating the top two by just 0.5 seconds. Ken Deamer improved to third place from 14<sup>th</sup> on the grid, while Peter Barnard held on to fourth place ahead of the chasing Mark Scott. After being pushed from the grid into the pitlane at the restart, Barry Holmes worked his way up to sixth place.

David Morrison's commanding drive in the Cockshoot Cup saw him steer his way through the twists and turns of Cadwell from pole to victory.

As Morrison rounded the first corner in front, chief Class C challengers David Coulthard and Ashley Woodward were side by side. However, as the opening lap developed Woodward found himself out of the running as he dropped down the field.

Down but certainly not out, Woodward launched an attack that saw him try to reclaim his position. Up at the front Morrison exercised a controlled win, as Coulthard brought home second overall and another Class C victory.

After sitting in third place for much of the outing, Peter Burchill's position soon came under threat when a charging Woodward appeared in his mirrors, desperate to pass. A close fight led to Woodward sneaking past into third place, as Burchill held on for fourth.

Behind, the battle for fifth place was an eye opener, with six cars each keen to score the position. Ian Winstanley led the way, chased by Stephen Mckie, Simon Lowery, Jeremy Toes, Ian Wright and Adam Key. Winstanley held onto the advantage, as his chasers crossed the line in formation behind him.

What an eventful day it was at Cadwell Park – with safety cars, red flags and some thrilling action once again. We now have a bit of a summer break before round five at Oulton Park on 7<sup>th</sup> September, but we very much look forward to seeing you all there. We're sure you'll all be ready for yet more exciting battles.