

WISCOMBE HILLCLIMB

We all look forward to the MGCC SW Centre event at Wiscombe; we also hope it will be dry especially under the trees. Well this year it was wet and with light showers for most of the day meant that it never dried out. Despite the weather some 135 competitors turned up, almost 40 of these were driving MG's, (20 Luffield Competitors), MG models included MMM's, T types, Midgets, MGA's and B's, MGF's and ZR's. The rest of the entry consisted of VSCC cars, Healeys, TR's, Scimitars, Caterhams, single seater's and various sports and saloon cars.

The hill was a like an ice rink and massive amounts of wheel spin was order of the day with quite a few sideways moments thrown in for good measure. Amazingly there were very few accidents; the close proximity of the trees seem to focus the mind. One of the Healey Championship Frogeyes managed to roll which resulted in a front wheel coming off; I think the driver was OK.

Steve Luscombe won the BMC Cup for fastest MG with a time of 51.41, Andrew Till (ZR105) won class A1 with a 54.91, Chris Pamplin won class 2c with a 58.91, David Butler was 2nd with 59.06. David Jones was 4th in class A2 with a time of 56.91, I was 2nd in class A3 with a 52.91, Rob Orford was 3rd with a time of 53.41.

In spite of the conditions the day ran fairly smoothly, all credit to the SW Centre team who put a huge amount of effort and hard work into organising the event, I think we all endured it rather than enjoyed it. Let's hope the sun shines next year

EELMOOR SPRINT ROYALE

This is the penultimate event in the Luffield Championship and a few competitors were hoping for good scores to improve their positions in the National Class awards and the Southern Championship.

There had been light rain overnight but the forecast was for improving conditions. We had twelve Luffield entrants in total. As usual there was a variety of cars present, including a pre-war MG, MG saloon and sports cars, plus hatchbacks, kit cars and a 4wd V8 off roader which provided great entertainment with his 'drifts' through the corners.

For those of you that haven't been to Eelmoor the track is almost a figure of eight with the central chicane being driven twice, the return approach to the chicane being quite tricky to get right, the chicane is best described as an 'S' bend. The practise runs were on a damp track and with most people being careful we got our first proper timed run in before lunch break. By the time the afternoon timed runs started we were basking in glorious sunshine, almost too much of an effort to get out of our picnic chairs and into our cars. Conditions must have been ideal as quite a few record times were beaten, notably Richard Withers (MGB) 60.57, Dave Butler (TD) 65.56, Marc Hanson (MGF) 61.67, Tim Read (MGA) 68.31 and myself (MGA) 58.27. Dave Butler's score secured the Southern Championship win, well done to him

It was soon time for our fourth and final run, Rob Orford got it a bit wrong exiting the final corner out of the chicane and hit a fir tree at considerable speed, fortunately he was ok apart from a small cut to his chin and bruises. Sadly the car was extensively damaged. This was the same tree that was hit by a competitor last year, the straw bale put in front of it offered no protection, maybe, if in future the course remains the same, a tyre wall should be installed. Crashes like this bring home the reality of racing at speed in close proximity to immovable objects. The saying 'Live by the sword' comes to mind.

Commiserations to Rob, what shame to end an enjoyable season in this way. As would be expected in situations like this the Luffield 'Team' were on hand with help with the car and support for Rob. He advised not to drive home by the Medics, Andrew Till kindly fulfilled this role towing the trailer, which I'm sure was a relief for Rob's wife Christine.

As to be expected Stuart Gilbert was the fastest MG with a 54.61 in his very powerful MGB V8. Class awards went to Stuart Gilbert 2nd in class (3rd fastest time overall) and myself 2nd in class, once again trailing Matt Carter in his Honda S2000. Other than Rob's incident the rest of the day ran very smoothly, Farnborough club are very enthusiastic and credit to them dealing with Rob's incident and running an otherwise enjoyable event.

CASTLE COMBE PEGASUS SPRINT 2011

This is the last Luffield event of the season and by the looks of the entry list a very popular event attracting the TVR, TR Register and Morgan Sports Cars Championship rounds amongst all the other entrants. Yet again this year the format of the course was changed which may provide some variation but certainly mucks up our Championship scoring system. Due to absence, injury and wrecked cars we were a bit thin on the ground with only eight Luffield entrants.

The start line this time was just before Camp Corner and we covered one and a bit laps, most cars were well up to speed before they crossed the Start/Finish line and effectively got in a 'flying lap'. The weather was forecast to be dry with warm sunshine which is what we got although it was cloudy during the morning. With hardly any incidents the day ran well but as always with a large entry there was a lot of waiting around, being called to queue in the pit lane and then made to wait for up to twenty minutes caused minor complaints from some drivers.

The Luffield driver's best times were Andrew Till ZR105 104.16; Clive Williams MGA 110.98; Martin Wollacott MGA 111.19; Paul Constance MGB 115.77; Derek Porter ZS180 104.73; Martyn Phillis MGA 108.42; Steve Luscombe Midget 104.26 and myself MGA 98.64. None of us qualified for class awards, my excuse being up against a double driven 270BHP Ford Puma which took 1st and 2nd places in the class, I took some satisfaction from being 2 seconds quicker than the Ferrari 360 that I was parked near to in the paddock.

The Southern Championship and group awards are usually settled at this event, this year the National and Southern Championship winners had already been established but improvements in overall rankings was still up for grabs. The maximum 98 point score helped some more than others. As it turned out a few consolidated there Championship positions notably Martin Woolacott (MGA) Andrew Till (ZR) and Derek Porter respectively 3rd, 4th and 5th in the Southern Championship ratings and winning their groups. Andrew and Martin finished 5th and 7th respectively in the National Championship, well done to all of them.

Yours truly won the Luffield Championship this year and we gathered all the MG competitors plus a few others Luffield drivers who weren't competing that day for a celebration in the paddock. We all enjoyed cake made my wife Jane which was washed down with Asti, (I couldn't afford Champagne!) A fitting end to a great season