



# Fifties Sports Car Racing Club Invitation Trophy Race

## At the MGCC Meeting

### Saturday 8th September 2012



The MGCC put on a real classic clubbie at Thruxton, the only non-MG interlopers being Aero Morgans and FISCAR. A glorious sunny day (quite rare this season) at a circuit with a distinct "picnic" feel about it welcomed a disappointingly small grid of FISCAR drivers, some 15 or so.

Aurelias gracing the grid this time with Chris Gawne's welcome entry doubling the count with the Kennedy's regular car. We are most privileged to have Astons, AC, Jaguar, Healey and Lotus as regular entrants and we shouldn't be complacent, this is as fine a mix of breeds that even Goodwood can muster.

Andy Shepherd upheld non-Lotus honours and put the lightweight (no paint) AC Ace on pole, with the two Healeys of Harvey Woods and Mark Pangborn 1-2s adrift. We were in David & Anne Reed's back garden so the family Aston was sitting nicely up in 5<sup>th</sup> place with a truly impressive lap time of 1.40.6 (83.4 mph



Purposeful Jag of Graham Love shadowed by the Aurelia



Chris Gawne was a stylish addition to the FISCAR grid



The Campbell DB2/4 MK1 runs better on empty!

It seems that those who know Thruxton always come back, and those that don't know it are influenced by the opinions of others. Well here's an opinion for those who didn't make it: you missed a cracking good circuit and a real test of mettle, of man (Louise, Anne - it's a figure of speech), and of machine.

Practice was a big learning curve for me and I suspect a few others, plenty of advice available on the line here, and the line there, don't get this bit wrong otherwise it will ruin your lap..... All good stuff and it took me 5 laps before I got a clean one in, not dissimilar to learning the new bits of the Silverstone GP circuit earlier this year.

average). No-one was more surprised than Mark Campbell to find himself 6<sup>th</sup> on the grid after electrical problems upon arrival, and his "time" of 1.41.6 was recorded without a transponder. That was his first slice of luck, perhaps down to those "racy looks" that he wears so well . . . Enough said. Jags, John Hilbery's



David Reed n his own backyard racing Mark Pangborn



John Hilbery proved very fast in the corners



Andy Shepherd on pole pursued by Harvey Woods

Average speeds in excess of 80mph and a test of precision that I have never previously encountered. If you get the line just right, you fly around the lap, if you don't, then you make work for yourself, and you get a bit worried in the process.

The benefit of a smaller grid was the space available on this 2.3 miles circuit, which helped the learning process.

Elite and the Aurelias populated the posh end of the grid and we were all set for great race.

We all thought that Brian Arculus was sand bagging back in 4<sup>th</sup> on the grid, until he revealed that he had achieved this whilst stuck in 4<sup>th</sup> gear....

It was Harvey Woods who took the advantage off the line with a fine start from third, and he held on to the lead for



The Jags all enjoyed the fast straights . . . .



The Lotus power /weight ratio makes gears optional for Brian



Rare sunshine added to the festive atmosphere

The customary FISCAR turnout produced another fine mix of cars, 2

(Continued on page 2)

(Continued from page 1)

nearly 3 laps before Andy Shepherd, and then Brian Arculus (now with more gears than only 4<sup>th</sup>) reeled him in.



Less than 1 second separation at the chequered flag

Once ahead Brian had a point to make which was executed in customary style, but Andy was not far behind at all, around 1s, and just one wide line at Thruxton would be enough to let those in close pursuit through. Mark Pangborn and David Reed were the next tussle swapping places through the race until David suffered from handling issues with the lever arm rear suspension. Until then it was anyone's place but Mark took 4<sup>th</sup> in style.



Nimble Lotus escapes Jag sandwich

Next up was a really close one with the Jags of Kevin Zwolinski and Geoff Ottley sandwiching John Hilbery's dwarfed Lotus Elite. At one point Kevin had a significant advantage over John and Geoff, until he "had a moment" taking a wider line than expected in the fast bit and lost ground. On the last but one lap John got through to take 6<sup>th</sup>. As they went over the line these 3 cars were no more than 1.2s apart, brilliant stuff.

And there's more. Graham Love had his newly re-built XK150 out for the first time since Silverstone GP circuit after suffering heavy damage due to oil on the track. Jason Kennedy in the Aurelia and Graham had a monster of a race with nothing to separate them, Jason getting through on the last lap to cross the line less than a second ahead, a truly great race for both drivers.

Mark Campbell and Chris Gawne enjoyed their laps bringing up the rear and getting to grips with a faster than usual

circuit, challenging for both drivers.

Now you might think Mark is lucky, but hear this: after his electrical problems before the start (well done to David Reed and Davron for sorting that out) his race strategy included running minimum fuel load calculated to the nip. Either that or he forgot to fill it. He arrived in park ferme at the end of the race he noticed a judder, and then it conked out. Yep, no more fuel. Was that brilliant or was that lucky, you decide. Mark hadn't figured this out, and thought it was electrical gremlins again, and was looking for volunteers to push the car on the trailer. Davron had a different approach. Put some fuel in and drive it on Mark!

FISCAR race 5 provided a fine race for all, and a missed opportunity for those who weren't there. It was a lovely day on a really challenging circuit with excellent company. What more can anyone want?

*Next meeting*

