

Moran Motors Home, Again – by Peter Herbert

MSA Championship Meeting

It's widely suspected the reason Yorkshiremen fit double glazing is so the kids can't hear the ice cream van, a rouse that will have paid off on the baking hot weekend of 2/3 July and the occasion of the British Hillclimb Championship's second visit of the season to Stockton farm.

During his victory speech, following a 49.68s FTD and two Top Twelve Run – off wins, twice national champion Scott Moran made reference to the need to manage overheating tyres. Something of a Harewood first.

In the opening run – off Scotty's closest challengers were the locally built OMS 25 of Trevor Willis and the Moran family Gould 61X in the hands of father Roger, the V8s pursued closely by those pesky bike engined cars of Lee Adams, GWR Raptor, and local hot shoe Richard Spedding, Force PC. Wallace Menzies in the ever improving DJ Firestorm V8 completed the first six.

During the second, Roger and Trevor tied for second spot ahead of Menzies, followed closely by Chris Merrick's Gould Judd and Adams.

The first of the class runs saw Paul Webster improving on his own record with a 67.66s run, the Mazda MX5 two and a half seconds in front of the Honda Integra of John Gallagher in a Road – going Production duel.

There was another new record set in the Road – Going Specialist Production class, with young David Warburton at the wheel of father Allan's Caterham K Series seeing off much more experienced opposition with a neat 59.74s ascent, ahead of Karl Jackson in his skeletal Ariel Atom and Dave Wilson's Caterham Vauxhall complete with terminally ill crown wheel and pinion. DTA supreme Warburton senior reflected upon the monster he has created whilst languishing in fourth place.

The perennial Andy Russell, Ginetta G15, ran alone in the 1400 cc Modified Series Production class when Wil Ker's Mini expired.

In the 2 litre division jovial Brummie Ralph Pinder was made to work hard at the tiller of his Peugeot 205GTi by Geoff Stallard's TVR Vixen, the winning margin just over a second. Whilst in the unlimited class Settle Son of the Soil and former hill champion Richard Hargreaves drove his Mitsubishi Evo hard to an untroubled win, despite a most unusual practice spin at Orchard, to see off widely travelled Cornishman Geoff Twemlow's Impreza by some four seconds.

Following Chris Mason's attempt to be the first E Type driver in space at Shelsley Walsh (see brilliant U Tube clip) Team Spedding brought in new talent for Harewood, with team patron Haydn sharing with younger son Robert, of whom more anon. And with a record setting 63.82s climb, Haydn set a fresh unlimited class record in the hastily repair Jag, a second clear of the mighty Morgan Plus 8 of Mike Hall. Former record holder George Hopkins ran a close third aboard the ex works Kim Johnson MGB V8.

The first of the Scottish invaders appeared in the 2 litre Modified Series Production class in the form of Scott and Lesley Sheridan with their Suzuki propelled MK Indy, and egged on by Lothian Car Club's Billy Cater they pushed hard for victory. However JC Racing's Russ Cockburn was having nothing of that, and in a re enactment of the Battle of Culloden his charge, Peter Herbert, drove the faithful Westfield BDH to one second win.

But the tables were turned in favour of the Scots in the unlimited division when the "Munchkin", Les Mutch, made the long trip from Aberdeen worthwhile to take victory in the Dax Rush IRS shared with Mike Jolly, the two sandwiching second placed Karl Jackson who had cunningly entered the Atom in two classes, all three being covered by a little over a second. Les had been under Tim Coventry's fourteen year old record in practice, but Scottish "prudence" resulted in an under filled tank causing fuel starvation on the critical final run. Recent Harewood School graduate Brian Newton wrestled his Rover V8 powered Westfield to a plucky fourth.

A single shared Mallock Mk20X comprised the Hillclimb Super Sports field, and it was Ben Johnson, son of car owner Kim, who set the pace, a second and a half quicker than co driver Matthew Price.

The 2 litre Sports Libre class saw Mark Dempster to the fore, his enterprisingly conducted Imagination PH1 locked in a day long battle with the Force LM001 of Graham Wynn from which he emerged just six hundredths to the good. Guernseyman Tim Torode took third place following an equally close contest with hill regular Les Proctor, Mallock Mk18 and OMS SC4CF a scant nine hundredths apart.

Single seaters were next to be released from the startline, and it was the Tillicoultry Quarries backed Force HC of Redditch driver Dave Uren that set the 1100cc class pace, a tenth ahead of first run leader Simon Fidoe's Empire 002. Uren's co-driver, Nicola Menzies, the Grommit to husband Wallis, was a good third, closely pursued by Simon Andrews in an OMS 2000M.

A hotly contested twenty two car strong 1600cc class saw the usual suspects at the sharp end. Under the watchful eye of the "wee un", Raptor constructor Graeme Wight Junior, rapid Scotsman Lee Adams scored a five hundredths of a second victory over the JC Racing prepared Force of Richard Spedding with a sensational final ascent, but Spedding's impressive 50.87s record remains intact. On the lock stops as usual, Eynon Price was a game third in his Force, just ahead of Jos Goodyear, DJ Firehawk; Will Hall, Force; and Peter Newton in the ex Robert Kendrick Force, freshly rebuilt after last autumn's monumental Loton Park

shunt.

Morgan Jenkins showed a clean pair of Avons to his fellow 2 litre class runners, the Pilbeam MP87 seven tenths up on the supercharged OMS CF07 of Jason Mourant. Tony Hunt's blown Force PC led the chase, and it was good to see Midland hill regular Laurie Richie make a rare excursion "oop north" with the venerable Argo JM9.

Scottish infiltration continued in the unlimited class, with Tillicoultry Quarries supremo Wallis Menzies giving the boy Moran something to think about by equalling the orange Gould's time on his second run, the DJ missing out on the win only because of a fractionally slower opener. Willis, Moran Senior, and the GR55 of John Bradburn jostled in the leaders' wake, with Tom New in the GR55 shared with "Boycie" Merrick completing the top six.

Two other classes remained.

The HSA (B License Holders) class saw George Laycock in the wittily named Farm Special take top honours (it seemed very stable – ha ha) a second and a half faster than the Emerson Kent Peugeot 205GTi. Chris Flavell's similar Pug, and Alan Muggleston's Mazda MX5 followed.

While finally The Yorkshire Centre Members (B License Holders) class, based on a cunning handicap system than measured performances against class records, was a triumph for Ed Carter in his Jedi, a point better than Dale Cordingley's Radical. Steve Carter took over the winning Jedi to finish third, ahead of Richard Paterson, Raw Striker; Chris Gibbs, Caterham: and hillclimb debutant Robert Spedding in dad's Jag – a great performance that never once involved leaving the ground.

Observed basking in the sun on the hillside were Mr and Mrs Kenyon, the former dispensing invaluable driving advice to all within ear shot; former Lotus Seven all rounder Bob Moorhouse; and Elan pilote from the past Brian Lee, who was so enthused by proceedings that he threatens to dust off the old Lotus and stage a comeback.

What a wonderful weekend's motor sport this had been, thanks in no small part to the dedication and enthusiasm of the club's fearless marshals and committed officials. We now look forward to the August meeting in keen anticipation.