

LOCAL CONSTRUCTOR DOES GOOD

Peter Herbert

OMS racing cars dominated the FTD standings at Harewood's Saturday 7 July Championship meeting, a day shared with Sunday's British Hillclimb Championship contenders undertaking their practice sessions.

Despite a murky early morning start, and a track surface blessed with little grip, the day got gradually better and better, with a hot sun plus gentle breeze microwaving the asphalt to perfection; a point proved by Jos Goodyear who climbed the diminutive Raptor deep into the 49s, unofficially under the unlimited racing car class record, a portent of what was to come the following day.

The opening Harewood class was for 1400 Road Modified Saloons and Sports Cars, and the record holding ex Steve Foster Peugeot 205 was the sole contender, shared by its builder Mike Gee and Joe Jackson, son of former hill champion Karl. As befitting a Harewood School instructor, it was Mike who set the pace, six seconds clear of his young co driver, who drove sensibly and is gradually bringing his times down. However "Foz's" record was safe, rubber availability forcing the Team Geen machine from 13 to 15 inch rims, which appears to have impacted upon drivability.

The 2 litre split was decided after a close duel between Honda Integra drivers Daniel Hollis and David Blakeston, and that was the order in which matters were settled 0.44s separating the two. Pete Cahill, MGB GT, watched from afar in third place.

The unlimited division saw the Mitsubishi Evos of Paul Anderson and Jonathan Armitage do battle at the sharp end, with Paul always a little ahead. Yet only two tenths separating the waste gate shattering projectiles at the finish. Darren Richardson in a Subaru Impreza was third.

Michael Bellerby and Henry Moorhouse resumed their monthly battle in the 1700cc Kit Car class, and it was the former trials rider who came out on top, his Westfield almost a second clear, despite a second run excursion, of Michael's Sylva Striker.

Paul Blackwell won the unlimited class in the Caterham R400, two and a half seconds ahead of his sole challenger, Simon Ambler's Caterham R Sport.

Of the road Going Specialist Cars, it was the Quin Evans Vauxhall VX220 that held sway, some six seconds clear of the majestic white Aston Martin DB6 of Colin Kingsman, who put on a fine show in the big classic. Chris Thurgar- Dawson was a close third in his TVR Taimar, narrowly beating the Mighty Quin's wife and co driver Emily.

The amusingly titled Road Going Non – Ferrous Cars confrontation saw Ben Lovell to the fore, a second and a half up on a very determined Tracey Taylor – West, both Elise mounted. Graeme Laslett and Vic Lord gave chase in their similar machines. Of note was the winner's second ascent, which included a straight-on at the foot of Thompson Straight, a trip around the back of the marshals' post, and a rejoin of the course at Chippy's.

In the first of the Modified Production classes, Gerard Henry found himself the only 1400 cc runner in his Mini after Wil Ker's turbocharged version expired in a cloud of smoke exiting Farmhouse when some oil pipes came adrift.

Vini Dobson was the lone 2 litre entry, but after a promising opening run he parked the Golf tail first in the Clark's Rectacil.

The Fraser Jemmeson Alfa Romeo 155 and Paul Martin Mitsubishi disputed the unlimited division, but the Italian car was no match for the flying Evo, over nine seconds separating the two.

Scotsman Stuart Dow was the only Up To 1700 cc Modified specialist car runner in his bike powered Caterham, with predictable results, whilst in the unlimited class it was Jerseyman Mick Lancashire who called the shots, urging his yellow Avon Sprint to a half second win over Chris Gibbs' Caterham. The Autotune Gemini of James Wilkinson settled for third.

Hardy annual Les Proctor put the OMS SC4 CF to good use by winning the 2 litre Sports Libre class, untroubled by the Z Cars Mini of Chris Thomas, four seconds astern.

In the first of the single seater classes, Harewood fixture Graham Smith ran alone in his 1100 OMS, as did Leon Bachelier's grandson Ben Tranter in the Formula Ford class with his ex Peter Whittle Swift.

Finally, it was the family Owen that dominated the 1600 Racing Cars class, with OMS constructor Steve warming up for the following day's British Championship round with a three second victory over wife Lynn in the red and yellow OMS 25.

It was a shame that more Harewood Championship regulars did not take the opportunity to take part in this event, and the weather far exceeded what had been expected.