

# Rain curtails close encounters!

Steve Wilkinson

With an excellent entry list and the prospect of some fascinating battles for class supremacy it looked set for a great day on the hill. The weather forecast looked good and despite the day starting under cloudy skies the sun soon broke through. After practice and lunch the first timed runs started proceedings. However part way through the second runs the rain arrived which effectively ended the competitive runs – those venturing out didn't get close to their 'dry' times but at least they got some wet practice in.

First to the start line were the TVRs and in the first class for 4 and 6 cylinder cars Geoff Stallard followed up his class record at Loton with another at the Yorkshire venue. He sliced over a second off Stewart Lobley's record as Lobley came home in second spot. Sharing Lobley's Vixen was Dale Cordingley and a reciprocal arrangement will take place at the end of September when Lobley shares Cordingley's Radical – the TVR Handicap result mirrored the scratch result. In the second TVR class John Carter set the fastest time but on handicap Trevor MacMaster came out on top with Carter second and Alister Holloway third.

Next it was into the Harewood class structure with Roadgoing leading the way. In 1A it was another 1-2 for the nimble 205 but this time 16 year old Joe Jackson took the win finishing 0.01 ahead of mentor Mike Geen. Geen was probably distracted by also competing in his Mazda MX5 in class 1B. Jackson now has his sights firmly set on the class record which was just one second away but don't discount Mike Geen putting the youngster in his place. In 1B Karl Jackson finally won the class in his Honda S2000. David West took second spot in his 106 and Daniel Hollis was third in the first of the Integras. It was during the second runs for this class that the rain started to fall. Into 1C it was the usual suspects in the top two. Richard Archbould took the class from Paul Anderson whilst Fred Currell was third at the wheel of his Audi V6 bi-turbo S4 Quattro. Into the Kit Cars and in 2A Bob Bellerby was back sharing Mike Smith's Puma engined Striker. After playing himself in and making some minor adjustments Bellerby got within a second of his class record to take the win from Henry Moorhouse. Michael Bellerby in Bob's old Striker was third and Mike Smith fourth. In 2B it was all down to the first runs as during the second sortie the rain increased in intensity and the times fell away. Paul Blackwell took the win thanks to Richard Paterson's first run indiscretion. Simon Ambler was second ahead of Gordon Frame and a recovering Paterson. In the Specialist Cars class we had two former record holders and the current incumbent. Quin Evans lowered his class record but next to the line was Robert Pallett who immediately set a new record. John Graham was next in his Lotus 211 but he made a couple of mistakes on his run and slotted into third place also inside the class record that stood at the start of the day. On the second runs Emily Evans, wife of Quin, equalled her first run time despite the rain and was fastest by far in the wet slotting into fourth spot. The final Roadgoing class was for the Elises and up front Ben Lovell was determined to take the fight to Sarah Bosworth. Lovell, the former record holder, equalled Sarah's record on his first run. Bosworth then sliced 0.01 off her record to take the lead but the rain put a premature end to the battle. Next it was the Mod Prod classes. Ivan Russell was top dog in the battle for 3A honours setting a new PB in his BDA powered Anglia and leaving Gerard Henry in his wake. Mark Teale took 3B in his 206 GTi finishing clear of Chris Flavell and the rest. In 3C Steve Darley led after the first runs with Paul Martin 0.6 in arrears but again the rain

precluded Darley's planned assault on his own record although he did venture out during the third runs. In 3F Andrew Steel took the win from Paul Pocklington the latter making his 2012 debut at the hill despite two previous attempts to compete faltered with mechanical problems. In 3G Chris Hulatt, who now lives and works in Helsinki, took the win ahead of Mike Tate and Ian Farrar. The Duratec powered Westfield looked quick and Hulatt was starting to get into the swing of things on only his third event of the year. Sports Libres managed to garner enough entries for two classes. In the first all the runners took just the one run and it was Les Procter who took the win ahead of Ben and Kim Johnson in the ex-Ward Hillclimb Supersport Mallock. Graham Blackwell was fourth in his Duratec powered Fiesta and it was patently unfair that this sort of car should be thrown into Sports libre; there must be a better solution! In the second Sports Libre class there was only one car but two drivers. John Saunders had his immaculate ex-Malcolm Wilson MG Metro 6R4 and Tony Hart was lucky enough to be his co-driver. Hart took the class win ahead of Saunders who was competing in his first hillclimb – one can't count the Festival of Speed!

Into the Racing Car classes and in the 1100s Graham Smith again won and also set second FTD. Richard Vaughan took second ahead of Eve Whitehead. Bradley Dickerson took all three of his runs in the 600cc Honda powered Jedi and brought the smallest engined car home fourth. The Formula Fordies were next and Andrew Henson took the win with his one and only climb. Ben Tranter spun on his first run so it was co-driver Robert Spedding who took second spot ahead of Geoff Ward (Swift) and Alistair Baron (Royale). Tranter did take his second and third runs but the rain meant he was three seconds adrift. Jolyon Harrison was the only 1600 runner in his immaculate ex-Brambilla F2 Brabham which we will hopefully see out again in September. In the final 4-wheel class for the two litre racing cars John Chacksfield took the win and also netted the Alan Staniforth trophy for FTD. George Bleasdale was second in his V6 Pilbeam with the rotary Brytec of Brian Walker third.

The final classes were for the Motor Cycles and Sidecars and the riders entertained with most taking their second and third runs. Peter Jordan took the 250 class on his Ariel Arrow with the 350 class being won by Mike Tilley on his Supermoto Yamaha. Jimmy Hodges not only beat Tommy Hodges in a Honda CRF 1-2 in the 500 class but also set the fastest solo time of the day. In the 750 class Martin Robbins (KTM) finished well clear of the rest whilst in the final solo class Ben Wilkins on his Aprillia Falco headed Glyn Poole on the Buell. In the sidecar class the Foster brothers (Mark and Simon) were the clear winners on their Honda F2.

Once again the marshals excelled themselves and their rapid response to incidents meant that despite the rain the event ran smoothly. Fingers crossed for some better weather in September for the 50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary week-end.