

Thwaites lowers Harewood record

CHRIS SEAMAN emerged the winner of the fifth Castrol-BARC hill climb championship at a rather chilly Harewood on Sunday, where his Blota MK1C had little difficulty in taking its class and slipping under the record by 0.48s. His only challenger, Brian Kenyon, although first quite easily in class, was unable to go fast enough and had to make do with second in the series. He uses Duckhams anyway... Overall FTD was set by Richard Thwaites who drove superbly to crack Mike MacDowd's outright hill record of 39.14s by 0.67s.

The class run started with the touring cars up to 1150 cc. Graham Brooks' 1.1-litre Escort leading the way from the 998 Mini-Coopers of Keith Hardy and Roy Greenwood. The first record of the afternoon fell in the 1151-1500 cc category, with Mike Flather's orange 1293 cc Cooper 5 just scraping under Nicky Porter's year-old record, while Porter himself (1328 cc) claimed second spot a few tenths outside his own best time. Richard White's familiar RS 1600, one of the fastest saloons on the hills irrespective of class, mopped up the final Touring division, the only other sub-50s time coming from Peter Ormerod's Crow Engineering Escort TC.

Londoner Alex Boyle, in his usual Lorrie Lammann-entered Cooper 5, headed the 1000 cc special saloons from Peter Beadman's 999 Cooper S, while in the bigger class 1971 Castrol-BARC victor Jim Thomson had no problems with the Guyton Sandblaster 2.5-litre Vauxhall Firenza and won as he liked by some 4s.

The MG TC class had just three runners, the very closely matched Nick Taylor and Alastair Naylor being some way ahead of Richard Green, while the first of the Marque sports car classes fell, rather predictably, to Brian Kenyon's 1275 cc Sprite from co-driver Miss Pat Hopkinson, and Mick Merrills' idyllic MG Midget. His McLaren M10B still recovering from its roll at the Shell/RAC Harewood meeting, Richard Shardlow was able to concentrate in the 1306-2400 cc Marque class and zip his yellow 2.4-litre 911S Porsche to the top a small margin

ahead of John Ashcroft's rapid Fiat Sprint. Only two cars tried out for the largest Marque class, and both were TVR Juncos, with Fred Cliffe taking his ex-Tony Bancroft version (which uses an Ian Richardson-maintained motor) to an easy win over Howard Sorrell's rather more standard model.

Notable non-starter in the Modified and Limited Production Sports class was Tom Hayton's recharged Mini-Moroc which had a brace shunt. Not that he would have been able to do anything about Chris Seaman, who clipped a few tenths off his own record on the way to sewing up both the class and the championship. John Houghton, owner and constructor of the Blota MK1C that Seaman has shared ever since an errant lorry destroyed his Midget in July, was a solid second from the RWS Developments-prepared 1293 cc Midget, complete with Brittenized rear-end, of John Bury and Bob Speak. Last but not least by any means, John Pascoe persevered with the ex-John Burton/Tony Lambert as Ginetta G4 for another meeting, battling with its natural aversion to firing on all four cylinders.

The situation in the over 1300 cc Limited Production Sports class reminds one of the first scraps which raged in 1968 between the E-types of Jim Thomson, Alan Mountain, John Lambert and Co.; the names have changed, but the class is still a frantic 'E' battle. Phil Bennett, blowing a little of smoke, seemed to have the class well under control however, his ex-Mick Jones version being nearly a second under the old record of 45.54s. His time earned him the Guyton Shofstall Trophy, put up by Jim Thomson, for the fastest time recorded during the season by a production model Jaguar. Filling second spot was Fred Cliffe's ex-Keith Holland model from the Service Garage of Barnsley-entered 'E' of John and David Walker.

A mere 0.1s was the difference between Bob Prest in Joe Ward's impeccable Wardford Mk4 and George Whittingham's self-built DMW in the Chubmans class, the former being the fortunate one

to be in front. Chris Cramer's Team Castrol U2 M111 made the poolest of opposition in the poorly-supported 1300 cc GT/sports-racing category, recording a time which wouldn't disgrace a well-driven FVA-powered single-seater. Now, if he had a 160 bhp Holbay unit fitted in place of the BLMC mill... Tony Bancroft's Pennine Motor Group Chevron-BMW B19 had little trouble in the bigger GT/sports-racing class, setting two very consistent times both under Tony Harrison's record.

The vast quantity of single-seaters which always fills the 1100 cc racing car class at Harewood to overflowing was led by Ken MacMaster's ex-Voigt Ginetta-imp G17B from former autocrosser Dan Robinson in the old Wilson Filippaldi Lotus-Novamotor 69 which had a hair-raising moment on his first run at Farmhouse Bend and only just missed a telegraph pole by inches.

A disappointing non-starter in the 1600 cc racing car class was the Teichardt-BRM which John McCartney was to have shared with Peter Voigt, but the latter stripped first gear while making a practice start, and the class was left to Geoff Rollason's faultlessly prepared Lotus 69, this is powered by an FVA previously used by Ronnie Peterson, and equipped with FVC cams for extra bottom-end torque. Peter Kaye, now gaining more confidence in Ken Walker's Brabham-FVA BT30, was an expected runner-up from Peter Varley's Vegantene 16-engined Brabham BT21C.

A couple of McLarens sorted out the rest in the large racing car category, both being under McCartney's outright record of 39.14s, which was later to be demolished even further. Roy Lane's ex-F1 M14D on 39.03s and Richard Thwaites's Packmail F5000 M10B on 39.07s led the class, with David Hepworth, just outside the record on 39.34s, taking third spot in the Guyton Sandblaster 891. The others were well out of contention as might be expected and none broke 40s, Voigt's 4.2 Palliser-Repsco WJ111 (which McCartney was also driving) being the nearest with 41.38s despite wetting its plugs. Malcolm Dungeorth's sturdy Harris RJ15 and John Lambert's Leda LT22 followed in close succession from Jack Maurice's Palliser WDH2,

which is powered by the 4.2-litre Buick motor that Tony Marsh used in his Special at far back in 1967. Completing the competitive runners was Peter Meldrum, once so dominant at Harewood in the mid-sixties, in the troublesome supercharged PR2 which has never seemed to run really well since its debut in 1968. Of the others, McCartney in Voigt's Palliser simply wasn't used to the machine, while former Fireball expert Andrew Goodfellow appeared in one of the old 1969 Racing Car Show Cooper 190s, untraced, and powered by a 400 bhp Mathwell-Chevrolet unit on carbs, but the Scot has yet to sort the beast.

There were two run-offs of course for the championship and the overall top ten. White's RS retired after the first runs with a blown head gasket, Bury's Midget seemed to have a particular attraction for the grass on the outside of Orchard Corner, Lambert's Leda (blown with leaking head gasket and with intake understeer) took to the ditch at Farmhouse, Lane's McLaren went off at Country on the first runs without any damage. Houghton made two highly consistent runs to win the championship run-off and Thwaites set an astounding 38.47s on his first run to smash the hill record by over half a second.

To round the meeting off, Hepworth and Lane swapped cars for a timed run, the latter taking to 4rd and like a duck to water recording 41.57s despite a missed gear and the use of only 7000 rpm (apparently Heppy uses 9000 rpm) while the former took it cautiously in the McLaren and made do with 45.41s. Interesting though... G.L.S.

F1E: R. Thwaites (1.0 McLaren-Chevrolet M10B) 38.47s—outright hill record.

Class winners: G. Brooks (1.1 Ford Escort) 51.42s; M. Flather (1.3 Cooper S) 47.48s; R. White (1.6 Ford Escort RS 1600i); A. Boyle (1.6 Cooper S); J. Thomson (2.5 Vauxhall Firenza) 45.56s; N. Taylor (1.5 MG TC) 54.12s; R. Newton (1.3 A4 Sprite) 47.50s; R. Shardlow (2.4 Porsche) 91.15s; 48.75s; F. Cliffe (16.7 R. T. J. Rover); G. Whittingham (1.3 Blota-MK1C) 45.06s; P. Bennett (1.0 Jaguar 6) 44.56s; R. Prest (1.6 Wardford Mk4) 45.09s; C. Cramer (1.3 U-B-MG); M111 42.76s; R. Cresswell (1.8 Chevron-BMW B19) 41.54s; K. MacMaster (1.0 Ginetta-imp G17B) 44.18s; G. Rollason (1.6 Lotus-FVA 69) 41.29s; and J. C. S. 41.7. McLaren-Chevrolet M14D 39.03s.

Record.