

23.9.82

# Bolsover — the best man won

**SURPRISES** frequently happen in hillclimbing and last Sunday was no exception. Following a beautiful Saturday practice, when the weather was near perfect, Sunday dawned dull and wet at Harewood, as the BARC Yorkshire Centre staged the final hillclimb event of the year and it quickly began to look as if the Harewood season would draw to a close on a quiet note. Not so, for James Thomson, master of Harewood, had been dethroned at the previous meeting in August when Martin Bolsover had set a new outright hill record but, come hell or high water, Thomson was going all out to take that record back. The Guyson International driver led during practice but, following the overnight rain, Sunday's course had completely changed and the corners proved highly dangerous for the unwary, proven when even Roy Lane managed to spin his Pilbeam on his first climb of the morning.

Bolsover led at the lunch break, with Thomson second, almost two and a half seconds down. As the track dried out later in the day, Thomson came flying back with a 38.18 second time to take the lead and push Bolsover back into the runner-up spot as they went into the top ten run-offs. In third place was Lane, the only other driver to get under the 40 second barrier during qualifying whilst Malcolm Dungworth, John Meredith and Jim Thomson were next, as Chris Dowson brought up the rear.

All bar Dowson had made the run-offs, to be joined by the Clubman's Mallocks of Charles

Wardle, Bill Wood, Jim Robinson and Alex Graham. Graham shot off the course on his first run-off attempt, the course having dried further but still very slippery in the corners. The rest improved dramatically, with Wardle again proving he can get an under 1600cc car up the hill in under 40 seconds — the fifth time he's done so. But the battle was really on between Bolsover and James Thomson. The hill record holder went first and stopped the clock at 38.30s as Thomson stormed ahead with a 36.63s — almost there but not quite. The final run would be crucial. John Meredith whetted



*MARTIN BOLSOVER puts his Pilbeam MP50 through its paces around Orchard Corner at Harewood on his way to a new hill record.*

the crowd's appetite by pulling out a few tenths of a second over Dungworth but Lane was still third fastest after failing to improve, so all eyes were now on the last two men.

The mist was falling, the track not drying out any more and Bolsover looked to have little left to give, for he needed an almost impossible improvement of 1.73 seconds to beat Thomson and record breaking definitely looked out. But Bolsover was going for it. In the fading light he rocketed up the hill and the crowd sensed something big, a silence falling over the circuit as the

commentator announced the time — an amazing 36.28s — a new hill record. The crowd cheered, Bolsover accepted the congratulations but a lone car was still sitting on the line. Thomson began his climb, yes it looked quick but not quick enough. At 36.33s he'd beaten Bolsover's previous record but he was still short of the Worcester driver's latest offering. The disappointment was obvious but the best man had won and, as they shook hands at the end of the day, the hillclimb season at Harewood closed on a very high note.

G.M.