

The opportunity to race on the Brands Hatch Grand Prix circuit doesn't present itself very often so it was with great anticipation that the competitors lined up for the third meeting of the HSCC's new 'Chase Equipment Historic Modsports & Special Saloons' series at the weekend.

The weather reports had been anything but encouraging throughout the previous week, culminating in the cancellation of the Goodwood FOS the evening prior to our qualifying.

Saturday morning dawned and the rain steadily decreased leaving a slightly damp in places, but predominantly dry track. Oliver Reuben in the family TVR fresh from two victories at Spa the weekend before set the pace, leaving him with a couple of seconds to spare over the ever quick Myles Castaldini in the Davrian. Next up were a couple of the current Thundersports incumbents, Rob Wainwright, deputising for owner Paul Knapton, who was on previously mentioned Goodwood FOS duty, with a blistering lap in the 1040cc Maguire Imp, and Simon Watts, stepping out of his Thundersports, Chevron B26 and into his beautiful Datsun 240Z.



Simon Watts Datsun 240Z

Firth was super smooth Paul Sibley in the first of the midgets and next came Andrew Willis, who had made a massive and very much appreciated effort of several late nights to cure an electrical problem which meant he only got to the circuit at around 4.00am on the Saturday morning. Thanks Andrew, your dad, you and the car are an exciting addition to the paddock. Martin Morris was next, another making his debut in the series, although he had to hastily prepare another of his cars as his usual mount had developed a problem too serious to fix

quickly. Then came Steve Watton, just in front of another debutant, Peter Hallford in his tremendous and very well documented historic Boss Mustang.

Mixed in with these were the quickest of the 70's Roadsports cars, John Davidson in his newly rebuilt and very quick Lotus Elan, John Williams in his Porsche 911, Martin Pratt in his V8 Morgan and Mark Leverett in another Elan.

The afternoon weather was even better with the sun now shining down on a dry track, although the wind had increased to a fair old lick. At the lights everyone made an even start with some competitive but very respectful driving round paddock, up round druids and down through bottom bend, with no contact between anyone by which time an initial order had been established. Ollie gradually edged away but Paul Sibley who had grabbed 2<sup>nd</sup> allowed Myles to get past, and then proceeded to chase him hard all the way.



The Castaldini – Sibley battle raged throughout

Simon Watts, although never completely alone had a relatively quiet race in 4<sup>th</sup>, steadily pulling clear from Andrew Willis in his crowd pleasing Mustang powered Austin A30.





Andrew Willis in his Mustang powered A30 was chased by Watton

The real mover though was Watton, following an initial close battle with John Davidson's Elan; Watton progressed from 12<sup>th</sup> on the grid up to 6<sup>th</sup>, before his march was halted. He then came under increasing pressure from Martin Morris, but managed to keep the maroon midget at bay.



Watton in turn had to work hard to keep Martin Morris at bay.

The unfortunate pair of Rob Wainwright and Pete Hallford both failed to finish, Rob pulling off on the green flag lap, but Peter was hard on it and well in touch when he had to retire after 7 laps.



Peter Hallford, unfortunate not to finish in his fearsome Boss Mustang.

The race was red flagged after the leaders had completed 10 laps with a Porsche unfortunately stranded on the exit to the very fast Hawthorn bend, so a shame, but the right decision. Myles was lucky, because his engine popped a core plug and lost water just as the race was stopped, but he deserved his second place after resisting the attentions of Paul in his midget.

That wind I mentioned also played a part, Ollie had a narrow escape when at the crest just before Pilgrims Drop a big gust sent the TVR sideways at possibly the fastest part of the circuit, credit to Ollie's skills that he kept the TVR on track.





Ollie waving a wheel!

Steve Watton had slightly different experience, when back in the paddock he cleared, small sticks, leaves and even a crisp packet from inside the car all blown in during the race.

Although only a single race for this meeting, everyone enjoyed the day. The next round is as part of the very popular Croft Nostalgia Festival on the weekend of September 2<sup>nd</sup> and 3<sup>rd</sup>. We have had over 20 different cars on the track for the first three rounds, with more coming. It would be great to make the Croft round the biggest field yet, especially with the history the circuit has with the genre of Modsports & Special Saloons. There will be lots going on at the meeting, which we will tell you about more in the coming weeks.



The top three at Brands, will they repeat the feat at the next round at Croft?

Many thanks to Chris Dicken and Joe Hemelsoet for some superb photos.