

2023 Speed Championship – Round 3

Harewood, Saturday 3 June 'Classic & Vintage'

'King of the hills'

Well, the King did have a small part to play in shifting our annual visit to Harewood to June for the first time since 2019. Due to a certain coronation, the season's calendar suffered a knock-on from our own Wiscombe meeting being delayed by 2 weeks and the rest of the calendar squeezed in as best possible. However, as it happened, the day couldn't have been more perfect with Yorkshire bathed in dawn to dusk sunshine and 22 degrees.

Our entry was smaller than previously; Andy Raynor, Stuart Barnes, the Mackintosh's, Mike Wood, Fraser Deane and local Mike Bell were all engaged elsewhere or unable to get entries for an oversubscribed event. And hear this - it turns out that every event at Harewood this season has been full to capacity, plus reserves!

Although the event heralded VSCC involvement, the day was organised by the ever-efficient BARC team. This year we were allocated paddock slots immediately opposite 'the chute' rundown to the start, a location which worked perfectly. The class was further allocated end of batch slots which helped for smooth running of the meeting. There was also a refinement of the start procedure where each of our cars was held at a newly painted line on the 'chute'. This gave enough distance to bump start before being called individually only when the previous car had started. This also catered for anyone red flagged on the lower part of the course to return for a re-run without holding up our cars. Thank you BARC!

The small entry consisted of **Vic Deane** in his immaculate Mk.9, **Chas Reynolds**, making his debut at the hill with his Kieft still in race spec' after Snetterton the previous w/e. **Richard Robarts** was in his ex-Paul Hughes Mk.XI and newcomer **James Smith** in a venerable early mark Cooper, entered in a Cooper Special', a car which has seen a long life including having a water cooled Ford engine in the 60's. As for most who embark on a '500 journey', this was to be a steep learning curve for James. It was also his first hillclimb. The only twin in the B class was **Charles Reynolds'** Mk.VII.

Scrutineering was in batch order with signing-on formalities afterwards to save long queues, another sensible Harewood innovation. Being in batch 2, there was little time for niceties before Vic was first off and the valley reverberated to the sound of JAP singles. However, for Chas, having started well, it was a tow up the hill when the JAP stuttered to a halt. "Same as at Snetterton" said the 'bandmaster'. Diagnosis of the usual suspect electrics revealed no spark. Then the earth, earth wire, kill switch showed nothing. More searching to the h.t. lead showed an exposed wire which had chafed against the barrel. With a new lead sourced from a kindly Healey competitor, the car ran fine for the rest of the day. Meanwhile, James who had elected to keep his engine running before the start was hauled to one side by a marshal when fuel was spotted leaking from the float bowls. Another 500 on a rope to the paddock

where the next 2 hours were spent adjusting float levels to finally enable one mandatory practice run. Then, back in the paddock over lunch the search for leaking fuel continued; finally with one float bowl disconnected, James was at least able to complete two runs albeit at much reduced pace. Back to P1, Richard was able to complete his run after much delay at the start to head the field. In the twin, Charles was trying taller gearing and was experimenting with gear change points.

P2 was a calmer affair, with Richard again heading the class followed by Vic, now a goodly 3 secs quicker and Chas, who ran out of batch having sorted the electrics, although he was handicapped by both Snetterton gearing and learning where the course went.

A relaxed lunch break in glorious sunshine preceded T1 where Richard “had the car sliding nicely” to chop 1 ½ secs off his best practice time and Vic who reduced his time by 1 ¾ secs. With the Kieft’s tall gearing, Chas was having difficulty engaging 1st both on the line and through the bottom hairpin. James meanwhile struggled with a car which now had little power although the fuelling was improved. Charles was now starting to use the V twin’s prodigious torque and was just shy of getting into ‘the 69’s’.

T2 was a similar story with winner Richard just 0.14 faster than his 2022 time and Vic also finding 0.6 over his previous best. Chas continued to have gear selection problems losing over 3 secs to his first run while James was just glad to have got to the top after a fraught first outing to applause in recognition of his determination. With all to play for in the big class, a dislodged magneto hampered any aspirations of a sub 69 time for Charles.....the title of Terry Wright’s excellent book on the JAP twins comes to mind; ‘Power without Glory’!

Results:

Up to 500 cc

(Current record: Nick Reynolds – 69.73 on 03.06.17)

Pos	Driver	Car	P1	P2	T1	T2	Best
1	Richard Robarts	Cooper Mk.XI JAP	73.95	74.43	72.95	71.99	71.99
2	Vic Deane	Cooper Mk.VII JAP	79.33	76.12	74.39	73.70	73.70
3	Chas Reynolds	Kieft JAP	DNF	82.42	81.13	84.52	81.13
4	James Smith	Cooper Special JAP	DNS	102.14	99.63	99.08	99.08

Over 500 cc & FJ cars

(Current record: Charles Reynolds – 67.49 on 16.09.18)

Pos	Driver	Car	P1	P2	T1	T2	Best
1	Charles Reynolds	Cooper Mk VII JAP	74.73	71.08	70.07	102	70.07