



October 2009 – Newsletter

Dear All,

TDI Classification

On the 17th October, thirty Fun Cup teams arrived at Cheshire's Oulton Park, for what proved to be a dramatic penultimate round showdown.

Having traced the cause of the dire handling at Anglesey to a cracked chassis, car 147, Team Honeywell, was intent on a podium finish for the four hour race.



Above: Plimmer and Fawcett were in high spirits before the race and hopeful for a podium finish.

Honeywell's ever strong line up of Neil Plimmer and Geoff Fawcett had a poor grid draw of 23rd after the random ballot.

Plimmer settled in strongly at the start and climbed steadily through the field to 7th during the first forty minute stint. He then handed over to Fawcett and the pair consolidated each others' hard work, running in the top five throughout the second and third hours of the race.

Plimmer took over for stint five and took the lead from JPR Motorsport car 131, before being handed a devastating 'stop and go' penalty, for speeding in the pit lane, pushing him back to 7th.

A charge back to 2nd before the final pit stop, brought about a decision to double stint Plimmer for the final session.

Having snatched the lead from car 252, Happy Racing, a second 'stop and go' penalty for speeding once again, dropped the team back to 4th, with only twenty minutes remaining.

With the pressure of a victory firmly on Plimmer's shoulders, he proved his worth as a quick peddler, snatching the lead from Austin Reynolds in the 245 Team RAM car, to take a ten second lead, well clear of the field.

Neil Plimmer, said: "The strategy the team employed and the driver's pace and determination to overcome the additional stops brought about a very satisfying team result".

In car 245, Team RAM's two driver line up consisted of Austin Reynolds and Mark Owen, minus RAM regular, Richard Ince.

The pair had a lucky grid draw, starting in 3rd position and after the first lap, Owen was dominating the race.

With both drivers putting in strong consistent lap times during their stints, Team RAM were hopeful and remained in the top five throughout the race, despite an unscheduled pit stop to repair a damaged exhaust.

With only one pit stop remaining and a number of front running cars abusing the pit lane speed limit, a handful of 'stop and go' penalties were dished out, all landing in Team RAM's favour.

The atmosphere was tense in the RAM pit garage, as Reynolds was now in the lead, with only half an hour remaining. But, handling problems dashed all hopes of

that elusive first victory, as Plimmer's charge into the lead demoted Reynolds and Owen onto the second step of the podium



Above: Team RAM have been strong contenders all year, but they are still aiming for their first ever P1.

In car 251, Team "Cuisine de France / SPAR" raced to their third podium of the year.

Driven by Richard, Marc and Ian Connell with the addition of Franck Pelle, the team crossed the line after four hours just thirteen seconds behind the winners.

They drew a disappointing 26th place on the grid and Pelle had stormed into 18th place by the end of lap one, before handing over to Marc Connell in 15th spot for the second stint.

Marc Connell settled down quickly, putting in quick times and moving into 11th place, while Richard Connell continued the solid work by powering into 8th at the half way point.

They remained competitive in the second half of the race and were running in 5th place with one hour to go, but like Team Honeywell and many others, fell victim to the pit lane speed gun and were forced to take a 'stop and go' penalty, for exceeding the pit lane speed limit.

This dropped them back to 7th, but with many other teams punished for breaking the pit lane speed limit, Richard Connell took advantage and moved to 3rd overall, to take the chequered flag.

Ian Connell, said: **"Thanks to our engineer Stuart, plus Mike, Pete, Steve**

and all the Solutions Racing Team who did a fantastic job running and preparing the car on race day. Thanks also to Connell Racing crew members, Marvin who did our refuelling and Mike and Emma who ran the race strategy from the pit wall."

Petrol Classification

JPR Motorsport, car 110, was driven by Ed Cole, in his third outing this season, Angus Ashton in his first endurance race and ex saloon car racer, Chris Weatherill.

Cole started 14th and was 9th by the second corner, Cascades, and stormed ahead of key rivals (and Spa team mates) Credit Crunch Racing, a few laps later when Wheeldon was forced into an error exiting Island Bend into Shell hairpin.

Ashton played it cool with consistent lap times for his middle stint and Weatherill picked up the pace in stint three.

The safety car was out for a prolonged period in stint four when Cole was driving, which enabled some ground to be gained on second placed Credit Crunch car 103 and JPR Motorsport car 102 in first place. Another steady session by Ashton, left it to Weatherill in the final stint to catch and pass both Credit Crunch and also car 102 on the second to last lap, taking the honours as winning petrol car and highest placed JPR rental team, finishing 6th overall.

However, a jubilant team were disappointed to learn that due to the rear wing being a fraction outside the technical specification, a disqualification ensued.

Ed Cole, said: " Second and third placed Teams 103 JPR/Credit Crunch and JPR 102 were very sporting in saying that we had won fair and square. We live to fight another day!"

JPR Motorsport, car 102, had a strong line up of Radical racers, Jon White and Rob Wheldon.

It was only the second Fun Cup race for the team who were incredibly lucky to be drawn on pole.

Wheldon took the first stint, losing three places to the faster diesels, but was impressive and kept them in his sight.

After fifteen minutes racing and a twenty second lead, the safety car was deployed, which cancelled Wheldon's hard work. But, the experienced racer soon pulled back a ten second lead when racing commenced.

White enjoyed an action packed stint, before handing back to Wheldon, who was flying and pestering the front running diesels again!

The duo were on the long list of teams to succumb to the 'stop and go' penalty for speeding in the pit lane and so their twenty second lead in the last stint, dwindled to a mere six seconds, with only ten minutes of the race left.

White, who was at the wheel for the final stint and leading the petrol class, was being rapidly hunted down by the 2nd placed petrol of car 110, JPR Motorsport and with two laps to go, the mounting pressure proved too much, as he locked up going into the chicane and could only try in vain to keep up with the new leaders, car 110, JPR Motorsport, as they flew past him and down the straight.

Jon White, said: "I was devastated to lose 1st with only two laps to go and a huge amount of mick taking then followed, which was well deserved! It was a hollow turn of events when car 110 was found to have a low rear wing and we returned to 1st."

The JPR Motorsport/Credit Crunch team have been strong all year in car 103. Tim Wheeldon, Nigel Griffiths and Dominic Jackson have proved themselves a force to be reckoned with in the petrol class.

But, Friday's testing was a tense time for the trio, when Griffiths planted the car into the barrier at the exit of Cascades and the JPR mechanics joined forces until 3am on Saturday, to make sure the car was ready for the race.

Wheeldon made a great start, taking three cars before the first corner to move up to an overall 8th position. He managed to move up to 2nd place in the petrol class by

the end of his stint, having kept several of the leading diesel cars in his sights.

Griffiths took to the track with the team in 3rd petrol position and 8th overall.

Griffiths revealed: "As far as my race goes, apart from feeling a bit of a 'numpty' for smashing the car to bits the race actually went very well. On exiting the pits, I immediately started dicing with Mark Hope in JPR car 101. Eventually, we both settled down and pushed each other to quicker and quicker times and I eventually overtook him in some traffic."

The race progressed with the team continuously changing between 2nd and 3rd petrol position.

It was a nervous final stint for the team, as the times showed Jackson obviously had a mechanical problem. However, he drove round it and brought the car home safely in 3rd place.

Tim Wheeldon, said: "After four wins out of six it is testament to the standard the team have achieved this year. Unfortunately for car 110 the chequered flag wasn't the end of the race: the scrutineers had a surprise in store when they disqualified them, which promoted us to 2nd petrol and 7th overall"

He added: **"Particular thanks after this race go to the JPR mechanics for pulling out all the stops and working so hard into the early hours to get 103 back on the track and also to the support team. Thank you also, to Rick and Jonny who had to go back JPR H.Q. base for parts to fix the car"**.

Alistair Stenhouse and Steve Darbay had the worst luck with the grid draw, as their car 41, Prestige Motorsport, was drawn last.

Stenhouse had a clean start. During the first couple of laps he climbed up to 19th and between them, they progressed steadily to 13th place by the second hour.



Above: It's been a year of mixed fortune for the Prestige team, but luck was back on their side at Oulton.

Darbay was running behind the top three in the petrol class, just behind the leading diesel car, when the safety car came out for the first time, which meant they lost a lap from the other front petrol runners.

After some swift pitstops and helpful pitwall management from their Bubble and Kick race crew, the pair managed to move up behind the top three again, only to be caught behind the safety car once more.

Alistair Stenhouse, said: **“We refused to be defeated. The car never missed a beat thanks to the tuning by JPR and the set up by Guy”**. He added **“We were able to put in some consistent times and gain another couple of places before the end of the race, finishing in 3rd for the petrol class and 10th overall.”**

Steve Darbay, said: "We came home feeling that we had had one of the hardest chases this season, but grinning just the same!"



Above: The petrol class boys celebrate their successes.

JPR Motorsport/Team Norsound, car 101, won the “Highest Placed JPR Rental

Team” award in the diesel class. Drivers Mark Hope and Steve Johansen finished 9th overall.

In car 102, Jon White and Rob Wheldon took the award for the “Highest Placed JPR Rental Team” in the petrol class, with a 6th place overall.

Phil Martindale set the fastest diesel lap with a 2:03.074, in car 0, for the Martindale’s team.

The fastest petrol lap was a 2:04.306 by Rob Wheldon, in JPR Motorsport car 102.

Oulton Park Fundraising

I am thrilled to reveal that the grand total raised at Oulton Park for the Make-A-Wish Foundation, was a superb £6,697.63.

Thanks to all of you who donated, many children with life threatening illnesses will now be able to look forward to some very special and memorable events. You are a truly amazing and generous group of people. Your kindness will make a massive difference to the lives of these children and we simply can not thank you enough.

Special thanks go to Bram de Groot, Frank Johns, Austin Reynolds, Mark Owen, Terrance Woodward, Dominic Jackson, Andrew Beverley, Ben Gill, Tim Wheeldon, Graham Pattle, Paul Rose, Ally McKeever, Harry Valkhard, Victor Buchannan, Jim (Martindales), Chris Hartley, Richard Ince, CCS Media and Tegan Ramsey.



Above: Some of the auction winners celebrate their prizes.

Oulton Park TV Coverage

Once the dates and time have been confirmed, they will be added to the latest

news section of the website
www.funcup.co.uk

Oulton Park Photographs

If you have any pictures from the event, which you would like adding to the website, please email them to me at roxie@funcup.co.uk

Thank you to David Goose, Rachel Bourne, Nualla Scully, Norman Hayes, Tim Williams, Marvin Hall and Chris Hall for providing some fantastic pictures of the event.

Snetterton 13th and 14th November, 2009

Please find the timetable below. Please note that it is provisional and I do expect changes to Saturday's timetable:

Friday 13th November

Exclusive Fun Cup Testing: 10.00 – 16.00
(Booking forms will be emailed in due course)

Qualifying for the day into night race:
17.00 – 18.00

Saturday 14th November

Qualifying for the sprint race: 09.00 – 09.40

Sprint race: 10.10 – 10.55

Day into night race: 12.20 – 18.20

If you wish to take part in the sprint race, please be aware that you must complete a separate entry form for this. For private teams, it can be found at <http://www.funcup.co.uk/entry01.asp>.

If you are a JPR rental driver, please enter for the sprint race at the following link <http://www.funcup.co.uk/rental01.asp>.

Finally...

I look forward to seeing many of you at Snetterton for what promises to be an exciting final round!

And now for something completely different....Hayley and Steve Johansen,

from car 101, have today has a new arrival to their family. She is a healthy baby girl weighing 6lbs and 13oz. Congratulations to them and well done Hayley!

Kindest regards

Roxie Marandi
Race Co-ordinator

