



November 2009 Newsletter

Dear All,

Snetterton Sprint Race 2009

TDI Classification

Twenty two Fun Cup teams arrived at a horrendously wet Snetterton last weekend for a forty five minute sprint and a six hour day into night race, to round off a fantastic 2009 season.

After coming agonisingly close to that elusive first win at Oulton Park, Team RAM arrived at Snetterton determined to reach the top step of the podium.

With team regulars Mark Owen and Austin Reynolds racing in JPR Motorsport rental car 101, Richard Ince was joined by Nick Padmore in car 245 for both races.

For the first time in Fun Cup UK history, the grid for the sprint was based on qualifying times. After topping the qualification time sheets, Team RAM started on pole and with a clear track and some slick pit work, drove a perfect race, to finish sixteen seconds ahead by the chequered flag.

Richard Ince was understandably delighted, he said: **“After three podiums at Spa 25 hours and countless 2nd places in the UK, we have finally won our first Fun Cup race! Richmond Racing set the car up superbly. Our job was just to keep out of trouble!”**.

Behind Team RAM, it was Neil Plimmer and Geoff Fawcett in car 147, for Team Honeywell. They started 5th on the grid and Plimmer took the start but suffered a set back after a collision with car 251 Cuisine de France/SPAR, as car 101 stalled in front.

Avoiding the second corner mêlée between Cuisine de France/SPAR and a

Martindale's car, Team RAM made a break at the front and Plimmer and Fawcett hunted them down for the remainder of the race to come home in 2nd place.

In 3rd place, it was the duo of Jason Porter and Max Hunter in the 252 Happy Racing Car.

They were nervous about damaging the car in the sprint race with so little time before the main race, but Hunter made a dream start, putting them in a safe 2nd at the end of his stint.

Porter, said: **“Honeywell made a great pitstop coming out on our tail and managed to pass me with a very brave move in the wet. I ran out of talent on my ‘in’ lap and spun, leaving Max to bring us home for our first podium in the final stint. We were nearly caught on the last lap by the flying 223 Signia car, bringing back memories of Brands when JPR 131 sneaked past on the last lap!”**.

Fastest lap was set by Sean McInerney. He placed a 1:35.084 in the 223 Signia Developments car.

In car 101, JPR/Team SAM-NFI finished 11th overall and drivers Mark Owen, Austin Reynolds and Steve Johansen won the award for 'Highest Placed JPR Rental Team'.

Petrol Classification

Nigel Griffiths took the start and there were no dramas for the JPR/Credit Crunch boys in car 103. He had a great start, but

mid way through Sear, he encountered the 251 Cuisine de France/SPAR car in the middle of the track and facing him. Discretion played the better part of valour and Griffiths backed off to avoid Cuisine driver, Franck Pelle and in the process let Cole in the rival petrol car 110 past.

Griffiths drove strongly and cleanly pulling the gap back to two seconds before the first round of pit stops, where he handed over to Jackson. An uncharacteristically slow pit stop for the team left him fifteen seconds behind car 110, though he was closing at three seconds a lap.

Sensing how well he was doing and in a fit of sportsman-like behaviour, Jackson had a 360-degree spin in the damp conditions, dropping the team back to twenty five seconds behind car 110 with only fifteen minutes of the race remaining. It all came down to the team's final pitstop. With Jackson handing over the Wheeldon, they did a much better job.

JPR/JLA Diamonds, car 110, were obviously feeling the heat of the situation and their last stop was slow.

Wheeldon said: **“The Credit Crunch Team restrained themselves from cheering as I passed the start finish line while car 110 was still driving down the pitlane. After twenty two laps Credit Crunch were in the lead, though with the slippery conditions, it would require a cool and calculated drive to bring the car back.”**

Wheeldon was impressive and drove the final seven laps at least a second quicker than the other petrol cars, crossing the line for their 5th Victory of the season.



The JPR/Credit Crunch Team were delighted with their podium finish.

Ed Cole started the race for JPR/JLA Diamonds in car 110 and had a great start, overtaking their main rivals, Credit Crunch, into the first corner.

There was a clear split between the diesels and petrols in the wet at Snetterton and Cole latched on to the diesels further down the field, holding 1st petrol position for his stint.

Ben Lack took the reins for the second of three stints and maintained a consistent pace to retain the lead.

The driver change to Kevin Williams for stint three was slowed by problems with the lap belts and Credit Crunch took advantage.

Williams made good pace, but JPR/JLA Diamonds had to settle for the second step of the podium.

Stuart Ramsey, Peter Flynn and Michael Lockyer took home the 3rd place trophy in the 220 Nightingale Racing car.

It was the trio's second podium of the year and they were delighted with the result in front of a crew of Nightingale sponsors.

Fastest lap was set by Stuart Ramsey in car 220 Nightingale Racing. He placed a 1:40.160.

JPR/Credit Crunch Racing won the trophy for 'Highest Placed JPR Rental Team', finishing 11th overall.

Snetterton Day Into Night Race 2009

TDI Classification

The Happy Racing Team in car 252, were new to Fun Cup for 2009 and have had a season of mixed fortune.

Having been extremely strong contenders in all of the UK rounds and qualifying on pole at the Spa 25 hour race, bad luck has always emerged and the podium position that they have so desperately sought was continuously absent.

However, their patience and hard work finally paid off at the season finale, when ex BTCC team owner Jason Porter and team mate Max Hunter crossed the line forty nine seconds ahead of the 2nd placed

Team RAM to take the top step of the podium.



Happy Racing finally took the top step of the podium, after trying all year.

They were full of optimism and Hunter made a great start and so a magnificent battle with Team Honeywell began.

Jason Porter said: **“The thirty minute stints meant it could always be won or lost on the speed of our stops. Our guys were brilliant at keeping us in contention with the extremely fast pitting Honeywell. It looked like it was going to be a close battle to the finish until Honeywell suffered from some racing incidents and a puncture.”**

He continued: **“The last two stints were incredibly nerve racking, as we were slowly being caught by the flying Team RAM and I was aiming for my first circuit racing win in over twenty years of racing! My team refused to give me any pit board for the last stint to make me concentrate even harder. My heart was in my mouth but I kept in on the black stuff and got it back in first place! Awesome!”**

Car 245, Team RAM, was drawn 18th on the grid, but with a blistering start to the first session from Nick Padmore, it wasn't long before the car was up to 2nd place.

A small oil cooling issue, followed by a subsequent 'stop and go' penalty dropped the car to 5th, but in the last hour, Ince and Padmore slowly reeled in the leaders to eventually finish 2nd, behind the victorious Happy Racing.

Ince commented: “We have been battling with Happy Racing all season and for us to take another podium finish in the second

race was a perfect end to a really great season of racing. In particular I would like to thank Richard and his team at Richmond Racing, who have worked so hard for the team. I feel we've paid them back a little today with our win in the sprint race.”

Honeywell were super lucky with the random grid draw and took pole for the six hour race.

They ran near the front for the first four hours, before taking the lead from Happy Racing, with ninety minutes remaining.

With Happy close on the tail of Fawcett in the Honeywell car, the pressure was intense and Fawcett was involved in a collision with a lapped car and suffered a puncture.

Further misfortune struck when another collision, this time with Happy Racing, resulted in Geoff losing momentum, after suffering from a knock to the right rear and the Happy team charged into the lead.

A pit stop to change the wheel followed and Plimmer and Fawcett fought back for the rest of the race, eventually settling for 3rd place and their 2nd podium of the weekend.



Team Honeywell have been strong podium contenders at every race in 2009.

Mark Simm set the fastest lap in the 189 car for GAP-Martindales, with a 1:27.189.

Mike McCollum and Brain Casey took home the trophy for 'Highest Placed JPR Rental Team', finishing in 9th overall.

Petrol Classification

Dominic Jackson started from 15th on the grid, in JPR Motorsport/Credit Crunch car 103.

Having moved to 2nd in the petrol class at the start, he decided to admire the scenery, dropping to 5th position and spinning twice.

Tim Wheeldon drove a storming 2nd stint taking the petrol class lead and handing over to Nigel Griffiths, who held the lead despite spinning too!

Entering the final two hours, the threesome was a few laps ahead of the 2nd place petrol car.

Tim Wheeldon, said: **“The remaining two hours was a mental struggle for all, as it was now cold, wet, windy and tense! The team operated like the well-oiled machine we had spent the previous seven races becoming; the pitstops, driver changes and fuel dumps were handled confidently and with ease.”**

Jackson finished his final stint with the immortal words uttered by Griffiths at Spa: **“My work here is done”**.

Griffiths revealed: **“The final session started with a huge lead and strict instructions from my team mates to take it easy and bring the car home. I just couldn't help myself when I saw Eddy Cole in Car 110, a hundred metres up the track and I dived down the inside of him into the Esses. This stirred Eddy up and a good battle followed with Eddy getting his own back on me before spinning.”**



JPR/Credit Crunch had an extremely successful weekend.

He continued: **“As the clock ticked on to 6.25pm, with only five minutes to go, the entire team was assembled on the pitwall to cheer me on to our 6th victory of the year, a truly fantastic result. A very, very special mention needs to go to the pit wall crew who stayed out in the elements for the full six hours and to our mechanic Henry and all the JPR mechanics who prepare and maintain the car. Final special thanks to JPR Car 131's resident Driving God, Steve Snooker Harris for setting the car up for us and providing much hilarity by driving out of the pits and straight on at the first corner!”**

Having learnt the lessons of slow pit stops JPR/JLA Diamonds car 110 were better equipped to tackle the main race.

The driver order was Williams, Lack and Cole - all maintaining similar pace and climbing to 2nd place petrol by mid race, whilst rivals Credit Crunch were running 1st.

Cole passed a red light at the pit exit and was handed a devastating 'stop and go' penalty and adding insult to injury, he was in the wrong place at the wrong time when a safety car was deployed, which put them even further down the field.

They now found themselves two laps behind the petrol leaders but two laps ahead of 3rd place.

All drivers were finding it tough in the conditions and in the final half hour after being overtaken by rival Griffiths in Credit Crunch Racing, Cole saw red mist and after taking Griffiths back had an excursion over the grass, but was able to rejoin and finish 2nd for the petrol class. JPR/JLA Diamonds were thrilled with another trophy!

JPR Motorsport car 99, with drivers John Glover, and brothers Rob and Andy Barnes took the final step on the podium.

The South African, Glover, having had a taste for the Fun Cup at the 25 hour race in July, braved the treacherous British

weather to team up with the brothers for both races.

Rob and Andy Barnes performed brilliantly, considering Andy had only ever raced Fun Cup that morning in the sprint and for Rob, the forty five minute race that morning was his first ever taste of motor racing!

Unfazed by the weather and their inexperience, the trio were impressive, taking home the trophy for 3rd place petrol team.

Tim Wheeldon set the fastest lap for JPR/Credit Crunch, car 103, with a 1:29.625

JPR Credit Crunch Racing took home yet another award, for the 'Highest Placed JPR Rental Team', finishing 6th overall.

Snetterton TV Coverage

Once the TV dates and times have been confirmed, they will be added to the latest news section of the website www.funcup.co.uk.

End of Season Party

It is nearly time to celebrate a fantastic 2009 Fun Cup season in style, at the end of season party!

The event, at the Hinckley Island Hotel, Leicester, will start at 7.30 pm in the Triumph Bar, where we will all meet for drinks. We will then move into the Westminster and Piccadilly Suite at 8pm where the party will truly begin!

Please note that it is a Black Tie event. If you require anymore tickets, please email me at roxie@funcup.co.uk.

I look forward to seeing many of you there!

Finally...

Mark and Austin from Team RAM would like to say a big thank you to all of those who sponsored them for their Hell Run in aid of Noah's Ark Children's Hospice. The event took place on Sunday the 15th of November and you will be pleased to know that they both successfully completed the event.

If you missed out on sponsoring them and would now like to contribute, you can do so by visiting, www.justgiving.com/markandpetehellrun

The strong grids at every race are a testament to the strength of the series, especially during such hard economic times.

Clerk of the Course, Julian Floyd, left Snetterton on Saturday after telling me that Fun Cup is a fantastic series, with fantastic people and the level of driving ability this year has been superb.

It was also great to see some famous names at Snetterton, including Jay Kay, who competed in his first ever motor race in a Track Torque rental car.

On behalf of Paul, Anna, myself and all of the staff at Fun Cup UK, all that remains is to say a huge thank you for an extremely special season. We truly believe that you are the friendliest, funniest and craziest crowd we have ever had the pleasure of going racing with.

Thank you all for a phenomenal 2009 Fun Cup season.

Kindest regards

Roxie Marandi
Race Co-ordinator