

## Trackrod MC - Harewood BBQ Hillclimb report (Midland Speed Championships)

Sunday 13th July 2003

### Definitely not to be confused with Goodwood

I'd been to Harewood only once before, to spectate, and I remember thinking at the time that it must be a fun place to compete at. So when the regs out, as a round of the Midland Speed Championships, I didn't hesitate in sending off my cheque the very same day the regs landed on the doormat.

And before you know it, it's the middle of July, and the event is right upon us. Preparation for Harewood included modifications to the exhaust, to try to stop the two 1.25" down pipes from parting company with the manifold. The down pipes aren't falling off, but they do drop and the manifold starts blowing, which a) sounds crap, and b) lets exhaust gas in to the car, which as we all know, stinks.

We arrived at 8:00am and proceeded to unload the car off the trailer, and then moved the trailer in to the nearby trailer park. A quick walk of the course, a visit from the scrutineer, and a sound check (94db @ 1M @ 4000rpm) later and we're all ready for our first practice lap of the circuit. The paddock was very well organised. A PA system announced which batches were due on the track, and a pretty lady marshal came and collected you when it was your turn to compete. Very slick organisation, and it removed that uncertainty your some times get at other events.

So for my 1<sup>st</sup> practice run I trickled off the line, and then nailed the throttle in the usual style, and before you know it, I'm heading up the final long right-hander to the finish line. No

amount of walking the course prepares you for Harewood. You just need to attack it, scale each hill, in fact as each run went by I was finding that driving like a hooligan was really starting to pay off. On the first right hander after the start, I could really slide the back of the car around the corner, the tail just seemed to step out and I could really get the power down. Though some fluids spilt by a Westfield could have caused that. But on the other corners, like the right hander after the esses, I just had terminal under steer, so I'm going to have to take some lessons in left foot breaking, so I can get the tail out, on demand.

Weather conditions were perfect. Bright blue skies, high 80's, little wind, the track temperature was high, and so was the temperature in the car, which made queuing for the start line almost unbearable.

Tyres were also getting hot, generating even more grip. So really there weren't that many excuses for a poor run, though lots of competitors were going off, some through over exuberance, and others due to mechanical problems.

I was joined after my 1<sup>st</sup> run by a race prepared 2.0 Vauxhall powered Mini. He had been ejected from the class he originally entered (road going saloons), and had been bumped up to Sports Libre, which I was pleased about, as I now had someone to compare my times against. He didn't seem to mind moving, and so we set about challenging each other's times.

I was surprised to see him post times with tenths of a second of my own, though on his 3<sup>rd</sup> run up the hill he recorded a 71.99s, beating my previous 72.45s, so I knew I had to try a little bit harder. I threw caution to the wind and set a 71.65, and then noticed a strange noise from the underneath of the engine, which turned out to be another snapped alternator-

mounting bolt. So I called it a day after the 3<sup>rd</sup> timed run, and put the car back on the trailer. Most of the other competitors managed a 4<sup>th</sup> timed run, including the 2.0 Mini, but he didn't improve on his earlier times, so I went home happy in the knowledge that I'd taken 1<sup>st</sup> in class.

An excellent circuit, and a very slick and well run event. Thanks to Trackrod MC for such fun event. Never did find the BBQ though. Funny that!

1<sup>st</sup> practice: 74.45s (missed gear)  
2<sup>nd</sup> practice: 73.92s  
1<sup>st</sup> timed: 72.26s  
2<sup>nd</sup> timed: 72.45s (missed gear)  
3<sup>rd</sup> timed: 71.65s  
Result: 1<sup>st</sup> in class 4B (Sports Libre)

Next event: Curborough (Long course) July 20th

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2003 Midland Speed Championships

3 Sisters (April 6<sup>th</sup>) – 4<sup>th</sup> in class  
Curborough (April 27<sup>th</sup>) – 2<sup>nd</sup> in class  
Loton Park (May 10<sup>th</sup>) – 1<sup>st</sup> in class  
MIRA (May 24<sup>th</sup>) – 1<sup>st</sup> in class  
Aintree (June 28<sup>th</sup>) – 2<sup>nd</sup> in class  
Harewood (July 13<sup>th</sup>) – 1<sup>st</sup> in class

Future events

Curborough (July 20<sup>th</sup>)  
3 Sisters (August 10<sup>th</sup>)  
Harewood (August 24<sup>th</sup>)  
Loton Park (August 31<sup>st</sup>)  
Curborough (September 7<sup>th</sup>)



Attacking the final climb



Another attempt on the hill with the Fiesta



Fred Currell's incredible Audi Quattro (450 BHP)



The last run of the day



One of the Westfield's comes to grief, on the first corner.