

Midland Speed and Nottingham Sports Car Club Championship rounds – Curborough long course

Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2005

### Curborough, or bust

I reckon I'm finally getting the hang of the first corner at Curborough. It's only taken me 13 years of trying (and I've not been competing for all of that time thank you very much). When something like that 'clicks', you feel so much more confident, and then the remainder of the course just falls in to place. It didn't happen until my 2nd timed run late in the afternoon, but boy did I time it right?

For those lucky enough to get an entry for the NSCC double lapper, the venue was blessed with near perfect conditions. The Sun was out, the temperatures were hot, hot, hot, and the tin top owners were looking enviously at the locater-fields and single seaters, all of whom were able to enjoy a cool breeze whilst they queued.

Most of the classes were having almighty scraps over class positions, and records tumbled. Following lunch, all the Peugeot GTI's in 2B whizzed round in under 66 seconds, and as I stood and watched Dyrr Ardash knock the first corner marker for six, you could really get an appreciation for the amount of commitment on display. Dave Marshal, not wishing to be outdone by the ultra quick 106 GTI, recorded a very quick 65.73 seconds run in his 205. As I stood and watched standing alongside Chris Taylor, we both remarked on the speed of the modified road cars. "I know what I have to do now" I said

to Chris, after Dave Marshall recorded a faster time than me.

I had Ian Medcalfe (Beautifully prepared 1340cc A-Series powered Fiat 500) and Les Proctor (now single engined OMS) for company in Sports Libre, though both were in the upto-1400 cc class, leaving me on my own in 1400-2000cc. Les explained why he'd ditched one of his two motorbike engines, and gone for a single 1400cc unit. He said that it was because two engines equalled twice the running costs. Eg two oil filters, two clutches etc. And with just the one engine, he was quicker than ever, presumably because the sprung weight was halved.

As for Ian's Fiat 500, I wanted to get revenge for our last encounter last year, where he had beaten me by 3/10ths of a second on the final run. I was getting close to Ian's times in the morning, his Fiat was incredibly quick off the line (2.1 seconds to 60 ft), but I was struggling to match his speed round the track.

For my last run, also spurred on by the display from the Peugeots, I made a real effort to go even quicker. I don't ever recall being that comfortable with the first corner, despite years of trying. But I was told to try to take it as a single radius bend, rather than driving up to it and turning in. The key appears to be to start turning in after the last marker post in the centre of the track, and to keep the lock on and your foot hard down. And it worked. Of course, it could have gone pear shaped, but luckily for me it didn't. I continued to attack the course, and fluffed my right turn at the start of the 2<sup>nd</sup> lap, turning in too late. But not to worry, I carried on and was overjoyed to find I'd

knocked practically a whole second (0.99s) off of my first timed run earlier in the afternoon.

More importantly, I'd beaten Ian's Fiat 500, and I'd beaten Dave Marshall's 205. And for the very first time I'd managed to finish "Fastest Front Wheel Drive" car at an event. Wahey!!

So that's it, the season is now over for me for 2005. Four events, four more new PB's, and a long list of improvements for next year in areas like brakes and engine breathing. I hope the rest of you have as an enjoyable season as I've had this year.

Graham Blackwell  
[www.zetecinside.com](http://www.zetecinside.com)



Very smart (and quick) MG Midget



Tony Brumfield [Caption competition time]



Ian Medcalfe's Fiat 500 Sports Libre car (stripped)



Dyrr Ardash removes another course marker



Starting the second lap



Three wheeling in to the first corner



Exiting the final corner

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