

The Lubricant Consultancy Mk2 Golf GTI Championship 2011.

Rounds 5 & 6.

Cadwell Park – 22nd May.

The Mk2 Golf GTI Championship had its 5th visit to the Lincolnshire Wolds miniature Nurburgring, namely Cadwell Park. The narrow and challenging venue, with undulating topography is a real driver's circuit and is always popular with the Mk2 Golf competitors.

A new format was introduced by the organisers, to accommodate the large entry. Due to the tracks narrowness only 28 cars were allowed to start which meant that the entry list was full very quickly. The revised format featured 2 qualifying sessions and 3 races, allowing up to 42 entries. As all the action took place on the same day, a frenetic day's racing was in store !.

Qualifying.

The strategy for a quick time at Cadwell Park is to make sure you have enough space for a clear lap and, following on from Brands Indy, we had some very early queuing in the holding area indeed one competitor had previously suggested that he might turn up the day before !.

Q1.

As the cars snaked onto the track and through Hall Bends, Q1 was underway. The previous lap record was, unusually, set in 2008; the times at other circuits have fallen substantially over the subsequent years. Local man James Bark immediately looked like setting the pace, but other front runners Lewis Hopkins and Jamie Martin were clearly not going to make it easy for him !. Bark dipped under the previous record by more than a second in the end to take fastest time. In Class 1 Clive Belton and Guy Stevens were setting a hot pace with the former just getting the nod. The Q1 results were as below :

Class 1

- 1st Clive Belton.
- 2nd Guy Stevens.
- 3rd Jonathon Done.

Class 2

- 1st James Bark.
- 2nd Lewis Hopkins.
- 3rd Jamie Martin.

Q2.

The second qualifying session followed immediately after Q1, providing 30 minutes of (almost) continuous action for the spectators. Michael Thurston screamed around, almost taking off over the Mountain with the constantly improving Josh Johnson just behind. In Class 1 Alex Harris and Dawn Boyd traded times and the results are listed below :

Class 1

- 1st Alex Harris.
- 2nd Dawn Boyd.
- 3rd Andy Holley.

Class 2

- 1st Michael Thurston.
- 2nd Josh Johnson.
- 3rd John Mawdsley.

Race structure.

To allow all competitors 2 races, they were divided into three groups as follows :

Q1 Class 2 competitors – **Group A.**

Q2 Class 2 competitors – **Group B.**

All Class 1 competitors – **Group C.**

The 3 races would take place between the following groups :

Race 1 – **A & B.**

Race 2 – **B & C.**

Race 3 – **A & C.**

The grids would be based on actual qualifying times.

Race 1

The skys opened up just before the start to provide a wet start to this 'Class 2 only' race. Hopkins got an absolute flyer of a start to lead from pole man Bark on lap 1. Bark pursued mercilessly and had re-taken the lead by lap 3. There was a small gap back to Martin, then Thurston, followed by a fantastic battle for 5th between Wright and newcomer Traves. The latter moved through to take 5th spot on lap 4 – a great performance for his first race at Cadwell. Further down the field Milne and Johnson looked like they were glued together at times, behind Mawdsley, and the Bedford / Reynolds / Drury battle for 10th ran right to the end.

The results are provided below.

Race 1 Overall results :

- 1st James Bark.
- 2nd Lewis Hopkins.
- 3rd Jamie Martin.
- 4th Michael Thurston.
- 5th Simon Traves.

Race 2

The second race of the day reverted back to the usual split of Class 1 and 2 competitors, with Thurston on pole. The 3 race program provided a grid with a slightly different twist to normal and it was good to see Johnson and Mawdsley lining up 2nd and 3rd. Class 1 was as per qualifying order. Thurston got a very good start, but was immediately pursued very closely by Johnson and Mawdsley. We are use to very close racing in the Mk2 Golf GTI Championship and as the race got into its stride, this was no exception with Johnson looking like he was attached by a tow rope to Thurston's rear !.

In Class 1, Harris, having carefully planned his strategy before the race slotted through a gap to take the lead from Belton and had opened up a gap of nearly a second by the end of lap 1. As the race progressed, Harris, Belton and Stevens continued in close company until a small error allowed both Belton and Stevens past on lap 7.

At the front, the Thurston / Johnson train continued with Mawdsley carrying out a watching brief a little way back and this was the order over the line. Remarkably Johnson was never more than 0.8 of a second behind Thurston for the entire race !. The top 5 in each class are listed below :

Race 2 overall results :

- 1st Michael Thurston (Class 2 Winner).
- 2nd Josh Johnson.
- 3rd John Mawdsley.

4th Clive Belton (Class 1 Winner).
5th Guy Stevens.

Class 1 results :

1st Clive Belton.
2nd Guy Stevens.
3rd Alex Harris.

Class 2 results :

1st Michael Thurston.
2nd Josh Johnson.
3rd John Mawdsley.

Race 3.

Both Class 1 and Class 2 competitors lined up for the third, and final, race of the day. Top 3 on the grid from Class 2 were Bark, Hopkins and Martin and in Class 1 the order was as per race 2.

Bark got an excellent start, as Hopkins bogged down allowing Martin through into second spot. Traves and Bedford were close behind followed by Milne and Reynolds. In Class 1 the close dice of the previous race continued unabated though the order changed a little to Belton, Harris then Stevens. By middle distance a '5 car freight train' had built up with Reynolds and Sedwell in close company with the top 3 Class 1 runners. Back at the front Bark was stretching his lead as Martin and Hopkins dived behind, the gap seen sawing between 0.4 and 1 seconds. On lap 7 Bedford got the better of Traves and eventually took 4th overall and in class.

In Class 1 the order remained Belton, Harris and Stevens with none able to open up a gap, nor overtake on the tight Lincolnshire circuit.

Qualifying and race results are posted on this site under 'Race Information' then 'Overall Results 2011'. More detailed information is available from the TSL website (www.tsl-timing.com).

Race 3 Overall results :

1st James Bark (Class 2 Winner).
2nd Jamie Martin.
3rd Lewis Hopkins.
4th Darren Bedford.
5th Simon Traves.

Class 1 results :

1st Clive Belton.
2nd Alex Harris.
3rd Guy Stevens.

Class 2 results :

1st James Bark.
2nd Jamie Martin.
3rd Lewis Hopkins.