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Longton and District Motor Club's annual dinner and presentation of awards will be on Saturday, January 21, 2017 at Barton Grange Hotel, Preston. Tickets are £30 per person. Accommodation is available at a special rate. BOOK ONLINE AT longton-dmc.co.uk

CHALLENGING ANGLESEY WEEKEND IS THE DECIDER FOR LONGTON AND NATIONAL CHAMPIONSHIPS

Wow, that was quite some end of season event at Anglesey On the upside, some impressive individual performances decided the Longton Championship and the British Sprint Championship, and the weather was glorious for the Sunday International circuit event. On the downside was a sodden Saturday morning (thanks marshals for sticking that one out), limited runs on both days, perhaps inevitable with a big entry and the inclusion of the BSC, although timing issues caused some delays.

In Longton's Northern Sprint Championship, Andy Larton, who is prone to doing the minimum number of events, won his class impressively on both days and scooped the championship from previous leader Nigel Fox. And in the Longton Sprint Championship Phil Nelson triumphed, also with wins on both days.

Things were more fraught in the British Sprint Championship where Colin Calder and daughter Heather were hit by a problem with the starter system on Saturday that ruled them out of the Top 12 and led to major engineering efforts that night. Amazingly, they reappeared with a working car the next day. Colin came in second in the Top 12 to give him a record-breaking fourth win in the national championship. Heather was first but had to settle for third in the championship. That left well-known local competitor, John Graham to claim an impressive championship second place.

For the future, Longton will be back for weekends at Anglesey with a new event on April 1 and 2 and also October 14 and 15 (see provisional dates on Page 7). As things stand, these will be one-lappers on the National and International circuits, although consideration may be given to running one, or both, events on the International circuit only. The conclusions from officials is that it is not possible to run two-lappers effectively and efficiently on the National circuit although many drivers will mourn the loss of the thrill of tackling School at high speed on the second lap.

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That's how wet it was on Saturday morning John Loudon splashing around at the seaside

WHAT A DIFFERENCE A DAY MAKES AS THE WELSH WEATHER GOES FROM RAIN TO SUNSHINE

Report and pictures by DENISE MOORE

Saturday: Wet! Very wet! In fact, the drivers in single seaters and open-topped cars probably thought that the weather was best described as 'biblical'. Not the best of conditions for the 110 National B and National A entries taking part in Saturday's two-lapper on Anglesey's National Circuit, although the forecast promised that the weather would improve during the day.

Practice got under way on time with the National A competitors starting proceedings. Whilst most competitors cautiously made it around the course trailing roosters tails of spray, other slightly more enthusiastic drivers discovered that the left hander at Rocket was more of an aquaplane pan than a racetrack and there were several rather squirrely moments. John Graham in the Gould GR55B spun out of the turn and ended up facing back the way he came, bringing out the red flag. Terry Holmes in the Lola Tegra Judd, having been given a rerun, promptly skittered in exactly the same place.

Others had a slightly different approach – Oliver Wright in his Caterham 7 fought the corner by adopting a four-wheel drift manoeuvre. Given the way he was wrestling the wheel this may not have been what he had in mind originally!

The red flags came out again when Heather Calder sent the Gould GR55 into a spin, ending up on the grass. The course car came out carrying a battery to restart the car. David Brown in the black Mazda MX5 managed Rocket OK but the next bend proved his undoing where he did a complete 360° spin but got going again and carried on for his second lap – where he did exactly the same thing in the same place.

The track was starting to dry in the afternoon session and with the appearance of the sun competitors began throwing caution to the wind. Jon Davies in the Caterham Roadsport SV lost control coming off the hill by Corkscrew, nearly completing a 180° turn before getting going again and Oliver Wright followed suit in exactly the same place.

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CHAMPIONS! Longton Northern Speed winner Andy Larton and Sprint Series victor Phil Nelson

David Williams in the Darrian T9 negotiated the Corkscrew bend OK but the car was right on the limits and hit the kerbing past the Corkscrew turnoff knocking lumps off his car. Red flags came out and while the Darrian continued on its way and the pieces were collected and returned to the paddock, where Mr Williams had to work some magic to cosmetically repair his car.

A couple of other drivers had interesting moments at the same bend but none so dramatic as Dom Wilson in his Renault Clio Sport 183. He came off the hill, failed to make the bend at all and skittered across the wet grass all the way to the tyre barrier before finally coming to a halt. He got going again but there was obviously something wrong with the car because as he started his second lap, the car did not make the turn into School and skidded across the grass again to re-join the track up to Rocket, finishing the course very gingerly indeed. It later transpired that something had gone awry with the car's steering and Dom was left with a car that was nearly uncontrollable.

The occasional light showers in the afternoon combined with the torrential rain in the morning really caused issues with the timing later in the day and much time was lost due to failures in the equipment meaning that instead of the planned one practice and three timed runs, only two timed runs were managed.

Top 12 run offs: With Colin and Heather Calder reduced to unsuccessful high-speed attempts to start their Gould with a tow, it was all to play for in the sprint championship. And it was all 'Smiles' for Stephen Miles who blitzed his two-litre Van Diemen round the two laps to a fastest of 107.54. Second went to John Graham in his Gould (111.22) with Terry Holmes third (113.05) in his Lola.



The rapid Radical of Robert Tonge



Tim Nunn in his Westfield

Continued

Sunday: What a difference a day makes! In spite of some overnight showers, Sunday dawned gloriously sunny with a light mist hanging over the fields soon blown away by sea breezes. Although the track for the one-lap International course was still very damp it was drying fast in the sunshine.

Colin Calder in the Gould GR55 had been having some serious issues with the car's starter motor on the previous day and had been concerned that this would affect the results of the British Sprint Championship but hard work overnight had sorted out the problem. In fact, the paddock on Saturday night must have been a very busy place as all manner of minor (and major) problems had been fixed, rebuilt or overhauled.

In the first practice Nick Algar in the red DJ Firehawk over-egged it off the start line and the car coughed its way to a halt before it even reached the first corner. He was pushed off the track by marshals and then towed back into the paddock. The next 'victim' of a damp track was Geoffrey Corker in his Caterham Roadsport – a squeal of brakes and then silence – he had come off near the banked hairpin. The recovery vehicle went out but he made it back under his own steam.



Mark Anson in his OMS



The TVR Tasmin of David Welton



Nigel Fox in his Caterham



The Mazda 323 GTX of Chris Edwards

We had barely had the rerun due to the red flag when Malcolm Hickey in his Caterham 7 had a nice little spin in the first corner but recovered and continued onwards. Play was further interrupted when Post 9 reported two sheep on the bank near the track so proceedings were brought to a halt while a track vehicle went up the hill to chase them off! Several drivers had to make fast recoveries on the first bend and Matt Turner in the Westfield Megablade spun on the bend at Corkscrew but carried on.

By second practice the track was drying really quickly and all was going well until Ed Carter in the blue Jedi Mark1 suddenly slowed in the straight and finally ground to a halt at the start of the banked hairpin and had to be towed back.

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With conditions improving all the time, drivers began taking more and more chances and there were quite a few moments coming off the final bend into the finish. Maurici Revilla in his Westfield SEIW managed a wonderful power slide around the final curve but nearly got it all wrong, hitting the rumble strip and grass with two wheels before correcting.

Stephen Norton in the yellow Men United MG F Trophy also had a dodgy moment, banging the kerb near the finishing line activating a shut-off valve on his fuel system. This proved awkward because he didn't know he had one so he couldn't pinpoint the problem! Fortunately the paddock rallied round and it was sorted out so he could carry on.

John Davies in the shared Peugeot 205 GTi M16 went so wide he also clobbered the kerb really hard. Hard enough, in fact, that a large chunk of trim flew off into the middle of the track. This was duly collected and delivered back to his fellow double driver who was not really amused.

There were some quite closely fought battles during the day but arguably none so close as that in class 5B between Phil Nelson in his Hawke DL2B and Geoff Ward in his Swift SC93F. Geoff, having just done his last and fastest lap at 97.06 seconds was then slightly crestfallen when Phil managed his fastest lap of the day at 97.04 seconds.

Sadly, as with the previous day, there were one or two timing issues, one of which meant 14 cars requiring reruns which lost quite a lot of time. There were 95 National B competitors and 17 National A competitors, (two more than on the Saturday).

Top 12 runs offs: Colin Calder was doing the minimum necessary in the repaired Gould to secure his historic fourth British Sprint Championship. With just one timed run and one Top 12 run he settled for second (74.30) behind daughter Heather (73.33), who needed a good performance to take runner-up place in the championship. However, John Graham's Top 12 third place (75.31) gave him just enough points to take the championship second place, with Heather third.

RESULTS

Saturday

National A 4A: Matt Carter, 117.49; 4B: Jim Belt, 124.46; 5A: Louise Calder, 125.36; 5C: Carole Torkington, 129.43; 5D: Steve Broughton, 114.36; 5E: Colin Calder, 116.70. National B SA: Andrew Rollason, 162.16; 1B: Keith Minshull, 137.99; 1C: Alan Sawyer, 139.92; 1D: Roger Fish, 133.21; 1E: Darren Jones, 139.87; 1G: Stephen Morrison, 140.98; 2A: Andrew Taylor, 138.78; 2B: Maurici Revilla, 128.95; 2D: Robbie Birrell, 200.89; 3A: David Williams, 160.38; 3B: Andrew Larton, 132.32; 3C: Chris Edwards, 126.52, 3E: David Welton, 148.81; 3F: John Loudon, 138.24; 3G: Barney Francis, 124.77; 3H: Tim Nunn, 129.80; 4B: Robert Tonge, 123.44; 5A: Mark Anson, 133.56; 5B: Phil Nelson, 137.89; 5D: Glyn Sketchley, 126.71. Lotus 7 L1: Richard Abraham, 146.09; L2: Chris Bramall, 153.13; L3: Grahame Wardall, 144.25; L4: Jeremy Davies, 148.03; L6: Shaun Elwell, 131.47; L7: Simon Rogers, 130.60.

Sunday

National A 4A: Matt Carter, 83.21; 4B: Jim Belt, 85.59; 5A: Louise Calder, 82.95; 5C: Carole Torkington, 94.66; 5D: Matt Hillam, 78.63; 5E: Colin Calder, 75.21. National B SA: Andrew Rollason, 120.43; 1B: James Kerr, 103.85; 1C: Alan Sawyer, 104.55; 1D: Roger Fish, 102.43; 1E: Darren Jones, 105.42; 1G: Stephen Morrison, 101.06; 2A: Michael Bellerby, 102.67; 2B: Nigel Fox, 93.60; 2D: Robbie Birrell, 101.86; 3A: David Williams, 120.33; 3B: Andrew Larton, 98.63; 3C: Chris Edwards, 96.22; 3E: David Welton, 112.94; 3F: John Loudon, 91.63; 3G: Derek Hodder, 86.03; 3H: Tim Nunn, 89.11; 4B: Robert Tonge, 88.21; 5A: Ed Carter, 85.61; 5B: Phil Nelson, 97.04. Lotus 7 L1: Robert Jacobs, 104.02; L2: Paul Collins, 103.03; L3: Grahame Wardall, 99.03; L4: Michael Sankey, 96.37; L6: Shaun Elwell, 91.50; L7: Simon Rogers, 87.40.

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Robbie Birrell's Lotus Exige V6 Cup



British Sprint Champion Colin Calder



Leon Franks, well out of shape in his Sylva Striker



Alan Sawyer in his Subaru Impreza



Dom Wilson having steering issues in his Clio



The Caterham 7 of Andrew Taylor



Derek Hodder in his Westfield



The Peugeot 205GTi of James Kerr

Continued

A TASTE OF EVENTS TO COME.....

The calendar for Longton events and championship rounds in 2017 is still being developed. But some provisional dates are outlined below. As will be seen, there are some changes amongst the established favourites. LDMC's April season-opener at Three Sisters is replaced by a weekend at Anglesey which should get most people's year underway in style! Then there's more high-speed stuff with a new championship round at Croft on April 17.

The remaining notable changes come at the other end of the year. September starts with the return to a 'north-west weekend' with Aintree on Saturday and LDMC's Three Sisters on Sunday. The month ends with another new Longton event – a visit to the popular Blyton Park sprint track on September 30. The season finale at Anglesey moves back a couple of weeks to mid-October.

2017 PROVISIONAL CHAMPIONSHIP EVENTS (SO FAR!)

April 1 & 2	Anglesey	LDMC
April 17	Croft	Darlington & District MC
April 22	Aintree	LMC
May 21	Three Sisters	LDMC
May 29	Blyton Park	Huddersfield MC
June 10	Barbon Mamor	LMC
June 24	Aintree	LMC
July 1	Barbon Manor	LMC
July 8 & 9	Blyton Park	WSCC
July 30	Three Sisters	LDMC
Aug 12	Scammonden Dam	Pendle & District MC
Sept 2	Aintree	LMC
Sept 3	Three Sisters	LDMC
Sept 30	Blyton Park	LDMC
Oct 14 & 15	Anglesey	LDMC

WET AINTREE IS ABANDONED AFTER T1

The final Aintree sprint of the season on September 3 turned into a soggy disappointment when heavy rain and streams running across the track forced Liverpool Motor Club to abandon the meeting after the first timed run. Most competitors – especially those in open cars – were glad to be put out of their misery. And the marshals who had endured hours standing in the pouring rain must have been even more grateful!

In the merged Class SB Colin Duncalf wound up second with 58.90. 1B was also a merged class and Russell Thorpe was second on 59.17. Roger Fish popped in a 56.96 to win the roadgoing sports car class with Martin Rowe having to settle for second on 58.53 and Steve Norton fifth (62.43).

Martin Walker could only manage sixth in the conditions in his Westfield in 1E with 62.21. Rob Holt was second in the Elise class on 69.12. Caterham driver Nigel Fox won in 2B at 55.88 with Sean Bourn second (58.63). Robbie Birrell was making a return after his big off at Anglesey and recorded 57.11 in 2D. Andy Larton had the modprod class sewn up with a best of 54.18 whilst John Moxham was third (57.18). David Welton had 3E to himself and recorded 63.55.

Harry Moody won 3H with a best of 53.10 whilst Richard Vaughan took second in the small single-seater class with 54.17. Fourth in that class went to Eve Whitehead (54.51) with Thomas Vaughan fifth on 56.18. An unusually busy Formula Ford class saw victory go to Geoff Ward with 54.32. Fastest time of day went to John Graham in his Gould at 46.46.

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THE FINAL TWO HAREWOOD EVENTS

August 28: Longton's second visit to the Harewood hillclimb was on August 28. There was a large entry for Class 1B, with James Kerr's Peugeot 205 GTi coming in fourth on 68.18 and Mick Lord 18th with 75.26 and Steve Norton rounding out the field (76.29).

In 1F the Honda duo of Roger Fish and Martin Rowe were outclassed by Subaru Imprezas, with Roger winning their private battle at 67.43 for fourth with Martin just behind on 67.69. Leon Franks in his Sylva Striker romped to victory in 2A at 65.68.

Tim Nunn was edged into second in 3F with 59.84 in his Westfield Superblade with Harry Moody third (61.88). Richard Kerr's Westfield Supertec was second in 3G on 61.48. In the small racing car class Eve Whitehead only managed the first timed run and ended up fourth with 63.85.

September 18: Many of the same faces were back at Harewood a couple of weeks later. Again, 1B had a massive entry and this time James Kerr improved to third with 67.79. Mick Lord was 13th (72.77) and Steve Norton 19th (75.48).

Martin Rowe took third on 66.99 whilst Roger Fish was curiously off the pace, coming in fourth with 68.09. Michael Bellerby romped away with the win in 2A at 62.48 with Leon Franks third (65.64).

The smaller-engined modified kits saw Andrew Steel take third (60.78) with Harry Moody fifth (62.50). In 5A Eve Whitehead managed to complete all the runs and came in sixth on 61.74.

SECOND VISIT TO OLIVER'S MOUNT

Only a few Longton competitors headed east on August 21 for the hillclimb at Oliver's Mount. Steve Norton in his MGF Trophy came in fourth with a best of 55.74. Andy Taylor won the small kit car class by two-hundredths in his Caterham Superlight, setting 48.48, whilst Andrew Steel was third in the bike-engined variants at 43.07.

APOLGIES from the Editor if this report, or the ones above, have missed Longton competitors.

