

JJ's dominate as Fisher & Hogg enjoy Brands Hatch limelight.

The two J's, Juno and Jade shared the honours at a sunny Brands Hatch last weekend for round two of the new OSS series, with Josh Fisher's V6 Juno taking the honours in Saturday's race and Alan Hogg accepting the laurels in Sunday's Race 2.

After the overcast drizzle of Silverstone last month, Brands Hatch presented a stark contrast, with competitors greeted by blue skies and a dry track. It was therefore no surprise that engine power was to play a key part in determining the outcome of the two OSS races.

Fun in the sun! An almost full OSS Grid provided spectacular racing at sunny Brands Hatch



Qualifying:

Josh Fisher dominated qualifying in his V6 Juno, powering into a 45.44 second pole position over the last round's winner Matt Manderson in his 2.0L Chiron. In contrast to Silverstone, Manderson was the only 2.0L car in the top seven positions and seemed surrounded by the V6's as a gaggle of Jade's occupied 3rd, 4th and 5th in the hands of Alan Hogg, Steve Griffiths, and Tony Sinclair. Tony carrying out some, handling experiments on the new Jade 3, equipped as it was with Michelin rubber for the first time. Less than a tenth separated the three Jade's with Peter Hobday in the beautiful V8 Chiron screamer another 3 tenths behind, emphasising just how close qualifying was in the dry. Castle Combe champ Shane Marshall, making his debut at the circuit, was again putting in a determined effort taking his Jade to 7th, just ahead of ADR's guest driver Andrew Bentley. The works ADR being the first of four ADR's making their debut in OSS this weekend with team boss Adrian Daniels well pleased with the marque's move up the leaderboard following a troubled start to their

UK racing venture. A qualifying position of second in class B testament to the hard work put in by the team to improve the car. Ginger Marshall and Morgan Burgess made up the remaining top ten positions, with Morgan going slower than in free practice after fitting new tyres! The Norma of Gaius Ghinn just missed out on a top ten slot by a mere 0.8 seconds in the two litre Norma - not a bad performance at all considering this was Gaius's first event in the French two litre car.

Ollie Hulme meanwhile was beginning a busy weekend at the Kent track, taking the top class C slot and 15th while alternating between BESCAR and OSS qualifying.

Tony Maisey in the SR3 Radical was attempting the same regime on his way to securing twelfth and 6th Class B competitor.

As is his trade, electronics wizard Nick Bass was meanwhile trying out a range of electronic trickery such as traction control and all wheel sensors on his Jade two litres and probably would have preferred a dry track to try it all out! Nevertheless, it could well have helped keep him ahead of the similar machine of Jeremy Hoyland despite the bone dry track.

Leigh Parkes Saturday woes were just beginning however on his way to 16th, with Leigh complaining of a flat engine and a significant loss of power later to be diagnosed as simply poor plugs.

Eamon Matheson's ultra powerful Turbo 1300 was thought by many to be well out of position in seventeenth and this was indeed the case, as a fuel feed problem hounded the rapid Irishman all weekend.

Graham Cole qualified Dorrian Tyrrel's ADR in a disappointing 18th with Graham called in at the last minute in an attempt to diagnose the handling difficulties suffered by Tyrrel's new two litre car.

The twenty lap field was completed by Dustin Barnes and Verity Banks respectively who claimed second and third slots in Class C. (Keep an eye out later this month for a Driver profile of Vez!)

Race 1 (Saturday) – Fisher nets victory and catches out Jade's

Josh Fisher had acquired his Juno V6 Nissan only a few months before the race, but it didn't show, as he had this race won almost before the event had started !

As the safety car pulled off, Fisher flew off into a lead that was never to be challenged; with only Tony Sinclair in the Jade reacting quickly enough from row three (!) to put up a chase as the cars passed the start line. An understandably surprised Steve Griffiths and Alan Hogg were both passed immediately by the quick thinking Jade pilot as the cars dropped down Paddock hill for the first time; leaving Hogg, Griffiths, and Matt Manderson in the Chiron squabbling for position into Druids. All emerged unscathed - testament to the fine driving seen so far in OSS.

With a few laps complete and tyres warming nicely, Peter Hobday in his more powerful Chiron and Shane Marshall (Jade) were also closing in on the front runners. All the front runners that is except for Fisher's Juno which was romping off into the distance, never to be caught again.

In the next batch of persuants Ginger Marshall, Morgan Burgess, Gaius Ghinn, Andrew Bentley, and Nick Bass were all lapping within a second of each-other making for an entertaining tussle that was to last most of the race. Morgan coming out top of the pile in the Chiron following a number of pass / re-pass manoeuvres with Ginger.

Halfway point of the race a couple of incidents were to prove decisive in deciding the classes...

First to go was the hard charging Andrew Bentley when an engine problem cut short a promising debut for the works ADR, effectively removing his challenge for class B honours. Ollie Hulme was next to go retiring the T5 Mission on lap 11 after dominating class C with a fastest lap five seconds faster than his nearest class rivals! Steve Griffiths in the twin Turbo Jade was also in a Hogg / Sinclair tussle when the Chrysler's heavily over-worked clutch opted for an exit, deciding that escape via the bellhousing was the only way to escape further punishment! The Welshman retiring instantly.

Nick Bass also retired his Jade a little later with fuel problems as did Eamon Matheson's E5 SM 1300. A lap later Shane Marshall's Jade also departed the fray with unexplained problems.

At the front, the two Jade's of Sinclair and Hog were engaged in a titanic tussle for the lead which was to last until the finish flag, with Hogg narrowly taking second place from the Jade works driver. Alan (Hogg) lamenting his slow start which effectively removed any real opportunity to catch the flying Fisher's Juno. Peter Hobday had also now suppressed the frisky challenge of Matt Manderson's two litre Chiron, with the additional grunt of the V8 Chiron proving decisive in the battle for fourth, Manderson though having the consolation of another fine Class B win. Morgan Burgess in the 2 litre Chiron was next over the line taking the Henry Nickless machine to 2nd in Class B ahead of class rival Ginger Marshall's Bowlby, Ginger complaining afterwards of water leak problems and wondering if his day two race would be compromised.

Gaius Ghinn and Tony Maisey were to take the next two places with Jeremy Hoylands Jade followed home by Leigh Parkes and Graham Cole in Nemesis / ADR respectively.

With dominant class C force Ollie Hulme out of the running unluckiest non-finisher has to be Verity (Vez) Banks who, within sight of the finish line and a class C victory had a rear upright bolt break and neatly machine a circumferential slot inside the rear wheel causing a dramatic puncture and instant retirement.

So the outcome was a delighted Josh Fisher taking a deserved debut victory and class A in the Juno ahead of Alan Hogg and Tony Sinclair in Jade's 2 and 3 respectively. Class B honours went once again to the Chiron's of Matt Manderson and Morgan Burgess respectively, with Ginger Marshall taking 3rd. Incredibly, there were no Class C finishers at the end as the remaining Class C runner Dustin Barnes in the ADR 1.3 also stopped on the penultimate lap!

Race 1: Victor, Juno pilot Josh Fisher, flanked by second placed Alan Hogg & third placed Tony Sinclair (Both Jade's)



Race 2 (Sunday) – Hogg clinches it for Jade

Jade pilot Alan Hogg could have been forgiven for feeling a little downcast after seeing his slow Saturday start cost him any chance of challenging for victory, but there was no sign of that on Sunday as the Safety car pulled off for the race start. With pole-man Josh Fisher in the Juno once again powering into the lead, the response from Hogg this time was instant. His relentless pursuit triggering incredible mid 45 second lap times from both drivers in their efforts to escape / catch! Fisher in fact setting a best lap time of 45.40.

Steve Griffith's Jade was now part of the fray too as his overworked service crew had restored the Jade to health with new clutch plates enabling a spirited chase of the leaders. Griffiths though was finding it a struggle to hold off the further duelling Jade's of Tony Sinclair and Shane Marshall.

Matt Manderson meanwhile was quite incredibly proving a match for the rapid Chiron V8 of the hard charging team-mate Peter Hobday, the pair lapping within 8 hundredths (!) of a second of each-other. Morgan Burgess in another Chiron was chasing down his partners lapping within 1.3 seconds of his more powerfully engine'd rivals, with again Nick Bass and Tony Masey (Jade 2.0L / Radical SR3) in hot pursuit. Joining the fray Andrew Bentley had a terrific battle with Morgan, Morgan eventually coming out on top but being passed by Mark Burton on his charge from the back amongst the backmarkers. Leigh Parkes in a now restored to full health Nemesis was also part of this squabble, lapping 0.2seconds faster than his two 2.0L class rivals,

but sensibly deciding on more than one occasion that suicidal lunges up the inside at Hawthorns could turn out too expensive ! Besides which, with Andrew Bentley in the ADR now also snapping at the rear of the Nemesis meant that there was more than enough to worry about from that end of the car too. Nevertheless, Ginger Marshall's Bowlby was also passed by the rapid Nemesis in the early laps.

While the midfield tussles continued, a Gold flash was seen by some, explained later by Brands Hatch expert Mark Burton who had by mid race powered his Jade into the second Class B slot having started from the back of the grid! A fine drives indeed. Meanwhile a little further back Graham Cole was getting to grips with the ADR after a poor start, passing Verity Banks and Dustin Barnes, only to revolve at Druids after a the safety car had closed them back up again. Graham thankful that the Race TV crew had departed the scene!

Back at the front, Spectators described Fishers Juno as "on rails" as the young Bristolian piled on the pressure building a six second gap by lap 6.

By lap 7 however all that was to change as the lapped Graham Cole jinked his ADR to avoid a wheel running across the wide McLarens corner. Tragically, it belonged to Fisher's Juno, which was instantly parked up on the grass at McLarens. A sad end to a terrific showing by Josh.

With the lead now in the hands of Alan Hogg's Jade Alan could have done with a breather although a re-vitalised Steve Griffiths gave not a moments rest to the Londoner snapping at the heels of the Green Jade all the way to the finish, especially after the safety car closed up the field.

At the end though it was a delighted Alan Hogg who took the Laurels from an equally delighted Steve Griffiths who actually had 6th Class B man Leigh Parkes to thank for loaning him the plywood needed to repair the Jade's damaged front skirt!

It was a Jade full house as Tony Sinclair narrowly pipped fellow Jade pilot Shane Marshal making it a top four for Owen Jones Godstone outfit.

The beautiful Chiron's of Manderson, Hobday and Burgess finished 5th, 6th, and 8th split only by the flying Burton who clinched 7th and second in Class B. Morgan Burgess clinched 3rd in Class B, a good result considering this was Morgans first visit to Brands in the Chiron, while Ginger Marshall's 11 year old crank (honestly) had by the finish cried enough exclaiming it's departure in a "loud bang(!)" and instant retirement, losing the driver any chance of a class B podium.

Class C honours went to Dustin Barnes after some terrific dicing with Graham Cole, followed by Verity Banks, both in ADR's, and both pleased to make the finish after the DNF's in Race 1.

Race 2 Victor Alan Hogg flanked by 2nd and 3rd placed Steve Griffiths (Right) and Tony Sinclair (All Jade's).



With the OSS series attracting entries from Chiron's, Jade's, Juno's, ADR's, Radical's, Norma, Nemesis', Mission, and Bowlby(!), nobody could have accused the series of being dull. And so it's proving, with three different marques claiming the podium places in the first four races, and even more variety in the classes!

With OSS variety providing a superb spectacle the series is indeed looking in good shape ! Roll on round three at Donnington !

PS: Keep an eye out for our "OSS - Featured Driver" articles starting this month

Graham Cole