



**CASTLE COMBE SALOON CAR
CHAMPIONSHIP IN ASSOCIATION WITH
NATIONAL MOBILE WINDSCREENS**

Round 8, Monday 30th August.



(Image: Oliver Read)

Bad luck once again struck for Jason Cooper as Kevin Bird fended off the Peugeot 106 battalion to take another Castle Combe Saloon Car victory. Russell Poynter-Brown kept his overall points lead whilst Tony Hutchings was impressive on his return to the Wiltshire venue.

Qualifying

As has become the norm this season, Jason Cooper (Drive-Tech Ltd. Ford Fiesta) put in another giant-killing performance during qualifying for round eight of the Castle Combe Saloon Car Championship.

Cooper's time of 1m15.887s would not only have smashed his previous Class C record from the last meeting, it was also good enough to break Mark Wyatt's three year old lap record from Class B.

Kevin Bird (Interceptor Racing SEAT Leon) was just over three tenths of a second behind, with Nick Charles (Pulse Networking Ltd. Peugeot 106 GTi) just edging out ex-champion, Tony Hutchings (Audi TT) for third who had struggled with traffic for much of the session.

David Kift (DK Cars & Bikes Peugeot 106 GTi) would line up fifth, just ahead of the ever-improving Adam Prebble (Sparshatts Rover 220).

Russell Poynter-Brown (Interceptor Racing Vauxhall Corsa) and Russell Akers (Bouchier Fencing Vauxhall Corsa) would start 18th and 19th respectively, as the first Class D runners. Poynter-Brown looked likely to extend his 1400cc points lead, as Will Burns was absent.

Race



As the lights went out, both Jason Cooper and Tony Hutchings made brilliant starts, with the Audi driver squeezing between Kevin Bird and Nick Charles as the pack stormed away from the grid.

Unfortunately for Hutchings he missed a gear on the run to Folly, dropping to fourth place, as the power of Bird's SEAT saw him fly passed Cooper as they charged over Avon Rise for the first time.

(The race-defining start with Kevin Bird soon to power past Jason Cooper and Tony Hutchings slipping back down the order initially. Image: Oliver Read.)

Cooper's race would not last much longer as a broken third gear saw the perennial challenger limp back to the pits and into retirement.

The Yatton Keynell man's retirement left Bird out front with the close attentions of both Nick Charles and David Kift who belied their relative lack of power to close on the mighty SEAT through the corners.

For lap after lap, the trio circulated with never more than a few seconds separating the three of them.

On lap seven, they were closer than ever, with just 1.1s between Bird in first and Kift in third. However, next time around the gaps had been stretched, with the difference between them up to 2.3s.

From then on in, Bird was able to comfortably pull away from the Peugeots, carving through the traffic with relative ease.

Charles, likewise, was able to stretch away from Kift, who was having particular difficulty in negotiating the backmarkers, catching a gaggle of cars on the apex of Camp corner with three laps to go.

If the race at the front did not provide enough action, then Hutchings recovery drive and the subsequent battles for the minor positions certainly did.

Having dropped to fourth after missing a gear on the opening lap, Hutchings dropped further down the order at Quarry and the Esses, being passed by Adam Prebble, Tony Dolley, Mark Wyatt and Will Di Claudio.

Just as he was shown a black and white flag for disrespecting the track limits, Prebble was out with engine trouble, promoting Dolley to a lonely fourth, with Di Claudio ahead of the battling Wyatt and Hutchings; the Peugeot driver having overtook the pair of them whilst they scrapped on lap two.

By lap three, Hutchings had carved his way passed Wyatt, refocusing his sights on the bright green 106 GTi ahead of him.

Lap five saw Hutchings taking a big look at Camp, but the Calne driver would not have long to wait before moving into fifth, taking the place just a few corners later.

Hutchings continued to push on, gradually closing on Dolley. However, despite a last lap look at Camp, Dolley was able to hold on to a much-earned fourth place.

Meanwhile, Di Claudio was falling back into the clutches of Wyatt. The Vauxhall Astra driver made his move with just two laps to go, diving down the inside into Tower having enjoyed a battling drive to take sixth place.

For the final few laps the top 10 stagnated, as Daryl Radford (VW Vento) came home a lonely eighth ahead of the two MG ZRs of Adrian Slade (Slades of Rowde) and Nick Mizen.

All the action in the race for Class D honours happened mid-race. After good starts from both Corsa drivers, Russell Poynter-Brown was just 0.4s ahead of Russell Akers by the halfway point.

Akers took the class lead on lap seven, only for Poynter-Brown to retaliate two laps later at the Esses. From that point on, the Reading driver could not challenge again, eventually finishing just over a second behind by the time the chequered flag fell.

With Wyatt losing out to Bird, Dolley and Hutchings in the Class B battle, the race for the overall title looks set to be a two-horse race between Class C's Nick Charles and Poynter-Brown.

Just one point separates them as they head into the Finals Day race meeting where both drivers need to win (ideally with fastest lap) to stop the other from taking the title.

However, with both men's closest rivals out of the title battle, Jason Cooper and Russell Akers could upset the party on October 2nd.

Results

Pos.	Cl.	Cl. Pos.	Driver	Car	Time	Qual.
1	B	1	Kevin Bird	SEAT Leon	15m30.581s	2
2	C	1	Nick Charles	Peugeot 106 GTi	+ 2.133s	3
3	C	2	David Kift	Peugeot 106 GTi	+ 6.577s	5
4	B	2	Tony Dolley	Peugeot 206 GTi	+ 10.154s	7
5	B	3	Tony Hutchings	Audi TT	+ 11.254s	4
6	B	4	Mark Wyatt	Vauxhall Astra	+ 16.247s	10
7	C	3	Will Di Claudio	Peugeot 106 GTi	+ 18.114s	8
8	B	5	Daryl Radford	VW Vento	+ 20.259s	9
9	C	4	Adrian Slade	MG ZR	+ 34.595s	11
10	C	5	Nick Mizen	MG ZR	+ 41.529s	12
11	C	6	Paul Gardner	Citroen Saxo VTS	+ 51.952s	13
12	C	7	Darren Hav	MG ZR	+ 55.784s	14
13	C	8	Martin Chivers	MG ZR	+ 1m00.794s	16
14	C	9	Anne King	MG ZR	+ 1 Lap	15
15	D	1	Russell Povnter-Brown	Vauxhall Corsa	+ 1 Lap	18
16	D	2	Russell Akers	Vauxhall Corsa	+ 1 Lap	19
17	C	3	Geoff Wade	Honda Integra	+ 1 Lap	17
18	B	6	Dyrr Ardash	Ford Fiesta	+ 1 Lap	23
19	D	4	Steve Sutton	Peugeot 106	+ 1 Lap	21
20	D	5	C Hyde-Andrews-Bird	Ford Fiesta	+ 1 Lap	22
21	C	10	James Keepin	MG ZR	+ 1 Lap	24
22	B	7	Kelly Williams	Ford Fiesta ST	+ 1 Lap	25
23	B	8	Jamie Diccox	Alfa Romeo 156	+ 1 Lap	26
24	D	6	David Rose	Volkswagen Lupo	+ 1 Lap	27
25	D	7	Peter Weston	MG ZR	+ 1 Lap	29
26	D	8	Eddie Benton	Citroen Saxo	+ 2 Laps	28
DNF	B	N/A	Adam Prebble	Rover 220 Turbo	+ 9 Laps	6
DNF	C	N/A	Jason Cooper	Ford Fiesta	+ 11 Laps	1

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