



## 'Two toes on the shield as Wyper earns himself European title number two'

On the 22<sup>nd</sup> and the 23<sup>rd</sup> of September, Burton Market Hall was the venue for the 2018 1/12th Stockcar European Championship which hosted last year's British title. The defending European Champion Ben Harding was only available for Saturday evening's racing therefore meaning a new European champion was on the cards for one of the thirty competing drivers over the course of the weekend.



Before the racing began, the annual AGM took place at TTT raceway where a large gathering of drivers were in attendance for both the F1 and F2 AGM's on Saturday afternoon. A lively debate certainly caused a few eyebrows to be raised with a number of people all wanting to express their views across the variety of proposals that were brought into discussion. Hopefully however, as echoed by the 1/12th chairman Mark Craig, we shall gain the support needed by everyone involved to make our formula a growing success in years to come.

The drivers travelled to the venue early evening to set up their pit areas and prepare for what should be an exciting weekends racing. This event was supported by the F2 formula who were hosting their 2018 world championships alongside the F1's with many drivers in attendance. The format for this year's event included a brief practice for each driver before a total of six qualifying rounds to be raced over the two days. Three of the six qualifying rounds were to count towards an overall qualifying position for each driver.

Once the qualifying rounds are completed; The top sixteen drivers would form the grids for two separate semi finals with four drivers from each semi to qualify for the European final. In addition to this, a last chance race would allow only one driver to complete the nine car final line up. Any driver that was set to miss out on a semi final slot were allowed to race in a grand national race.

An exciting batch of drivers were in attendance all to try and grab their hands on that European title. One of the favourites for this event had to be newly crowned British champion Dylan Ashurst. Dylan has already shown what a great talent he is and even though he's one of the newbies to the stockcar scene, he's certainly one of the biggest threats in any race. We also

had three past winners of this title, Rugby's Ben Harding, Urmston's Anthony Wyper and not forgetting the only overseas driver this weekend Holland's Maikel Rutten. World champion Rob Teuke was another driver who you can't rule out.. Even though the curse of the gold paint hasn't done him much favours this year!

A fantastic selection of trophies displayed at the entrance to the track where local spectators were able to come and watch the weekend's racing and get to know what we are all about! A big thankyou goes to everyone who was involved in the preparation to this event and I hope that this is a sign of better things to come.



On display alongside the trophies for the weekend the cars of newly crowned 1/8th stockcar world champion's Ben Harding #1 from Rugby and youngster James Eccles #532 from Urmston who both took victory in their respective world title races recently.



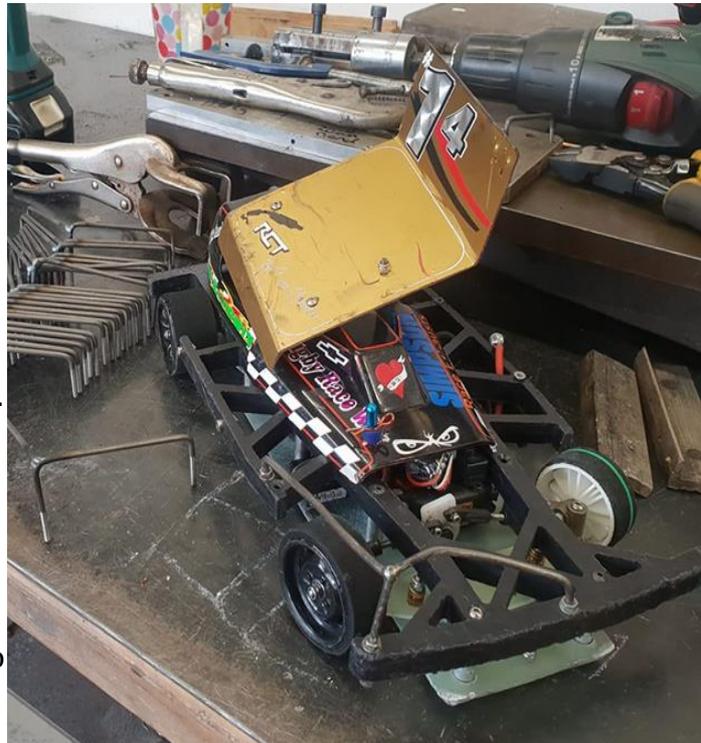
We also had the newly retained ministox world champion Jack Witts #18 who was racing in his first ever championship event in the 1/12th section. Already it's clear to see that the young man is enjoying his racing with the help of father and son duo Dylan #55 and Peter Ashurst #146.

## **Round One**

The first round of the weekend was a good eye opener for the drivers with the track changing grip pretty much race by race. It was quite clear to see that the majority of the cars were struggling with their set ups due to the tracks wide lines and tight cornering in the opening stages to the meeting.

It was Rugby's world champion Rob Teuke in the #14 machine that earned top spot in the opening round with an impressive 104 laps for his first heat. Scotland's Gary Riddell had a fine start to his weekend with a confident drive just losing out to Rob by one lap while Anthony Wyper grabbed 3<sup>rd</sup> place in his overall standings with 102 laps while Gordon Mutch was fourth place. Gary Osborne and current holder Ben Harding were the only other drivers in the field to reach the 100 laps mark in the opening round of heats.

Not to many real casualties in the first few races with only Thomas Howells and Callum Ogden having a troubled start to their weekend's racing. Sadly one of the favourites Dylan Ashurst was not in attendance on the Saturday evening due to an illness however he could still manage to qualify on the Sunday if he was to make a quick recovery.

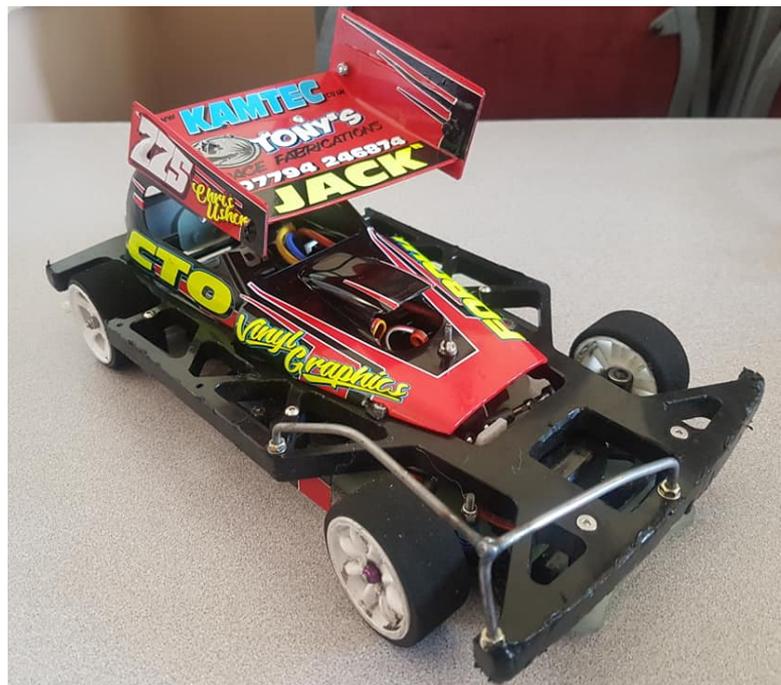


## **Round Two**

With drivers having a taster of how their cars were handling after their first race a mad dash back to the pits allowed each driver to make one or two slight changes in the hope of gaining some extra laps for their second outing. This certainly happened to the current F2 world champion Chris Usher who gained an extra eight laps on top of his first outing. He raced to 103 laps alongside Brandon Eccles and Rob Teuke continuing his fine form from his first heat.

Gordon Mutch once again finished in fourth place overall after equalling 101 laps again for a second time in succession. Ben Harding, Josh Malt and Anthony Wyper were also on the pace with them all driving to the 100 lap mark to set them up for the rest of the event. David Smith, James Eccles, Stuart Clarke and Gary Osborne were just a few others to mention that were also on the pace after a successful opening two rounds.

The results in the second round of heats just shows how quick and tricky the racing really was! Most drivers finished their races with 90+ laps excluding the one or two newbies to the racing who were finding it difficult to stick with the big guns.



### **Round Three**

The final round of heats for the Saturday evening once again seen some high laps getting clocked up around the track; This time with Brandon Eccles all but sealing his spot in the semi finals still with three rounds remaining. Brandon roared to victory in round three with 104 laps with his club rival Anthony Wyper closely sneaking up behind on 103. Ben Harding once again showing his class with a comfortable 101 laps to end his night with the red and yellow aerofoil still shining bright even though it would be the last time we were to see of it on his car .. For one more year at least! Sadly he had to withdraw from the Sunday's meeting due to him winning somewhere else instead!

Stuart Clarke ended his evening with his second heat win of the weekend on 99 laps with Dutch racer Maikel Rutten beginning to show what he's made of matching Stuart's 99 in round three. There was however a lot more lower laps in this round of heats with a number of drivers having technical issues ... Or as the world champion would say .. Forgetting your in this heat!!

Rob Teuke only managed 49 laps after realising he missed half his race. It happens to all of us don't worry! Clive

Buckler, surely one of the older racers in this weekend's event also had some troubles in his third heat after only managing 75 laps. Billy Clague had technical issues also meaning he only managing 57 laps while Peter Ashurst had even bigger problems only completing 37 laps.

So after day one of the European championship it was certainly all to play for with one thing being a certainty. A new European champion will be crowned at the end of tomorrow's meeting. Who that may well be I would love to have told you but even I didn't know who was favourite for the title? In the meantime however, it was time for the drivers to head home and get an early night's sleep ready for a long day ahead. Not for everyone however; Their might have been one or two sore heads first thing in the morning that's all there is to say!!



### **Round Four**

The start to a new day was upon us and everyone .. Well almost everyone .. Was ready for another action packed day of hard racing. Round four kicked off with a bang after a quick practice for the F1 stockcars to warm the track up first thing in the morning.

Brandon Eccles certainly must have had a good night's sleep as he flew to victory in his opening race of the day smashing the track record with 109 laps. Maikel Rutten was only a couple of laps away from Brandon while Anthony Wyper and Rob Teuke also carried on their good form into the second day.

Some of the young guns were beginning to kick start their weekend with the likes of Josh Malt, Owen Bates and James Eccles all earning themselves their best lap scores of the weekend setting them up for what would be a challenging semi final for sure. Gary Riddell and Chris Usher were also continuing their brilliant results which all but sealed their spots in the semi finals also.

Places in the two semi finals were beginning to get tougher with every single heat that passed by and everyone knew just how tough it was to maintain that pace during the days racing. High 90+ laps at the moment would not be enough to qualify in the top 16 so the standard was certainly becoming harder to come progress through with everyone battling with the hopes of earning a spot on the back end of a semi final.

### **Round Five**

Round number five and it's now starting to become a lot clearer as to who is and who is not going to be qualifying for one of the semi finals at the end of the afternoon. It is once again, the main man Anthony Wyper who strides to victory in his fifth outing with 104 laps beating his closest competitor David Smith being just the two laps behind.

Third place went to Chris Usher whilst Dylan Ashurst slowly but surely starts to find his set up around this fast track as he prepares for what would need to be a high finish in his final outing if he has anything chance of making the semi finals. Stuart Clarke all but secured his spot in the semi final with a comfortable weekend's racing so far. That also goes for Gordon Mutch who walks into the semi finals with ease. Luckily for Gary Osborne and Gordon Mutch, they are both all but secure for a spot already even though they struggled with car technical faults and rough races in their fifth races. Martin Nash was a non starter in this round which unfortunately summed up a tricky days racing after a fairly decent opening day.

All to play for in the final round of heats however with around about six or seven different drivers all in with a shout of earning the last two or three spots on the back of the grid and with the racing being so quick all weekend, their isn't really any room for error if they were to have any chance of making it through.

### **Round Six**

The final set of heats of the weekend for the F1's and it is Dutch man Maikel Rutten who sets his highest score of the weekend taking the final round with 106 laps alongside Dylan Ashurst on the same lap. Brandon Eccles finishes his fantastic qualifying rounds in superb style with 104 laps while there was four or five drivers all separated by just two laps with all of them already qualifying for a semi final.

Clive Buckler failed to finish their sixth and final race however luckily for the oldest competitor in the field, he had done other during the weekend to grab a place in semi final

two. No other real surprises in the final set of heats as all drivers gave it their all to have a chance of earning themselves them last few final places for the semi finals later on in the afternoon.

After all heats were completed, a small break allowed the drivers to check over their weekends performance while they all waited for the news of which drivers were to qualify for the top 16 of the weekend. The drivers that failed to make either of the two semi finals were given the opportunity to race in the grand national once the semi finals were completed. A good way to keep everyone track in my opinion.

So after the top sixteen drivers were named the man or shall I say young teenager who was top of the list after the six rounds was Urmston's Brandon Eccles who tallied up 317 laps from his best three rounds. Holland's Maikel Rutten was his closest rival at this early stage being a total of five laps behind Brandon. Anthony Wyper and world champion Rob Teuke were also top of the list with the pair separated only by one lap.



Scotland's Gary Riddell was having a fantastic weekend's racing so far managing to qualify for the semi finals. He is someone who can never be underestimated in any given race! He'd certainly give the best of drivers a tough challenge to beat him!

Unfortunately the same couldn't be said for Urmston's Peter Ashurst. A very busy weekend with looking after three cars without forgetting about all the scrutineering he was busy getting involved in. Luckily enough, Ministox Jack Witts was on the scene to give him a helping hand!



## **Semi Final One**

The line ups for the first semi final was as follows:

Brandon Eccles #531 – Brandon had the best weekend of everyone so far topping the table after the six qualifying rounds. He is always capable of putting in a performance when the pressure is on so he must have been feeling pretty confident heading into his semi final.

Rob Teuke #14 – The world champion.. Say no more really! Rob was on the pace pretty much all weekend however he was always looking for that extra something out of his car to make it into the final. Can he find what he's looking for?

Chris Usher – The current F2 world champion. Again, clearly a driver who knows his race around an oval track and on his day he can be up there with the best of the bunch. A good qualifying position has helped him out just in time for what could be a special memorable race for Chris.

Dylan Ashurst – Ill on the Saturday, seemed back to his normal self on the Sunday though! With having only five minutes practice to set his car up before the qualifying and no racing on the Saturday, I think Dylan done very well to make the semi final in such a reasonable starting position. He's certainly got the pace. Has he got the stockcar head to go with it?

David Smith – David has certainly been one who has improved a lot recently and his results are starting to show for his improvement. A brilliant looking car with some good speed inside of it. Can he mix it with the big boys and make what should be a fantastic final.

Josh Malt – Josh had a very consistent weekend's racing not really making too many mistakes, always up there in the podium places during the weekend, but can he keep his head and progress into the final along with the rest of the Rugby's hopefuls.

Gordon Mutch – A very good weekends racing for the man from high up in Scotland. He's proved he's got the talent in the thumbs, I think he'd be pretty pleased to make the semi finals. One better though and I'm sure the journey back to Scotland wouldn't be feeling as long!

Gary Osborne – And finally in semi final number one is Gary. Gary is someone who can most definitely mix it with the big boys on his day. He just seems to struggle for that extra drive when it really counts. Can he prove me wrong and make the European final?

The race itself was very much like it has been all weekend. Clean, tidy, a lot of racing respect between all the drivers and this type of race was more about who could stay consistent the most without losing too many laps when they crashed. On recent success, Dylan Ashurst had to be one of the favourites for the win on paper but with him not having as much track time as everyone else this may well prove to be a disadvantage.

It was in the end however the British champion Dylan who managed to sneak through the pack to take top spot in semi final one closely followed by world champion Rob Teuke in second place. Brandon Eccles drove with his head and stayed clear of the big hits coming in to allow him to progress into the main final onto the third row of the grid. Finally, it was Chris Usher who managed to scrape through and claim that final position ahead of Josh Malt in fifth.

The full results of semi final one are as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Dylan Ashurst 103 laps**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Rob Teuke 102 laps**

**3<sup>rd</sup> Brandon Eccles 102 laps**

**4<sup>th</sup> Chris Usher 101 laps**

**5<sup>th</sup> Josh Malt 99 laps**

**6<sup>th</sup> Gordon Mutch 98 laps**

**7<sup>th</sup> David Smith 69 laps**

**8<sup>th</sup> Gary Osborne 57 laps**



### **Semi Final Two**

The line ups for the second semi final was as follows:

Maikel Rutten – Holland’s only representative to represent his country at the European championships this year however qualifying second out of the whole field during the six previous rounds leaves him sitting on pole position with a very likeable chance of making it into the main final.

Anthony Wyper - ‘Toe’ has been on the pace all weekend, certainly someone who knows where to put the car when it comes to the nitty gritty races. Looking at the line up behind him, this semi final could certainly be a tester for the likes of Anthony and Maikel to sneak through the field to earn their spot in the main final.

Gary Riddell – Gary has had a brilliant weekend’s racing so far with a second row inside starting position to show for his efforts. He may not always have the best of meetings but this weekend must be up there and he certainly has the driving skills to qualify for the European final.

James Eccles – Young James is another one who’s had a fab weekend’s racing. His brother has already qualified into the final, can James follow in his older brother’s footsteps and have team Eccles battling it out for the win in the final?

Owen Bates – Owen has had a consistent weekend’s racing with not many races where he’s suffered from any real issues. On his day he knows he can make the final, but when things aren’t going his way it certainly can affect the way he races the car. I’m sure his father will be following his every move.

Stuart Clarke – A real struggle to get the perfect set up for this track certainly made Stuart questioning his next move. Someone who certainly knows what the front bumper is, but the same time certainly knows where the outside of the fence is. Only time shall tell what happens with the Rugby driver.

Clive Buckler – Clive, the oldest competitor this weekend, he's been their done that got the t-shirt and he is another driver who will be trying to sneak into them last few spots to get into the final. The NZ car always looks lovely to go around the oval tracks nowadays.

Billy Clague – I think Billy qualified by 0.02 seconds? Billy has had a good weekend's racing he probably won't be expecting to qualify for the final but as the saying goes you have to be in it to win it!

Race time and the first corner already had contact as Clive Buckler goes for the first bend lunge only to end up stuck under race control and in turn losing around three laps before he gets untangled. The rest of the pack are away and battling it out to try and make the top four at the end of the five minutes. Stuart Clarke started upsetting a few driver's stride as the bumpers flew in on pretty much anyone who was in front of him. Billy Clague was another who was getting his front bumper used.. Maybe on this occasion a little too much as a returned hit on the car ends up with a badly broken body shell to demolish his current chances of making the final.

Anthony and Maikel were battling it out hard at the front of the pack while youngsters Owen and James were battling it out between them to try and get as far up the positions as they can. Gary Riddell was slowly starting to lose out with the power of the youngsters starting to take charge. Stuart Clarke once again trying his luck with a few big hits only to really end in bad news for the Rugby man.

Eventually, as the five minutes clocked out and the race control buzzer sounded, it was Anthony Wyper who took victory with ahead of Dutch man Maikel Rutten in second place with a clean drive. A fantastic result for James Eccles in third meant that he joins his brother Brandon in the final alongside Owen Bates in fourth. Gary Riddell sadly just missed out on this occasion after a hard effort.

The full results of semi final two are as follows:

**1<sup>st</sup> Anthony Wyper 102 laps**

**2<sup>nd</sup> Maikel Rutten 101 laps**

**3<sup>rd</sup> James Eccles 95 laps**

**4<sup>th</sup> Owen Bates 95 laps**

**5<sup>th</sup> Gary Riddell 94 laps**

**6<sup>th</sup> Stuart Clarke 91 laps**

**7<sup>th</sup> Clive Buckler 86 laps**

**8<sup>th</sup> Billy Clague 78 laps**



### **Last Chance Race**

After the semi finals, there was one last chance for the driver's to make the European final and this was it! Eight cars, only one winner. There was plenty of top drivers in the race all looking at winning this race and qualifying to form a nine car grid.

This race was very much all about keeping out of trouble. Each driver knew the front bumpers were going to get used plenty in this race, but it was all about who dealt with the hits the best. The man who managed to do that the best was the eventual winner David Smith who managed to win the race with 97 laps. Unfortunately for second place Gary Riddell, he gained the same amount of laps as David however missed out by seconds.

Third place went to Josh Malt on 93 laps ahead of Gary Osborne; also on 93 laps. Fifth place was Stuart Clarke on 88 laps with Clive Buckler, Billy Clague and Gordon Mutch bringing up the rear of the pack.

### **Grand National Race**

In between the last chance race and the European final the remaining drivers who failed to qualify this weekend was entitled to a grand national race to end their weekend's racing. The winner of this race went to Urmston's Stewart Smith who unfortunately for him just missed out on a semi final spot.

### **Junior European Championship**

Sadly only four juniors were present at the European championship's for this year. Hopefully however we still had some hard little racers all wanting to win! We start off with Jack Witts; As mentioned earlier, this is Jack's first ever championship meeting. He may well have won the ministox world championship twice before but the smaller scale stockcars are a certain next for the newbie.

Secondly we mention the only girl racer this weekend Leah Wyper. Daughter of Anthony, Leah has improved massively in my opinion. She seems to be getting bigger and better every time I see her and hopefully if she can follow in her father's footsteps she could well be a driver not to mess with!

We then move onto James Eccles. James has qualified for the main final which really I no need to say any more! Stockcar racing is a hard sport for anyone, yet alone a youngster like James and I think that he has a bright future in the sport. He's got the right thinking in his head and on his day he's a great rider to race against.

Finally we have Dylan Ashurst. Like James, he has also qualified for the main final as is definitely most likely to win the junior race on paper. But this is stockcar racing and anything is possible as we all know. A difficult day off on the Saturday through illness for Dylan hopefully won't affect his chances at yet another win.

The race itself wasn't one to remember sadly with only four cars in attendance for the European weekend. However, nonetheless the job had to be done and it was Dylan who raced to victory ahead of James in second and Leah in third. Jack finished last in the race but considering he's only be doing the odd meeting the past few months, he's certainly starting to get the hang of things already.

Well done to all the juniors taking part in the meeting.



From left to right – James Eccles #532, Jack Witts #18, Leah Wyper #107, Dylan Ashurst #55

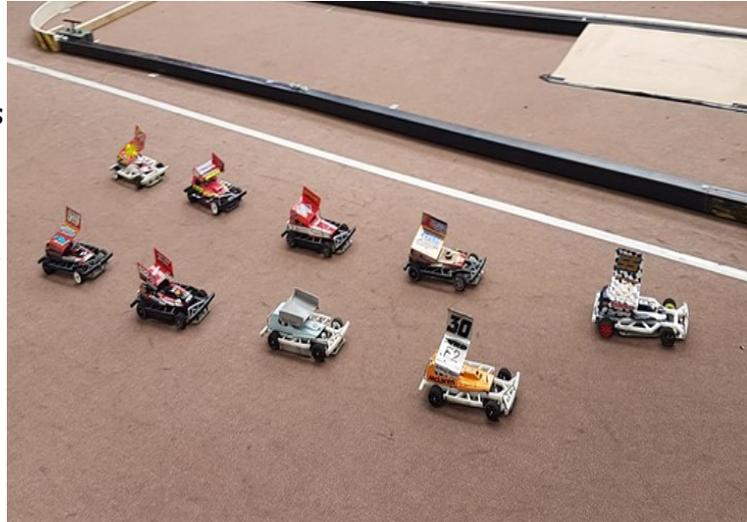
I spoke with Dylan's dad Peter Ashurst after the meeting. This is what he had to say; "I suffered electrical gremlins all weekend and my car was poor. As for Jack, he was on fire just like the real thing. He got stuck into his car from the minute he sat down in the pits. He was very interested in the scrutineering and asked if he could help out".

"Nice to see Dylan win the junior title despite Jack's best efforts. Dylan on pole in the final was awesome stuff in my book. He had a great start. He was on fire and then he started to lose his concentration and switched to do what he came to do. I personally like both formulas running and the same time as it makes for a bigger show that can only be better for the 12<sup>th</sup> section".

### **The 2018 1/12th European Championship Title**

Final time and we were certainly in for a treat! The big boys were all lined up ready to go and for one of them the European title would be going home with them. On the weekend's form, Urmston's Brandon Eccles has to be one of the favourites for the race however we also had the likes of new British champion Dylan Ashurst, National points champion Anthony Wyper and world champion Rob Teuke just a few names to stick into the lottery draw.

The race itself was of very very fast pace with Rob Teuke really the stand out driver for sheer pace. Unfortunately for the world champion, his luck was not on his side on this occasion with him getting put into the fence the majority of the time that he was trying to sneak past the oncoming field. Dylan Ashurst started off in good style however a sketchy little mid race disturbance caused to drop the young man down the positions quickly. Anthony Wyper, Brandon Eccles and Maikel Rutten were once again battling their way through at the front of the pack however it was last chance winner David Smith who was picking their way through the pack the best as the race nears the end.



Race control called the race to a stop once the five minutes were completed as the drivers began to discuss how the race went. Only one person knew the official results and that was Allan Inness in race control. A fantastic effort by him and everyone involved in running this event. As the trophies were prepared to be presented to the finalists, chairman Mark Craig was the man in charge of delivering the all important race results. The results of the race were as follows.

9<sup>th</sup> #515 Owen Bates 90 laps

8<sup>th</sup> #532 James Eccles 92 laps

7<sup>th</sup> #Dylan Ashurst 94 laps

6<sup>th</sup> #14 Rob Teuke 96 laps

5<sup>th</sup> #775 Chris Usher 96 laps

4<sup>th</sup> #531 Brandon Eccles 96 laps

3<sup>rd</sup> #54 David Smith 97 laps

2<sup>nd</sup> #H144 Maikel Rutten 98 laps

1<sup>st</sup> #30 Anthony Wyper 100 laps



A huge congratulations goes to Anthony 'Toe' Wyper for his second European win. After the meeting I had a quick chat with a number of drivers.

Gary Riddell #600 - "I thought my car had the pace and was set up well knocking out 100 plus laps to qualify for the semi final. I Had a great start to my semi final as I started in third and took the lead after the first corner. I then got tangled, lost my lead and I thought I was about third. I was actually fourth before I lost it on the last corner to finish 5th. The last chance race went very much the same started pole position, lead most of the race got tangled and again lost it on the last corner to finish 2nd. Overall a bit disappointed that I never made the final but the weekend overall was top notch and I think we got the AGM sorted as well".

Owen Bates #515 - "The meeting went well for me as I didn't think I was going to make the final from my recent performances but I managed to pull it off. The event was good, great close racing and bumper work".

Mark Craig #141 - "The hardest part was the getting people booked in and getting details but once i had them this is were Allan Inness come into his own. He already set the timing loop before sorting all the heats and necessary paper work out. Honestly with out Allan's experience I would find it hard but he is a credit for all the things he does behind the scenes. John Twiggs also played a big part in the event".

"Some brilliant racing was had over the weekend. TheF1 final was the best race of all where every one swapped places numerous times. One thing that stood out was the marshalling and credit to every one they all raced and was right out to marshall which helped the meeting run fantastic".

To finally end this report, I'd like to personally thank everyone involved in the preparation to this event and the way everyone all joined together to make this weekend work. We have a good little oval family and we all can have a great laugh together. Let's hope if we can continue to work together in the future, come five years time we will all still be hear loving the racing as much as we are doing now.

I hope you enjoy reading the report

Stuart Clarke

Nobby #150