

NG Road Racing... Brands Hatch Race Report.



Round 1 | Brands Hatch | 16th and 17th March 2019

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All Hail those who mastered the conditions.

11 | Chris Pope

Early season meetings can always be a lottery as regards weather, but early season meetings at Brands Hatch with British weather is another thing altogether. It is a well known paddock fact that the Brands tarmac does not afford much grip when it is cold, and this weekend for round one of the NG Road Racing season was cold....and windy.... with intermittent hail storms thrown in for good measure. It wasn't all bad though, there were times on Saturday that the sun poked through, the track dried and some impressive lap times were put down which included a new lap record in the Suzuki Bandits class by Harley Prebble.

It was a weekend to get though unscathed as crews switched tyres from wet to dry and back again in a bid to have the right set up, and it was obvious out on track who had made the right choices. One paddock wag even said of a rival that "..... he would be really quick if he hadn't used slicks in the wet and wets in the dry !!!". That summed the challenges of the weekend.

The racing though, as ever early season threw up a few surprises and a few new front runners. James Welch showed that he will be a force to be reckoned with in the 600's despite two crashes at Graham Hill Bend. The Powerbike riders are still playing catch up to get on Josh Day's pace and the Bandit challenge is still as fiercely competitive with last years top two James McHardy and Harley Prebble going at it hammer and tongs.

Stand out rides came from Simon Bastable on his R6 who took five wins over the weekend and Chris Pope who gave the hardy soles who stayed until the end of the weekend a display of how to ride in the cold and wet with a setting sun as a backdrop, taking his maiden win on the AFB R1 in the Powerbikes, visibly unable to contain his excitement popping celebratory wheelies on the cool-down lap..... and all this at a track he openly does not favour, in conditions he dislikes. I think he may have a change of heart now !!!



All the Brands Hatch Action | Class by Class

Formula 125 | Backed by Steve Lynham Motorcycles

2017 F125 champion James Chapman started his bid to regain the class title with two fine wins on his Chapman Racing Aprilia, both times over Sean Able. Able however was not to be denied his moment on the top step as he swept through to a victory in Sunday afternoons final on his Hire Standards Ltd RS which was held in very wet conditions.

Formula 400 | Backed by A and R Racing Spares

Young Welshman Lewis Jones took a convincing win first time out on his KTM RC390 heading the field home by 15 seconds as others struggled with set up issues. Mark Walker impressively fought through from the sixth row to take second place and his best F400 result to date. Reigning champ Tim Bradley was struggling with conditions finishing in an uncustomary fourth place. Bradley though was in no mood to let any other points go begging as he took the next two races on his A and Z Taylor FZR over Phil Atkinson who was having an outing on a borrowed ZXR 400 and Dan Hanby who has switched to an FZR and was revelling in the wet conditions that met the Formula runners.

500cc Open | Backed EDP Photo News

15 year old Bradley Richman started off his challenge for the 500 open title with a hat-trick of wins on his Hel Performance ZXR400. The 2018 runner up may not run the full season though as he is making the switch to a 600 as soon as he hits 16 !!! Mark Walker and Nik Sweet mopped up the minor podium spots.

600cc Open | Backed by IMS Ltd

Last years newcomers runner-up James Welch has moved up to focus on the 600 open for 2019 and took a stunning win first time out on his R6 Yamaha leaving Ross Walker, Luke Welch (...James's brother !) and Michael

Rees in his wake. Wrong tyre choices in the mixed conditions saw championship tips Max Symonds, Liam Delves and Kayla Barrington struggling on the fringe of the top 10. The red flag came out two laps before the end of the first race but as the Barrington saw the red at the top of Paddock Hill she lost the front of the new R6 and ploughed into the fencing. She is walking wounded but the R6 is in new of a lot of TLC if it is to be ready for Snetterton. In the worsening conditions on Sunday it was Simon Bastable that took two stunning wins on his Streetstock spec WSC R6 with Michel Rees, Adam Grosch and the hard charging Dean Richards battling out the podium. Saturday's winner Welch crashed out of both of Sunday's races at Graham Hill, luckily walking away both times.

Open | Backed by Phoenix Motorcycles

Josh Day was in usual dominant form in the Open. It was business as usual for Josh who has switched to an all new R1 for 2019 running in the Dayo Race Team colours, taking the flag each time. Behind him Jonathan Railton and his GSX-R, Paul Dawson with an R1, Dave Mackay and his Panigale and Joe Sheldon-Shaw on his new 2019 mount the Via-Moto ZX10 watched on as Josh bagged a full point's haul. Railton was the only real threat when on Sunday Morning he pressured Day early on and actually set the fastest lap of the weekend....that was until Josh got into his stride !

Powerbike | Backed by Bluebell Lakes

Josh Day has started 2019 as he ended 2018....winning... and headed Jonathan Railton and Joe Sheldon-Shaw in Saturday's outing. Sunday saw JSS not on the entry list and Railton get caught out with the changing conditions and not making it to the grid. That left the way for NG regulars Chris Pope and Paul Dawson to mount the Powerbike podium. The final outing of the weekend saw no Day on the grid as he had "killed all three sets of wets" that the team had to hand. Chris Pope on the AFB R1 needed no second invitation to grab his first Powerbike win storming to a stunning 24 second victory over fellow R1 man Paul Dawson and Sukhminder Rai and Paul Jeffery in a survival of the fittest face in the wet and cold conditions with the sun going down.

Super Twins and Mini Twins | Backed by Racebuykz.com

Some of the closest finishes of the weekend were in the Mini Twins class Dan Harris took his HP Racing SV to victory in the first outing by 0.15 of a sec over William Holland...the second race saw the same order but this time the gap was 0.03 of a sec. Holland got some revenge in the third outing taking his 650 Gladius to the win but again in a tight finish with just a 0.1 second gap....wow. Holland is the defending Super Twin champ but had to settle for three podium finishes but no win as James Edwards took two on his Slidesports SV and Paul Wardell one on his first outing with the Bee Lighting ER650

Sound of Thunder | Backed by 100% Suspension

Reigning Sound of Thunder champ Dave Mackay took his True Heroes 959 Panigale to three impressive wins to kick off his defence in perfect style. Jacques Foley with his Kramer Evo RR, Les Linney with his 675 and Antony White all had podium finishes but it was some way behind Mackay who will focus on retaining the NG title as well as campaigning the Ducati Tri-option at BSB.

Streetstock | Backed by DTR Racing Spares and Metzeler

As ever two classes for the road based streetstockers, 700cc and 1300cc. 2017 700cc champ Simon Bastable is back on track and aboard his WSC Performance R6 after a huge crash at Anglesey early doors of 2018. He did not put a foot wrong here taking three wins as behind him Adam Grosch and reigning champ David Irons squabbled over the remaining podium spots. Irons had suffered a "big off" in testing on Friday and took a little time to get back up to speed. The 1300's had Jason Hill take his first race weekend double with a fine pair on his JT Racing/Weston Motorcycles ZX10 but just missed out on the hat-trick as the experienced former champ Jon Wright took the final outing of the weekend on his Controls and Safety R1.

Pre Injections | Backed by Love Life and Ride

The older pre-2001 pre-injection machines have two classes 700cc and 1300cc. Daniel Nelmes took a narrow win in the first 700 outing on his R6 over Dean Kennedy in the dry, but in Sunday's wet conditions no one had an answer for Nelmes who stormed to two more wins. The big class had newcomer Daniel Boucher grab the win on Saturday from class pole on his LBW & D Boucher R1. Sunday though saw Wayne Pither and his Supreme Engineering/BAS R1 take a fine pair of wins to put him on top of the points table after the first round of 2019.

Bandits and Formula Prostocks | Backed by Motul Oils

It looks like the 2019 Bandit series to all teed up to be a head to head between reigning champ James McHardy on his European Vacuum Drainage Suzuki and Harley Prebble on his Redneck Racing GS. There was literally nothing to choose between them over the four races that they have over the weekend taking two wins apiece. The lead swapped numerous times, sometimes three or four times per lap.... and they both loved the racing congratulating each other on the cool down laps.... Roll on Snetterton.

Also part of the Formula Prostocks series are the FP1's (pre '81 Classic F1) where John Tatham took two wins with the Harris magnum and Ian Feeley one on his naked CB900 F. The FP2's (pre '87 Production) had Andy Bailey untroubled on his GSXR750 and FP3's (pre '95 Classic Superbikes) with defending champion Lewis Rees taking the wins on his Pembrokeshire Self Drive Hire CBR 600 each time over Andrew Howe.

Ducati Desmo | Backed by The Ducati Sporting Club

Steven Colville won first time out on his 620 Ducati with a margin of almost 30 seconds over the rest of the field. Mike Burke was next up as he battled with Jim Weatherald, Scott Wilson and Duncan Bailie. Scotsman Bailie did not want to head back up North without a good points haul and promptly took the next two race wins, each him over Wilson. The 600 class saw Austin Lachlan take his first ever Desmo win over pre race favourite Preston Tuby. Tuby bounced back though taking the second and third finals of the weekend, with Lachlan not too far adrift.

Newcomers | Backed by Protect my Income.com

The newcomers had some of the worst conditions on Saturday afternoon for their outing but they presented us with a great four-way battle for the open class win as Luke Welch, Chris Oliver, Antony Stroud and Daniel Boucher went head to head. Welch on the LSW Electrical R6 took the honours with a couple of late race fastest lap. The Mini Twins division saw Olii Warren take a stunning 14 second win on the Boutiqueolii SV over Hayden Rushton and Grant Seymour.

Sidecars | Backed by NG Road Racing

Lewis Blackstock and Paddy Rosney took pole for the Sidecars on their new SBR LCR 600 Yam and in the first outing set off at a great pace but with two laps remaining his fuelling issues and pulled into pit lane. That left the way open for Sam and Adam Christie to take the Christie Engineering LCR to take the flag. After that win he was never headed across the line and took the next two races in fine style despite early pressure from Brian Gray/Jason Pitt and the afore mentioned Blackstock and Rosney. Kyle Masters survived being thrown out of the back of the outfit piloted by Kevin Cable after they spun on oil at Graham Hill but was unscathed, bouncing back to take a couple of fourth placings.

125/250GP ACU National Championship |

2 | Phil Atkinson

Jim Hind set a stunning pole position for the first round of the Dunlop 250 GP series but it was Bruce Dunn the MCN test rider that drew first championship blood with a stunning win over 20 year old Hind and former 250 Cup winner Simon Hunt. Dunn was using the all new Bilstein suspension on his TZ. Bilstein are huge in the car world and a looking to break into two wheeled port..... it looks like it won't be long before more people are knocking on their door. Hind was unstoppable on Sunday taking both wins by impressive margins on his Bass Tyres/North Lincs. Components TZ with Dunn, Hunt and Daniel Walling making visits to the podium



Reigning 250 GP Phil Atkinson is without a 250 ride in 2019 so wheeled out his newly built RS125 and took a surprising race one win on the untested machine over Paul Fyson and Sam Llewellyn. Race two was Fyson on the Machine Tool Maintenance RS over Llewellyn and Atkinson... and race three Llewellyn over this time Atkinson and Fyson to put them all on 61 points at the head of the Hartsmere logistics backed series

Wiz Sliders Performance of the Meeting | www.wizkneesliders.com

At every NG round one lucky rider is selected for the Wiz Sliders Performance award. The chosen one gets a special set of one-off sliders made by the Wiz guy's in Somerset. For this meeting it was Simon Bastable that caught the eye after taking five wins on his WSC Performance R6, returning to racing after a massive off at Anglesey last season....and he's still not fully fit!



Jonathan Railton | Set the fastest lap of the weekend with a stunning 47.54 sec lap (91.45mph) in Saturday mornings Phoenix Open.



James Hind | The former 125 GP champ now in the 250GP series and heads the series after round one.



Simon Bastable | The well deserved Wiz Sliders performance of the meeting winner on his WSC Performance R6.

Images courtesy | EDP Photo News | www.edpphoto.co.uk

Next Round: Snetterton | 13th and 14th April.

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