



The headlining act of HRP's September to remember came this past weekend at HP Lochgelly Raceway as a mammoth weekend of racing saw some incredible racing, a dash of controversy, sportsmanship, stupidity and new champions crowned in a weekend that simply had everything and delivered it in spades!

Three formulas gathered in fantastic numbers on the Saturday night with major championship implications for all as the UK Oval Track Legends made their annual appearance to contest their European Championship, a star-studded field of Stock Rods battled it out for their British Championship while war was declared in the 1300 Stock Cars in their World Championship!

The UK Oval Track Legends only make one appearance in Scotland every year and it has become traditional that it is for their European Championship. Originally imported from the USA in the 1990s, these pocket rockets are one of the leading non-contact formulas around the UK. Based on vintage American hot rod body shapes, but powered by superbike engines, these little cars are extremely quick in a straight line and demand plenty of driving skill from some of Britain's top oval racing drivers. Given the long trip north for drivers and teams; an excellent sixteen cars were on the grid as two heats would determine the starting positions for the European Championship and these were duly won by Daniel Holden and Tom Sutton who both looked exceptionally quick as did Mark Dews who picked up two podium finishes. The European Championship race itself was an out and out hot rod race with Holden making all of the running while being kept honest by the chasing pack led by Dews and Sutton but Holden held on, using all of his experience to cross the line to claim the 2017 European Championship.

The Stock Rods are very popular at HRP Lochgelly Raceway and the Soapy Bubbles Car Wash/Shotts MOT Centre sponsored British Championship brought one of the strongest fields of Stock Rods ever assembled to HRP Lochgelly Raceway this past weekend with entrants from all corners of the Stock Rod world. The thirty-six cars drew for grid positions for their three heats which would see each of the cars race twice to determine the grid for the British Championship Final and the heats were won by the home trio of Jon Venters, Darren McAlpine and Gary Nicholls. The British Championship Final grid saw thirty-five drivers take to the track as the atmosphere built under the HRP floodlights with England's Jack Grandon on pole with Northern Ireland's Curtis Greer alongside ahead of Scottish quartet Darren McAlpine, Siobhan Martin, Jon Venters and Chris Lattka. As the green flag fell; Grandon shot into the lead while Greer had to defend his position as he was challenged by those behind him which allowed Grandon to create a decent gap between him and the chasing pack with Lattka, Stuart Smyth and Siobhan Martin looking particularly quick. Greer continued to defend his position while McAlpine's tyres went off in the latter stages which allowed a number of cars to get past him but time and laps ran out for any hopefuls as Grandon crossed the line first with Greer in second and Lattka third. Unfortunately, for Grandon and Greer, post-race checks discovered issues with their engines which saw both subsequently removed from all results for the weekend which resulted in Chris Lattka being declared the 2017 British Champion to add to his European and National Points titles this year with Stuart Smyth finishing second and National Champion Siobhan Martin taking third in a race that was sadly, but unavoidably, decided in the scrutineering bay rather than on track.



The 1300 Stock Cars have had a turbulent season on the domestic front but over forty cars were in the pits this past weekend to contest the ASD Welding Services 1300 Stock Cars Championship of the World with all of the big names in attendance including defending champion Daniel Weavers. Drivers would be gridded according to their National points and draw for positions on the grid against their peers from the other promotions. The first two rows saw Lochgelly's own Euan Mathieson on pole with Norfolk's Billy Smith and Diggy Smith second and third while Northern Irish Points Champion Jon McQuillan would line up fourth. The grid made for an impressive sight as they rolled off for the first of two rolling laps as the tension built around the stadium. The green flag fell on the huge field with Mathieson coming under fire immediately from the father and son Smith duo while the bumpers flew in all the way through the field with an early caution declared for a car in a dangerous position. Following the resumption of the race and the early laps sort-out; it became a two-horse race with former European Champion Ian Beaumont and Diggy Smith trading blows and positions as the laps wound down. Smith was given a helping hand on several occasions as his son Billy slowed down in an attempt to hinder Beaumont's progress as the crowd reached fever pitch encouraging their favourites when a huge hit from Tommy Aylward saw Dean McGill stuck in the turn four fence with just one lap to go bringing out the yellow flag. As the leaders came out of turn two and headed down the back straight, Smith flew over the infield kerb and slammed Beaumont into the fence which brought an immediate end to the race under the "Malcolm Girling Rule" which states that if the leader of the race is taken out illegally in the final three laps then the race will revert one lap back and that handed Beaumont the win in controversial fashion but there was certainly no doubt about the illegality of the hit by Smith – despite his rather over the top protests to the contrary!!! Ian Beaumont came through a myriad of challenges and can rightly be declared as the 2017 1300 Stock Car World Champion with Scottish duo Paul Ford (who started at the rear of the grid) and Ryan McGill rounding out the podium. The two subsequent heats were won by English duo Jason Scopes and Ryan Jordan while Jordan had to settle for second behind Lochgelly's Andrew Mathieson in the Bill Auld Fabrications Trophy Final which brought an end to Saturday's proceedings.

Sunday dawned wet but the track was dry for the early part of Sunday's meeting which would see the Legends, 1300 Stock Cars and Stock Rods contesting their Open Scottish Championship while they were also joined by the CC Rods and Ministox. The Legends heats were won by Jon Evans and new European Champion Daniel Holden and it was Evans, on his first visit to the track who drove a highly-composed race to take the Scottish Open title in the formula who signed off for another year with many of the drivers doing donuts to the cheers of the crowd in attendance.

The 1300 Stock Cars Open Scottish Championship was their first race and was exceptionally competitive as the drivers let loose with the bumpers being used to full effect. Ryan Jordan had enjoyed a successful Saturday and looked odds on to take the title but was caught by European Champion Lee Pearce in the closing stages as he added another title to his CV with Jordan coming home in second and new World Champion Ian Beaumont third. The first heat was won by British Champion Will Morphey ahead of Jordan and Ryan Santry while the second heat (and final race of the weekend for the 1300s) was abandoned before it began due to the shenanigans of Ryan McGill, Dean McGill and Billy Smith who had to be stopped by one of the recovery vehicles from doing anything else! A shameful end to a brilliant weekend of 1300 Stock Car Racing.

The Stock Rods arrived in fantastic numbers once again with thirty-seven cars in attendance, necessitating three heats once again and these were won by Irish Champion Derek McMillan, former

British Champion Andy Grant and British Champion runner-up Stuart Smyth. With McMillan on pole, it was up to the other drivers to find a way past the former National and European Champion and, at the end of the twenty laps, nobody had an answer for the flying Northern Irishman who took the title ahead of Smyth and younger brother Shane McMillan.

The CC Rods raced in their three usual races with a number of debutants on track. Heat wins went the way of Colin Thomson and Pete Honeyman while Thomson doubled up once more with another final win to add to his hat-trick last time out. The Ministox had another good field of cars on hand including visitor Charlie Morphey. Mitchell Gold took heat one with Morphey taking heat two before ORCi Champion Steven Burgoyne claimed the feature final top bring a close to an incredible weekend of action which had it all.

Many will be talking about last weekend for a long time but the season rolls on and Championship Fever continues at HRP Lochgelly Raceway as the 2.0 Hot Rods and Junior Productions contest their Scottish Championships with the ProStocks, Ninja Karts and Superstox in support. The action gets underway at HRP Lochgelly Raceway this Saturday September 30<sup>th</sup> at 5:45pm.