



Drivers, teams and fans gathered in huge numbers at HRP Lochgelly Raceway this past weekend for one of the highlights of the 2016 Scottish Stock Car calendar – the Dechmont Forklift Trucks National Hot Rod European Championship Weekend. As befitting such a major occasion; a large crowd gathered at HRP Lochgelly Raceway for the event with people coming from all over Scotland, England, Northern Ireland, The Republic of Ireland, Holland and Germany to witness one of the major titles for short oval motorsport’s elite non-contact formula being contested.



A fantastic entry of cars arrived to do battle featuring ex- World Champions Glenn Bell (Northern Ireland) and Chris Haird (England) as well as current British Champion David Casey (ROI) plus the likes of 2016 Best in Britain winner Jason Kew and a blend of experienced racers and determined young chargers meant that this championship was probably the most competitive it has ever been. The cars were split into three groups with each driver racing in two of the three scheduled heats. Former World Champion and the first man to win the European at HRP Lochgelly Raceway three years ago, Chris Haird, struck first blood as he took the chequered flag in heat one ahead of a fast-moving Carl Waller-Barrett and English Points Champion Kym Weaver. The second heat saw a hugely popular Scottish victory as Lochore's Billy Bonnar headed home English duo Layton Millsom and Terry Hunn with Hunn racing the newest car shape to National Hot Rods in the form of the Mazda RX8 with heat one winner Haird coming home seventh. The third and final heat saw former World Champion and current Scottish Open Champion Glenn Bell take the win ahead of British Champion Casey and Derek Martin with Waller-Barrett finishing in a very useful fifth place.

With their high finishes in their heats; the front row for the Dechmont Forklift Trucks National Hot Rod European Championship saw Carl Waller-Barrett start in pole position with former champion Chris Haird on his outside with Glenn Bell on the inside of row two. The grid looked resplendent under the HRP Lochgelly Raceway floodlights and you could cut the atmosphere with a knife as the drivers rounded turn four to take the green flag. As the green flag fell; Waller-Barrett attempted to fend off the advances of Haird on his outside but left a gap down the inside which Bell attempted to fill and, as he did, the three drivers made contact causing a large pile up which involved around half of the field! The National Hot Rod Promoters' Association had deemed that a ten-minute period of repair time would then begin

to allow drivers and teams to get their vehicles back to race-readiness. Sadly, for the likes of Scottish hope Robert McDonald this would not be enough time due to a broken gear box. The restart of the race saw Waller-Barrett surge into the lead and he managed to break away from Haird to maintain a healthy gap while Haird was also clear of the chasing pack led by Bell who had Derek Martin and Billy Wood in close quarters. With a couple of stoppages for spinners; Waller-Barrett held his nerve and regained his advantage every time but, as the laps wound down, it was clear that Haird was making significant inroads into the lead of the 162 machine and, by the time the five laps to go board was displayed, the race was well and truly on! Haird was all over the back of Waller-Barrett and had several looks round the outside of the young driver and Haird made his move on the final corner as he attempted to out-drag Waller-Barrett to the line. It was not to be however as Waller-Barrett managed to stay ahead of the 115 machine to take victory by less than a car length in a thrilling finish! Huge credit must go to Carl Waller-Barrett as he claimed his first major title in the formula ahead of Haird who had driven a great race while Glenn Bell managed to fend off Billy Wood and Derek Martin for the entire race to claim the final podium position.



The Sunday afternoon race session saw the National Hot Rods contest their Scottish Open Championship with Glenn Bell defending the title he won last year. Derek Martin continued his great weekend with the win in heat one ahead of Scotland's Ian Donaldson and Chris Haird in greasy conditions. Heat two saw newly-crowned European Champion Carl Waller-Barrett claim victory with Jason Kew in second and Martin in a very impressive third on a now dry track. Martin's results put him on pole position for the

Scottish Open Championship which, as always, doubled up as the Malcolm Chesher Memorial event and he was not to be denied as he took the spoils home to Northern Ireland ahead of England's Jason Kew and The Republic of Ireland's David Casey to round off an incredible weekend of top class National Hot Rod racing. The trophy presentation saw the Chesher family join the victorious drivers plus Keith Chesher's Classic Hot Rod which is a replica of one that Malcolm had raced – a wonderful sight.



Chesher's Classic Hot Rod was not the only Classic in attendance as the Classic Hot Rods made their long awaited and eagerly anticipated competitive debut in Scotland with a fantastic entry of twenty-two cars! The drivers would race in three heats on Saturday and one on Sunday prior to their own Scottish Open Championship. Heat One saw a Scottish victory which pleased the crowd who were thrilled at the sight of Mk1 and Mk2 Escorts and Ford Anglias flying around the tight confines of HRP Lochgelly Raceway but it was the Vauxhall Chevette of Grangemouth's Graham McCabe, a long-time advocate and racer in the formula, that took the historic first win. The second heat win went to one of the youngest stars in the formula as Harry Stewart took the spoils in heat two before Norfolk's Gary Goodswen (a former 2 Litre Hot Rod World Champion) took home the trophy for victory in heat three. Sunday's racing began with the fourth and final heat and it was Sussex driver Hughie Weaver who took the win in this one. Goodswen's consistency saw him claim pole position for the inaugural Scottish Open Championship and a great race ensued with drivers battling and jockeying for position. It was Staffordshire's Daz Owen who came out on top as he claimed the Scottish Open Championship ahead of Weaver and Northern Ireland's Thomas Dilly who had driven an incredible race to move from his starting position near the

back to a rostrum finish while pole sitter Goodswen took fourth. The final race for the Classic Hot Rods this past weekend saw McCabe rise to the occasion once more as he took his second win of the weekend to round off a great weekend of racing for the Classic Hot Rods who many say stole the show this past weekend.



Talk of show stealers brings us to Scotland's top stock car formula as the 1300 Stock Cars enjoyed two days of racing in front of the large crowd. A few more drivers were on hand as teams complete their new cars with Peter Low and Fraser Clark both debuting their new machines while European and British Champion Adam O'Dell was a welcome visitor as he prepares for the defence of his European title here at HRP Lochgelly Raceway on June 11th/12th. Saturday saw two heat wins for an on-form Jason Secker while Craig Watson took the soils in the feature final. A Grand National heat saw Glenrothes driver Lee Buchan claim his first win in his new HRD car. Sunday saw a further two heats with wins going to Kenny Swankie and Scottish Champion Callum Barclay before the 1300 action was rounded off with a feature final win for Barclay ahead of Buchan and O'Dell in a bruising weekend of 1300 Stock Car action!

The Ministox joined the fray on the Sunday at HRP Lochgelly Raceway and a large entry of around twenty cars had gathered to do battle including English visitors Dan Santry and brotherly duo Tony and Danny Elbourn. It was Tony Elbourn who took the first win of the day ahead of Scot Steven Burgoyne and Santry and Danny Elbourn as the English drivers looked exceptionally fast. Santry underlined this in

heat two with the win ahead of Tony Elbourn and Burgoyne with Burgoyne's Scottish rival Euan Millar coming home in fourth. The feature final race was for the HRP Gold Cup and the youngsters continued to display tremendous abilities as they thrilled the spectators. Recently-crowned ORCi Champion Dan Santry maintained his recent form as he scooped the Gold Cup ahead of fellow English driver Tony Elbourn with Burgoyne the first Scottish driver home in third to round off another great day of Ministox action at HRP Lochgelly Raceway.

A great weekend of racing was enjoyed by all and full credit must go to the drivers, teams and staff who kept the meetings moving at a good pace. Every formula put on a tremendous show and the spectators left very happy with their experience and with some great memories of yet another hugely successful HRP Speed Weekend.

The next slice of HRP stock car action comes this Friday April 15th from 7pm and features the return of the incredible Superstox while the Ministox are back in action along with the 2.0 Hot Rods and ProStocks in a four formula spectacular at HRP Lochgelly Raceway.