

As the season draws towards its close in early November; a blustery and wet afternoon greeted drivers, teams and fans as they gathered at HRP Lochgelly Raceway this past Saturday for the latest slice of stock car action presented by Hardie Race Promotions.



Championship Fever returned with a vengeance as the hard-hitting 1300 Stock Cars arrived to contest their Scottish Championship – which was the last Scottish title to be determined this year. Sadly, last-minute engine troubles meant that defending champion Callum Barclay was unable to defend his title on track so a new champion would be crowned.



While it had been wet earlier in the day; the majority of the rain had disappeared by the 6pm start time and a public grid draw for the 1300 Stock Cars Scottish Championship saw Lochgelly's Andrew Mathieson claim pole position with West Lothian driver Derek Slater alongside him. At the drop of the green flag the expected chaos did not take long to happen with Bobby Gold, Kev Baird and the Low brothers getting involved with each other. With some very un-savoury actions being witnessed; the Low brothers were actually ordered to leave the track for their part and certainly those kind of hits and actions are not what most people want to see. Andrew Mathieson had made a good start on the initial green flag and managed to do so again to retain his lead. A great battle ensued behind the 124 car as Euan Mathieson, Dean McGill and Zak Gilmour all traded blows with McGill eventually making the break from the other two to give chase to Andrew Mathieson but he was unable to reduce the gap sufficiently to make a challenge as the chequered flag fell on Andrew Mathieson. Sadly, the story did not end there as Mathieson's car sadly failed post-race checks which handed the win and, more importantly, the Scottish Championship to Dean McGill of East Wemyss with Lochgelly's Euan Mathieson in second and Kirkintilloch's Zak Gilmour in third. Andrew would go some way to making up for that loss in the subsequent two heats as he claimed a fantastic double with newly-crowned Scottish Champion McGill taking second in both races to finish a controversial evening in the 1300 Stock Cars.



The Stock Rods were back in action for the first time since their fantastic Best in Britain weekend here a couple of weeks ago and Best in Britain Champion Jonathan Lattka rolled into the pits with the Union

Jack proudly on display on his roof. The meeting also saw the return to racing of Lee Smart who has been busy with mechanic duties on daughter Kaitlyn's Ninja Kart of late. Conditions were far from ideal for the non-contact formula but the drivers put on a fantastic display of control in greasy conditions with some great racing throughout the evening. National Points Champion Siobhan Martin certainly looked to have a handle on the conditions as she stormed through from the back of the grid to take an excellent win in heat one ahead of Jonathan Lattka and John McAllister. Heat Two saw a victory for Gary Dean – the Kirknewton driver has been one of the finds of 2016. Having never raced before the 2016 season, Gary has won a number of races and displayed some great skill in rising to blue roof and still managing to take wins – one to watch for the future. Gary managed to stay ahead of Jonathan Lattka and Siobhan Martin to take the win against some very exalted company. The feature final was another fantastic race with the drivers once again showing all of their skill to lap the HRP tarmac at a ferocious pace. After a great battle through the field; Siobhan Martin found herself at the head of the field once again and, as in heat one, it would be a lead that she would not lose as she went on to take an excellent heat and final winning double with Jonathan Lattka completing a full set of podium finishes in second ahead of John McAllister.



The CC Rods were also back in action after a few weeks away and another good field of HRP's low budget, non-contact formula arrived to do battle. Having had a late start to his rookie season, Michael McNiven looked to be in the mood to make up for lost time as he stormed to victory in heat one ahead of the on-form Bob Martin and Brandon Gourlay. McNiven managed to repeat the feat in heat two with Gourlay and fellow Kirkcaldy pilot Kevin Hutchison being his nearest challengers. The feature final saw many wondering if McNiven could pull off an incredible hat-trick but it was not to be in a race that saw

several cars looking worse for wear by the end. Ian Hotchkies took his MK2 Astra to victory lane as he bested Kirkcaldy duo Hutchison and Craig Watson.

The Ministox were the final formula on show and they have undoubtedly been one of the highlights of the 2016 Scottish Stock Car Season and yet another good turnout of cars rolled into the pits for start time. With no English visitors on track, many spectators were interested to see that a couple of drivers have upgraded their equipment with Mitchell Gold taking over the former Euan Millar car while points leader Sean Naismith appears to have acquired a car from the Elbourn camp from down south. Neither of these two drivers, or anyone else for that matter, had an answer for Dundee pilot and 2016 rookie Reece Din who scored a fantastic win ahead of Lochgelly's Danny Whyte and Airth's Steven Burgoyne despite his relative inexperience and the tricky track conditions! Just in case anyone believed that win was a fluke; Din went and repeated his exploits in heat two with Whyte again having to settle for second ahead of Burgoyne in a repeat of the podium from heat one. With promotion to the yellow grade for the feature final; Din's advantage was significantly reduced and a rapid Michael Mitchell took the chequered flag ahead of Sean Naismith and Steven Burgoyne. Sadly, post-race checks indicated that Mitchell's car did not comply with the rules and he was subsequently removed from the results – a real shame for a fantastic young man and one of the real characters in the Ministox formula.

An evening with some great action and a bit of controversy. The next slice of stock car action at HRP Lochgelly Raceway comes this Saturday October 22nd and the headline act is the annual RAMP ROLLOVER competition where drivers deliberately roll their cars in the name of entertainment. The Superstox, 2.0 Hot Rods, CC Rods and Ninja Karts complete the racing portion of this week's programme of events which gets underway at 6pm on Saturday October 22nd and will conclude with the ramp rollover!!!