

A dry evening greeted drivers, teams and fans this past Friday evening at HRP Lochgelly Raceway as Hardie Race Promotions hosted their final Friday Nights Under the Lights event of the 2016 Scottish Stock Car Season. A four formula, twelve race programme of events was scheduled with some interesting battles to be settled across the evening.



The Stock Rods were first on track with the destiny of the Track Championship still hanging in the balance as Best in Britain Champion Jonathan Lattka held a slender 5-point lead over National Points Champion Siobhan Martin at the beginning of the evening. A great drive from Kelty's John-Lee Green netted him victory in the first heat of the evening with Jonathan Lattka claiming second place to Siobhan Martin's fourth to increase his lead to seven points in the track championship battle. Another Kelty driver showed the rest of the field a clean pair of heels in heat two as a fast-moving Darren McAlpine took the chequered flag ahead of Lattka in second again and heat one winner Green in third. Martin's fifth place meant that there was ten points between her and Lattka with a maximum of ten points up for grabs on the last race of the year for the non-contact formula – the feature final. Both Lattka and Martin made good progress through the field to catch up with early pace-setters Garry Gilfillan and heat two winner McAlpine and these four drivers put on a fantastic display of close non-contact racing with the drivers battling for position as the laps wound down. Cowdenbeath's Gilfillan drove a race of fantastic maturity as he held a tight line on the inside of the circuit while Lattka, McAlpine and Martin all made attempts at taking the lead. A blanket could have been thrown over the four cars at many points throughout a thrilling race but Gilfillan held his nerve and his lead all the way to the chequered flag to

take an excellent win ahead of McAlpine and Martin with Lattka's fourth place securing him the track championship.



The ProStocks were also in action for the final time this season and while Tam Melrose had already secured the National points, Scottish and Track Championship titles; there was still the matter of the highly-coveted Christopher Burke Memorial Trophy to be decided. Dougie Kidd claimed heat one as he showed great pace to make his way through the pack to take victory ahead of Ryan O'Shea and Melrose. Melrose got back to winning ways in heat two as he stormed to victory ahead of O'Shea and Paul Barron. The feature final doubled up as the Christopher Burke Memorial Trophy Race and the drivers put on a good show in memory of the much-missed young man but none of them had an answer for Melrose who underlined his domination of the domestic scene with a fine drive to claim victory ahead of a very consistent O'Shea and Kirkcaldy's Ian Christie whose Fiesta could be one to watch in 2017!



The Ministox have been arguably the best formula in Scotland throughout 2016 and it certainly seemed that they were determined to underline that fact at HRP Lochgelly Raceway last Friday as a phenomenal 31 cars arrived to do battle including a double figure entry from south of the border!!! Former British Champion Charlie Morphey was among the English entrants and he went on to take victory in an action-packed heat one from fellow English pilots Luke Dorling and Steph Sore with Sean Naismith the first Scottish driver home in fourth. Morphey doubled up in heat two as he stormed through the pack to take an excellent win in a stop-start race ahead of fellow Englishman, National Champion Ethan Pope, and Scotland's Steven Burgoyne who had been confirmed as the 2016 Track Champion at the last meeting. The feature final saw most of the protagonists back on track for what was a thrilling conclusion to the 2016 Ministox Season as the drivers displayed car control and bumper-work well beyond their years. Stepps' Sean Naismith had already done enough to secure the National points Championship following a great battle with Saline's Gary Paterson for most of the season and he crowned that title in spectacular fashion as he sliced his way through a huge field containing many of the top names in the formula to take victory in the feature final ahead of English duo Pope and Dorling to end one of the best seasons in memory for the junior class.



The final formula on show were the 1300 Stock Cars and there was also visiting interest from England in the formula as British Champion Adam O'Dell made a welcome appearance while Billy Smith also made the long trip north from his Norfolk base to join the fray. It certainly didn't take long for Smith to be involved as Ryan McGill attempted to put the Norfolk driver away in the early stages of heat one. Smith managed to escape this attack without any damage and was soon overtaken by old adversary Zak Gilmour. Smith's memory must be a bit longer than Gilmour's as Smith immediately retaliated in a move that eliminated both from the race and sadly ended Gilmour's evening as the engine had fallen out of the car as a result of Smith's attack! As the drivers behind him battled away, Grangemouth's Jock Whyte took victory in what is becoming a very successful end to his season ahead of McGill and Adam O'Dell. McGill went one better in heat two after a thrilling battle with Billy Smith which saw Smith clatter the run four fence on the final lap as McGill took the chequered flag ahead of O'Dell with Smith holding on for third. The feature final race was for the coveted Mr. Gunn Trophy and a closed grid saw the action start right away with the drivers getting stuck in from the off. Billy Smith's challenge came to an early end as he was unable to get his car out of third gear while the rest continued to battle for places and the big money on offer. At the end of the 16 laps, it was Adam O'Dell who once again underlined his liking for the HRP tarmac with yet another big win to claim the Mr. Gunn trophy ahead of Ryan McGill and 2016 Track Champion Euan Mathieson to conclude a great night of 1300 Stock Car action.

Next Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup> sees HRP Lochgelly Raceway close the 2016 season with a bang in more ways than one. As well as a cracking fireworks display; there will be five formulas in action from 5pm as

the annual 1300 Stock Car Ladies Race (sponsored by GA Autos and Ringtone Racepaints) gets proceedings underway. A full five formula race programme will follow featuring the 1300 Stock Cars, 2.0 Hot Rods, CC Rods and Micro Bangers plus the National Hot Rods will be in world championship qualifying action with World Champion Adam Maxwell on track as he makes the trip from Northern Ireland. A fantastic night in prospect to conclude the season this Saturday November 5<sup>th</sup> from 5pm at HRP Lochgelly Raceway.