

SOUTHERN STUFF 4 2012

WISCOMBE PARK HILLCLIMB

This was the second Luffield visit to Wiscombe this season, this time organised by the MGCC SW Centre. The early morning journey to Wiscombe was hampered by thick fog which seemed even thicker at the venue, at least it wasn't raining and a fine sunny day was forecast. There was a bumper entry of some 120 which consisted of 33 MG's, 17 of these were Luffield competitors, one of the oldest MG's being the ultra-rare K3 race car driven by Jeremy Hawke. Wiscombe is a picturesque venue set in a tree fringed valley; the main paddock is on a grass slope which makes parking a challenge when it is wet. The numbering system a bit quirky which I'm sure makes sense to somebody but certainly not the drivers, the trick is to locate your parking place on foot first and then plot your route, parking in your paddock space is a bit like a production car trial (not that I've ever driven one) maybe there should be extra points for a perfect manoeuvre without wheel spin.

Due to the fog practise was delayed for almost an hour; the Sun was making an effort to burn off the fog when first practise finally got under way. The track was a bit slippery due to the moisture dripping off the trees up through the Esses and Castle Straight but was a lot drier by the time second practise started. Most drivers were posting quick times; this was partly due to the new tarmac surface laid earlier in the year, to me there seemed to be more grip off the line and along Castle Straight. An early retirement was Stuart Gilbert in his MGB V8 due to a suspect valve or cam follower problem.

After lunch the Event runs began and proceedings went without to many hold ups, eight new Luffield records were set, these drivers being Howard Harman PA 58.17; Martin Price TA 63.47; Martin Woolacott MGA 55.52; David Jones MGF 52.93; Mike Cole MGB 47.78; Steve Luscombe 48.31; Andy Walker 43.12 and myself MGA 46.64. Mike Cole and Rob Orford were especially pleased to beat the absent Richard Wither's long standing Group 3 MGB record, I'm sure he will be back next year to rectify this! Top Luffield 102 scores were achieved by Howard Harman, David Jones, Andy Walker and me, these scores being quite useful as the season draws to an end. The Don Smith Trophy went to Jeremy Hawke K3; The Cider Apple Trophy went to Martin Price and Andy Walker won the Bristol Motor Company Cup for fastest MG.

Finally many thanks to the MGCC SW Centre headed by Bruce Weston and Club stalwarts for another excellent event at Wiscombe Park Hillclimb.

Terry Drinkwater

