

2016 BRSCC MAZDA MX-5 SUPERCUP

RACE REPORT

September 17 & 18, 2016 | **Rounds 14, 15 & 16**

ROCKINGHAM

Words and pictures by **JON ELSEY**



AVON
TYRES

Eibach
LIFTING

Pipercross

TOWNSEND
VEHICLE HIRE RUGBY

RACING
BEST EQUIPMENT

GAZ SHOCKS

Sanspeed

2015 BRSCC Mk1 MX-5 champion Brian Chandler made his SuperCup debut at Rockingham.



Late deal sees Mk1 champ Chandler join the SuperCup party at the Rock

The lure of ultra-competitive racing proves too great for reigning BRSCC Mazda MX-5 champion.

THREE weeks after the mixed-weather challenge of Donington Park, a strong 29-car SuperCup field headed to the impressive Rockingham Motor Speedway in Northamptonshire for the penultimate meeting of the 2016 calendar.

The challenging circuit with its juxtaposition of high-speed banking and undulating technical infield section would host the season's second triple-header.

With the title battle well into the home stretch, on paper at least, it appeared to be a two-horse race with Surrey's James Blake-Baldwin and Cardiff's Tom Roche separated by just two points at the top of the standings.

However Sheffield's Jon Greensmith was arguably the man in form having secured his maiden SuperCup victory with a commanding drive in the wet, last time out. The consistent Yorkshireman has stepped admirably into the shoes of the departing champion Alan Henderson to take the

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challenge to the lead pair and should not be ruled out of the title race.

Other potential thorns in Blake-Baldwin's and Roche's sides are Jack Harding and Liam Murphy, both looking to build on their podium success at Donington and eager to steal a win or two.

But the big news for Rockingham was the SuperCup debut for 2015 BRSCC Mazda MX-5 Mk1 champion Brian Chandler. The Suffolk driver secured a last-minute deal to race Andrew Caird's Seriously MX-5 sponsored machine at the event.

Chandler explained: "I was in the right place at the right time, Andrew approached me and we've come to an agreement for me to race his Mk3 for the next meeting or two, depending on how it goes."

The BC Cars boss added: "I usually don't get to see much racing when I'm looking after the Mk1s but we actually made time to watch the Mk3s. Partly because I wanted to see how my

old Mk1 mates, Tom [Roche], James [Blake-Baldwin] and Jonny [Greensmith] got on. But to be fair, even if they weren't involved I would still watch it, it's been the closest racing I've seen all year. It's been a real highlight and that's why I wanted to get involved."

The popular driver is being realistic about his ambitions stating: "If I knock on the back door of sixth place I'll be kind of happy. Personally I don't think I'll be up there because I've got such a steep learning curve ahead of me."

"The front boys are looking phenomenally quick and I'm already trying to think of every excuse possible as to why I won't be fighting with them... I don't know the car, I haven't been in the seat long enough, I don't know the set up and I don't particularly like Rockingham... in fact the last time I raced here I fell off the circuit more times than I stayed on it."

He continued: "After I won the Mk1s last

year, the SuperCup was going to be my next step, I bought a Mk3 which I started building but halfway through I completely changed direction and thought I'd go and race a BMW M3 instead.

"Ironically, I gave my Mk3 to Tom [Roche], so the car he's winning all these races in was mine!"

He continued: "The opportunity to race other things this year has been fun and I feel that I've learned lots by driving the BMW and competing in a Porsche in GT Cup. But after all my gallivanting I thought I should come back to my roots and have a play in a Mazda."

Following a shakedown test at Rockingham a week earlier he commented: "They are nice and easy to drive on the sticky Avon tyres. There's lots of grip, which seems a bit weird in a Mazda, but they still haven't got that much power. Obviously I've been driving some quicker stuff recently, so perhaps that's why I was a little bit surprised at their relative lack of pace."

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"Ultimately I'd love to be in the mix, it looks hilarious out there, but at the end of the day I appreciate there's a championship up for grabs and I don't want to upset anyone by getting in the way. After all Tom, James and Jonny are all my mates."

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"It's hard though because on one hand I want to race, I want to compete and I want to win, but on the other I don't want to spoil anyone's season."

He added: "I know that I may have helped James out in the Mk1s a couple of years ago, but I'm not going to do that this time."

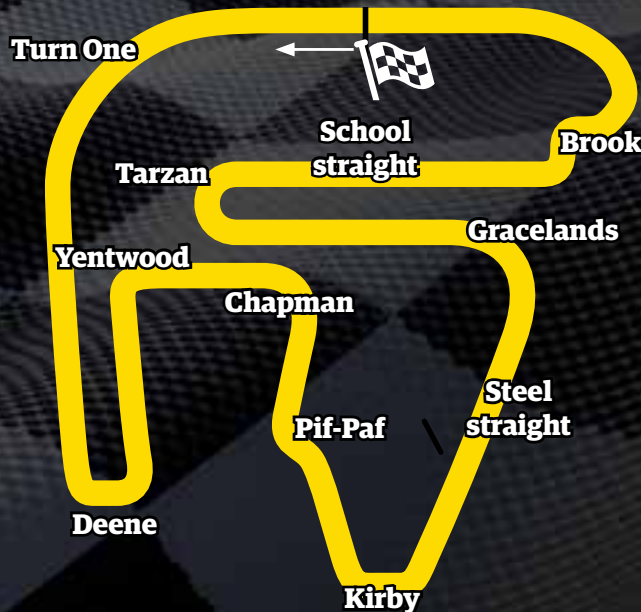
"I'm here to have some fun and discover what these Mk3s are all about and see if we can get a customer base for it next year. Maybe even look at options for myself going forward, as I'm still undecided as to what I'm doing in 2017."

"I would like to thank Andrew Caird and Seriously MX-5 for the opportunity to be on the grid and of course my sponsors Lancaster Insurance, BC Cars Motorsport and KS Autos."

Chandler wasn't the only new face on the grid as the BRSCC also welcomed Roy Stephenson to the SuperCup fold. He is no stranger to motorsport having had selected outings in our sister Mk1 MX-5 championship as well as campaigning a thoroughbred Aston Martin DB5 for many years.

ROCKINGHAM (International Long)

The inside line with Brian Chandler



14

Number of drivers eligible for Masters Trophy points at this event.



29

The number of drivers entered for this event.



40MPH

The speed the slowest corners, Deene and Tarzan are taken.



9

The number of corners in one lap of the circuit.



2.02MILES

The length of one lap of the circuit.



72MPH

The speed retardation in the heaviest braking zone. Slowing from 112mph to 40mph in 100m on the approach to the Deene Hairpin.



14

The average number of gear changes on a flying lap.



1.3G

The highest lateral 'g-force' recorded turning through the Deene hairpin - every other corner is around 1G.



107MPH

The speed at which the circuit's fastest corner, the banked Turn One is taken. However, this isn't really considered a corner in the dry. The next fastest is Gracelands which is taken at 71mph.



0.8G

The highest longitudinal 'g-force' recorded when braking for all corners except Chapman.



112MPH

The highest speed achieved on the run down to the Deene Hairpin.



1:43.503

The quickest lap time during the meeting set by Jamie Goddard during qualifying. Recording an average speed of 71.30mph.

Jamie Goddard caused an upset by claiming pole on his first visit to Rockingham.



Qualifying: Rookie Goddard shocks regulars by claiming maiden pole

Topsy-turvy session ends with Rockingham first-timer heading the time sheets while champ contender 'languishes' in ninth.

AS with all triple-header meetings, there was no free practice so for the majority of drivers qualifying was the first time they got to sample the unique Northamptonshire circuit.

The anti-clockwise circuit is challenging at the best of times - something Alex King and Richard Breland can relate to. The pair found the gravel and concrete wall respectively during the 20-minute session.

Taming the tricky tarmac on his first visit was rookie Royston racer Jamie Goddard. His best lap of 1:43.503 was enough to guarantee him his first ever pole position.

He said: "I know a lot of people don't like this place but I've made it my mission to try and enjoy it, particularly as it's probably my home circuit.

"We've made some big changes to the car since Donington. We'd been running the car really soft and I wasn't really getting any feel so by upping the shocks and tweaking a few other things everything seems to have clicked into place."

TOP TEN

1. J. GODDARD
2. J. HARDING
3. T. ROCHE
4. J. GREENSMITH
5. R. BRELAND
6. B. CHANDLER
7. J. DAVIES
8. T. COLLINS
9. T. ROCHE
10. L. MURPHY

MASTERS TROPHY

1. R. BRELAND
2. S. GODDARD
3. G. TOWNSEND

Richard Breland's joy at qualifying fifth was tempered by swiping the wall.



Talking about his pole lap he added: "To be fair I may have had a bit of a tow but overall I think my times were fairly consistent. I found it really grippy out there."

Jack Harding completed the front row

missing out on the top spot by three tenths of a second. While behind the Yorkshireman sat the first of the three title contenders, James Blake-Baldwin. He said: "Brian [Chandler], Tom [Roche] and I all went out with a plan to

see if we could work together with the tow.

"We were all going as fast as we could, none of us were making any mistakes, taking it in turns at the front to see if we could go any quicker.

"But when we came in after the red flag my team shouted at me 'stop messing around, you're down in ninth'.

"I remember thinking, 'I can't go any quicker than that', but we lowered the tyre pressures and adjusted the shocks and amazingly found a bit more pace. Even if I did have to come through all the traffic to get third."

He surmised: "I suspect that Jack and Jamie managed to pick up a lucky tow but I'm not unduly worried about them. The only one I'm really concerned about is Tom [Roche], I need to get to the front and stay there because even though he's starting a fair way behind

"I just hope people are going to be sensible out there – it's getting a bit heated now towards the end of the season, some of the drivers need to take a step back, take a deep breath and chill for a bit."

me I know he'll come through, because Tom always does."

Posting the fourth fastest time was Jon Greensmith who said: "I have to be pleased with that. What with yesterday's testing being wet I'm sure everyone's gone for pot-luck with the set-up and that shows on the timesheets."

He confessed: "I've never particularly liked Rockingham even though I've had a couple of wins here. You've really got to concentrate because there's so much that can potentially go wrong – perhaps that why I don't like it, it's too hard.

"I just hope people are going to be sensible out there – it's getting a bit heated now towards the end of the season. Some of the drivers need to take a step back, take a deep breath and chill for a bit."

Despite being the quickest Masters Trophy runner and an impressive fifth overall, BLiNK Motorsport's Richard Breland had mixed fortunes during the session. He said: "I'm very happy to be fifth fastest, although I believe I was fourth for a while before the inevitable happened and I ended up in the wall."

He explained: "I was following Tom, Brian and I think John Davies and must have got too close. The car slid and glanced off the wall. Fortunately it hit side-on so it could have been a lot worse – just a broken wheel bearing and some cosmetic damage but it's all fixable."

Brian Chandler took sixth in his first SuperCup qualifying and said: "I can't grumble with that, the car's okay but needs a few subtle tweaks here and there. "I didn't

Jack Harding.



Steve Dolman.



Roy Stephenson debuted in the SuperCup with AK Automotive.



Alex King found the kitty litter at Pif-Paf.



James Blake-Baldwin.



Carl Garnett turns out of the Deene Hairpin followed by Tom Collins and Simon Orange.



really appreciate that until I was on track with the other guys.

"That was pretty much all I could give it so I'm hoping that the race pace is a bit slower. It should be fun and I'm where I wanted to be - right in the mix. Hopefully I'll do Andrew [Caird] proud."

Perhaps the biggest shock of qualifying was reserved for championship contender Tom Roche. The Blendini Motorsport driver who only managed ninth fastest said: "I was a bit surprised to be honest, I guessed it might not

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"My car felt really good particularly around the infield section. Brian and James could stay with me when I was in the lead, but when they were in front I felt a lot quicker.

"I'm not really that worried for the race, as long as I get a good start. I'm sure the pace will be quite slow and it should make for an exciting first lap."

Title contender Tom Roche found himself down in ninth after qualifying.



QUALIFYING RESULT

POLE POSITION

DRIVER: JAMIE GODDARD LAP 4 TIME: 1:43.503 SPEED: 71.30

POSITION	NUMBER	DRIVER	CAR	BEST TIME	BEST LAP	TOTAL LAPS	GAP	DIFF	MPH
1	91	Jamie GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:43.503	4	10			71.30
2	43	Jack HARDING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:43.775	11	11	0.272	0.272	71.11
3	2	James BLAKE-BALDWIN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.172	9	11	0.669	0.397	70.84
4	5	Jonathan GREENSMITH	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.258	4	11	0.755	0.086	70.78
5	811	Richard BRELAND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.349	4	8	0.846	0.091	70.72
6	176	Brian CHANDLER	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.442	4	11	0.939	0.093	70.66
7	33	John DAVIES	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.475	2	10	0.972	0.033	70.63
8	20	Tom COLLINS	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.487	10	11	0.984	0.012	70.63
9	25	Tom ROCHE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.523	9	11	1.020	0.036	70.60
10	3	Liam MURPHY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.570	5	11	1.067	0.047	70.57
11	28	James ASPINALL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:44.769	9	10	1.266	0.199	70.44
12	4	Will CHAPPELL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:45.082	7	11	1.579	0.313	70.23
13	76	Richard WICKLEN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:45.163	6	7	1.660	0.081	70.17
14	46	Simon GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:45.315	10	11	1.812	0.152	70.07
15	223	Garry TOWNSEND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:45.323	4	11	1.820	0.008	70.07
16	19	Carl GARNETT	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:46.097	2	10	2.594	0.774	69.55
17	36	David HENDERSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:46.720	9	11	3.217	0.623	69.15
18	52	Steve DOLMAN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:46.804	5	11	3.301	0.084	69.09
19	77	Jeremy CROOK	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:46.825	10	11	3.322	0.021	69.08
20	40	Raymond WORLEY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:46.916	5	11	3.413	0.091	69.02
21	67	Simon ORANGE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:47.195	10	10	3.692	0.279	68.84
22	21	Simon FLEET	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:47.427	7	11	3.924	0.232	68.69
23	189	Roy STEPHENSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:48.238	9	10	4.735	0.811	68.18
24	41	David WILLOUGHBY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:48.674	5	11	5.171	0.436	67.90
25	152	Alex KING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:48.897	8	10	5.394	0.223	67.77
26	27	Jim HART	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:49.345	8	10	5.842	0.448	67.49
27	96	Michael LAWSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:49.378	10	10	5.875	0.033	67.47
28	13	Gregg CATTON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:49.783	8	11	6.280	0.405	67.22
29	85	Ian McDONALD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	1:51.681	8	11	8.178	1.898	66.08

■ Drivers in red eligible for BRSCC Masters Trophy



Jack Harding leads Jamie Goddard, James Blake-Baldwin and Jon Greensmith and the rest of the field away at the start of Race 1.

Race 1: Harding takes first win as Blake-Baldwin spins

First lap incident sees title favourite drop to rear of the field with mountain to climb.

THE surprise pairing of Jamie Goddard and Jack Harding made up the front row for the opening race of the weekend. Looming large in their rear view mirrors was the menacing sight of experienced campaigners James Blake-Baldwin and Jon Greensmith ready to pounce.

When the lights went out it was Harding who made the best getaway to lead the field around the banked Turn 1. With cars fighting four abreast for position on the high-speed approach to the Deene Hairpin, the racing pedigree of Tom Roche shone through as he picked off three rivals to slot into seventh.

Just ahead, Harding, Jamie Goddard, Blake-Baldwin and Brian Chandler all jostled for the lead heading towards Yentwood. The benefit of the inside line clinched Harding the lead from Blake-Baldwin with Chandler and Jamie Goddard was hung out to dry, gifting a grateful Greensmith third.

Yards later third became second for Greensmith when contact between Chandler and Blake-Baldwin in the braking zone for Chapman saw the championship leader spin out. Fortunate to keep it out of the

OVERALL PODIUM

1. J. HARDING
2. T. ROCHE
3. J. GREENSMITH

MASTERS TROPHY

1. S. GODDARD
2. R. BRELAND
3. G. TOWNSEND

gravel he returned to the fray in 26th with a metaphorical mountain to climb if he was to keep his title aspirations alive.

With it all kicking off behind, Harding was afforded some much needed breathing space and pulled out a slight advantage over Greensmith with Chandler in third just ahead of John Davies and the fast-starting Roche. The Welshman no doubt spurred on by the

James Blake-Baldwin had his work cut out driving through the field after being punted off on the opening lap.



POLE POSITION

1 Jamie GODDARD	2 Jack HARDING
3 James BLAKE-BALDWIN	4 Jon GREENSMITH
5 Richard BRELAND	6 Brian CHANDLER
7 John DAVIES	8 Tom COLLINS
9 Tom ROCHE	10 Liam MURPHY
11 James ASPINALL	12 Will CHAPPELL
13 Richard WICKLEN	14 Simon GODDARD
15 Garry TOWNSEND	16 Carl GARNETT
17 David HENDERSON	18 Steve DOLMAN
19 Jeremy CROOK	20 Ray WORLEY
21 Simon ORANGE	22 Simon FLEET
23 Roy STEPHENSON	24 David WILLOUGHBY
25 Alex KING	26 Jim HART
27 Michael LAWSON	28 Gregg CATTON
29 Ian MCDONALD	

● Grid slots show in red indicate drivers eligible for Masters Trophy.

calamities that befell his main rival.

Indeed, Roche was in inspired form as he picked off Davies at Tarzan to finish the opening lap in fourth behind Harding, Greensmith and Chandler, while Davies, Jamie Goddard, Liam Murphy, Richard Breland, Will Chappell and Tom Collins completed the fledgling top ten.

Even at this stage the early signs of several race-long battles were being forged, noticeably between Garry Townsend and Richard Wicklen and also Simon Orange and Steve Dolman.

Meanwhile, Roche continued his march forward passing Chandler on lap two, before dispatching Greensmith at Tarzan on the following tour. Although the Sheffield driver didn't make it easy for the Welshman, fighting back on the brakes for the Brook chicane. Greensmith's insistence on taking the fight to Roche allowed Harding to scamper clear, while at the same time setting up a great five-way scrap for second with Chandler, Jamie Goddard and Murphy also gate-crashing the party.

After what had been an exciting opening salvo of laps the race settled down in to a

"It was my first time leading so I wasn't going as fast as I should have been."

rhythm with most drivers seemingly happy to follow in the wheel tracks of others waiting for a mistake or two to open up any overtaking opportunities.

The one real exception was the progress of Blake-Baldwin, who had carved his way up to 12th by the half-way point. But with his tyres beginning to go off and the field now getting strung out his pace in the remaining half a dozen laps would be somewhat less energetic.

In typical SuperCup fashion, it seemed that wherever you looked there were two, three and four-car battles peppering the Rockingham raceway. Away from the hunt for the runner's-up silverware, key examples were the aforementioned Townsend and Wicklen disputing 13th, just behind an equally enthralling scrap being played out for the final top ten slot between Breland and Simon Goddard.

Also catching the spectator's gaze were Orange and Dolman joined in their quest for 18th by BRSCC Master's Trophy front-runner Ray Worley.

Locking horns towards the tail was Worley's Boreham Motorsport teammate Jim Hart who was fighting with Blendini Motorsport run Michael Lawson.

With a handful of laps remaining Harding pulled out an impressive five-second lead over Roche, who in turn had broken clear of the feud for third by almost three seconds.

Sensing a podium in his first SuperCup race Chandler attempted a move on Greensmith

Garry Townsend and Richard Wicklen were this close for most of the race.



Jack Harding leads the field along the start/finish straight on his way to his first SuperCup victory.



Tom Collins and Will Chappell flat out around Turn 1.

at the Brook chicane on the penultimate lap but the shrewd racer was wise to that and robustly defended. This set up an amazing final lap showdown that saw Greensmith, Chandler, Jamie Goddard and Murphy barrel into the Deene hairpin braking zone as one.

In the end, Harding took a well-deserved maiden victory ahead of Roche with Greensmith just holding on to third by the narrowest of margins from Chandler, Murphy and Jamie Goddard.

Davies came home seventh with Chappell edging out Collins for eighth while Blake-Baldwin passed Simon Goddard and Breland in the closing stages to claim the final spot in the top ten.

In fact Goddard and Breland was one of many close finishes, the pair separated by two tenths of a second at the flag.

The trio of Townsend, Wicklen and James Aspinall disputing 13th were equally close across the line as were David Henderson and Carl Garnett for 16th and Worley, Simon Fleet and Jeremy Crook fighting over 20th. Dolman got the advantage over his race long nemesis Orange with a sweet move on the brakes into the Deene hairpin on the final lap to sneak 18th.

Jack Harding's first SuperCup win followed a commanding drive and he said: "It definitely

"We touched and he spun around the front of my car and my mate found himself down in last."

wasn't easy from my point of view. When I saw Tom coming I got a bit worried because I knew he had decent pace. Luckily he got stuck battling with Jonny.

"To be honest, I think I had the pace, it's just when I saw him coming I got a little bit rattled. It was my first time leading so I wasn't going as fast as I should have been. But once I got that little gap I could focus on what I was doing and drove away. The car felt really good.

"It's a good feeling to be a race winner - it's a bit surreal actually. I was in the lead and I thought 'I hope Tom doesn't catch and

pass me I could really do with this win.' I've had two thirds and a second and just needed to go one better.

"AK have got the car just spot-on. Hopefully I can do the same again later on."

Runner-up Tom Roche said: "I got a good first lap which I'd hoped for but I'm a little bit gutted that Jon [Greensmith] started fighting. I remember thinking 'Why have you done that!' We could have easily caught Jack but once Jon dived down the inside of me then that was the end of that. Because, as soon as I knew he was going to try and get past rather than work with me I had to defend. And then Jack was gone. Fair play to him he drove really well.

Simon Fleet chases Ray Worley and Simon Orange.



Richard Breland and Simon Goddard battle for Masters honours.



Simon Orange, David Henderson and Steve Dolman.



Ray Worley in full flow.



"I'm sure James will bounce back in the next race."

Completing the podium was Jon Greensmith who said: "It was a good result but I'm not happy with the car, it just went off after about two laps - I think the tyres are shot to be honest with you - I definitely couldn't keep up with Jack."

"It was too much like hard work that one. But a podium's a podium - I've just got to keep finishing now, but we need to get our thinking caps on to see what we can do to improve the car."

Fourth place went to a glum-faced Brian Chandler who said: "I had contact with James on the first lap. Everyone was shuffling for position and he was on the outside. I had lifted and tried to let him in front of me, but I was being pushed by the pack so he had to turn in and I had to turn in and there was nowhere for him to go unfortunately. We touched and he spun around the front of my car and my mate found himself down in last. I was avoiding him as much as I could."

"Other than that it went well. My BC Cars guys seem to be getting a bit of a handle on the car now."

"I looked a few times at the back of Jon Greensmith to go past, but obviously both him and Tom are wily and they knew it was coming. The mid-part of the race was so slow, with Tom backing Jon up. I knew that they had a championship to fight and while I did

want to go up the grid and clear them both, I was in a hard situation really because they are my mates, so it's quite hard for me to race, to show I'm competitive, while at the same time not wanting to ruin their championships."

"But there's two races left so perhaps I can redress the balance and punt Tom off in one and Jonny in the other," he laughed.

Fifth place went the way of Liam Murphy who said: "I got what I was after in that race. I

"I'm a little bit gutted that Jon started fighting. I remember thinking 'Why have you done that!' We could have easily caught Jack but once Jon dived down the inside that was the end of that."

wanted to get into the top six and then work on getting onto the podium in the next two races."

"I think Jonny's car went off towards the end and I was trying to get Brian but he's good at defending. Overall I'm happy and it's a good start to the weekend."

A frustrated polesitter Jamie Goddard finished sixth. He said: "I got loads of wheelspin off the line and it's such a long run to the first corner that everyone came past. It was four-wide into the hairpin and I



remember thinking 'urm I don't know what I'm doing'. Then I had to back out of it when Brian and James came together. I could just see Jack pulling away and I thought 'that should be me'.

"Liam gave me a bit of a tap on my left rear about half-way through which totally de-laminated a tyre. That gave me a huge vibration from the flapping rubber and allowed him to pass me into Turn 2. Then I was stuck behind him for the rest of the race."

He admitted: "I just need to feel a bit more confident when going for a pass, because some points you see people braking and you think 'I could go a bit deeper' but you don't want to make a silly move and end it. I'm happy I can do quick laps its just the starting and overtaking I need to improve!"

Richard Breland who lost out to Simon Goddard for the accolade of top Masters' runner said: "The car wasn't brilliant to be honest, there's loads of toe out on the front, which meant I was struggling to get the front end to turn in. That slowed me up and I ended up battling with Will [Chappell] and Simon [Goddard].

"Then I missed a gear change which was fatal - I've just got these little mistakes that I need to stop doing and then I might be all right. But the good thing about this weekend is that it's a triple-header so hopefully I can move forward in the next race and have another good go in the last one."

James Blake-Baldwin said: "That didn't really go to plan, I haven't had a full conversation with him about it but I believe it was Brian who hit me... twice! Obviously it wasn't intentional but I don't really know what happened. I got a reasonable start and tucked in behind Jack and I thought 'sweet, that's all good'. It was going to be a really good first lap but then Jack braked early so I had to duck out and I didn't even get the chance to hit the brakes for turn three, I'd just eased off the gas and there was this massive great bang, which sent me one way. I managed to catch it and as it was just straightening up again I got hit again and because I was already in a slide that was it.

"So I found myself at the back and it was a nightmare coming back through. Even though it's a drafting circuit Rockingham doesn't seem to affect the Mk3s to quite the same extent as the Mk1s. I was just hoping that they were going to bunch up and hold themselves up but no they were all setting quick lap times. Some people were great, like Richard [Breland], who just pointed and let me through. Others, quite rightly, defended and made me have to work to get by. But because you're pushing that much harder you end up heating the tyres up quicker to the point that when I got to about tenth I had no more pace left, I'd cooked the tyres. We'll see what Race 2 brings. Tom managed it from ninth so I can hopefully try and do it from tenth."

James Aspinall.



Simon Fleet.

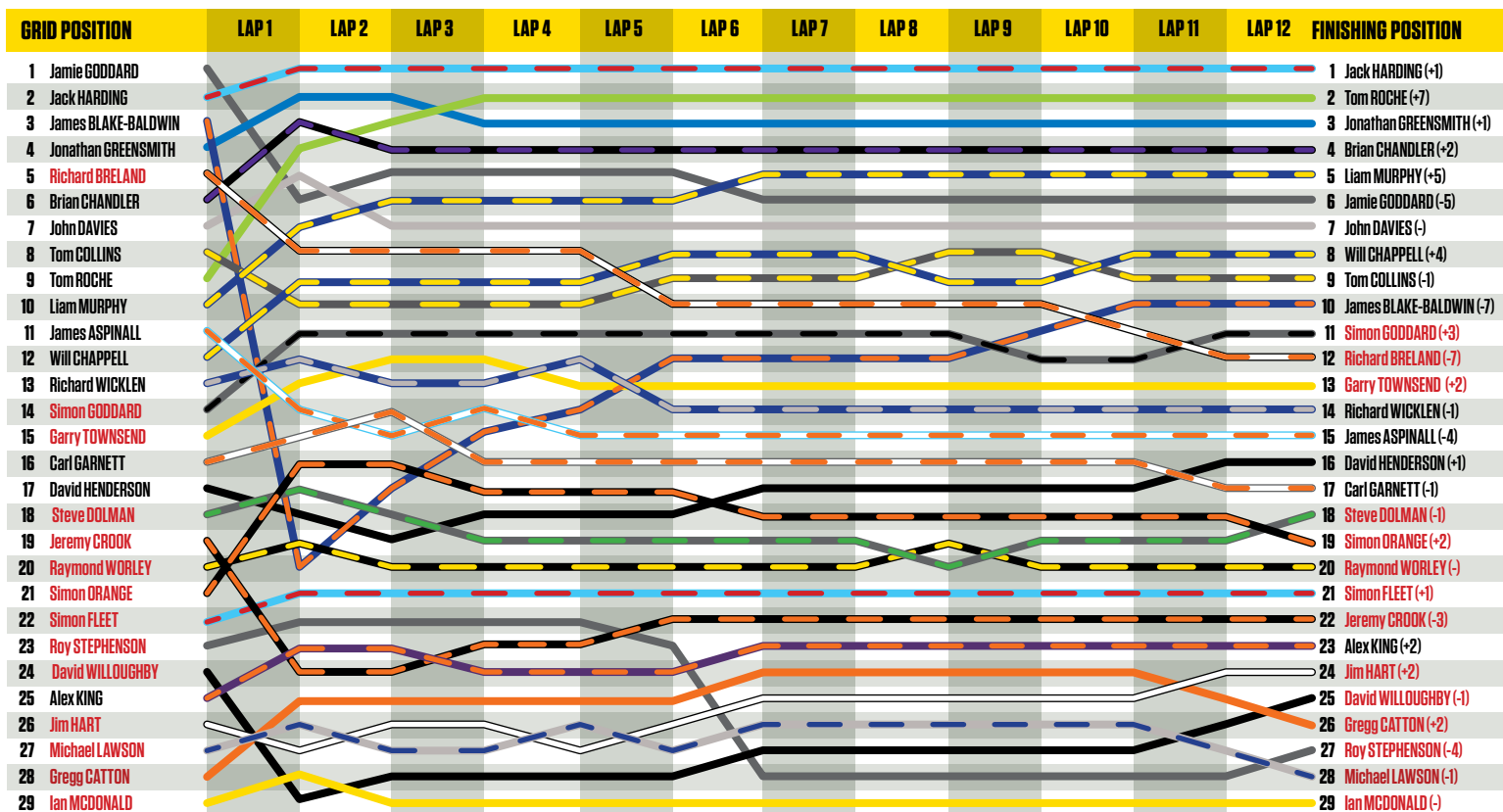


A great six-car battle for the lead featuring Jack Harding, Tom Roche, Jon Greensmith, Brian Chandler, Jamie Goddard and Liam Murphy.

John Davies powers his way around the super-fast Turn 1 on his way to seventh.



DRIVER TRACKER



Jon Greensmith has Brian Chandler, Liam Murphy and Jamie Goddard breathing down his neck.



RACE 1 RESULT

FASTEST LAP

DRIVER: TOM ROCHE LAP 2 TIME: 1:43.890 SPEED: 71.03 MPH

POSITION	NUMBER	DRIVER	CAR	LAPS	RACE TIME	GAP	DIFFERENCE	AVERAGE MPH	BEST LAP TIME	BEST LAP
1	43	Jack HARDING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:03.607			70.08	1:44.224	5
2	25	Tom ROCHE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:09.076	5.469	5.469	69.78	1:43.890	2
3	5	Jonathan GREENSMITH	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:12.614	9.007	3.538	69.58	1:44.385	2
4	176	Brian CHANDLER	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:12.967	9.360	0.353	69.56	1:44.265	5
5	3	Liam MURPHY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:13.300	9.693	0.333	69.55	1:43.967	3
6	91	Jamie GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:14.039	10.432	0.739	69.51	1:43.972	2
7	33	John DAVIES	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:15.402	11.795	1.363	69.43	1:44.910	3
8	4	Will CHAPPELL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:19.256	15.649	3.854	69.22	1:44.919	2
9	20	Tom COLLINS	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:19.690	16.083	0.434	69.20	1:45.073	3
10	2	James BLAKE-BALDWIN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:21.888	18.281	2.198	69.08	1:44.352	3
11	46	Simon GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:22.862	19.255	0.974	69.03	1:45.149	4
12	811	Richard BRELAND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:23.137	19.530	0.275	69.01	1:45.240	2
13	223	Garry TOWNSEND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:28.642	25.035	5.505	68.72	1:45.173	3
14	76	Richard WICKLEN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:29.106	25.499	0.464	68.69	1:45.522	4
15	28	James ASPINALL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:34.686	31.079	5.580	68.40	1:45.575	3
16	36	David HENDERSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:39.522	35.915	4.836	68.14	1:46.047	8
17	19	Carl GARNETT	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:39.826	36.219	0.304	68.13	1:46.837	8
18	52	Steve DOLMAN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:50.183	46.576	10.357	67.59	1:46.618	4
19	67	Simon ORANGE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:51.709	48.102	1.526	67.51	1:47.335	3
20	40	Raymond WORLEY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:56.420	52.813	4.711	67.27	1:46.681	4
21	21	Simon FLEET	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:56.775	53.168	0.355	67.25	1:47.994	8
22	77	Jeremy CROOK	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:56.885	53.278	0.110	67.24	1:47.323	8
23	152	Alex KING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:09.750	1:06.143	12.865	66.59	1:48.578	4
24	27	Jim HART	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:12.396	1:08.789	2.646	66.46	1:48.626	11
25	41	David WILLOUGHBY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:15.153	1:11.546	2.757	66.32	1:49.171	
26	13	Gregg CATTON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:16.638	1:13.031	1.485	66.25		3
27	189	Roy STEPHENSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:22.390	1:18.783	5.752	65.97	1:48.714	4
28	96	Michael LAWSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:24.666	1:21.059	2.276	65.86	1:48.407	7
29	85	Ian McDONALD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:57.626	1:54.019	32.960	64.28	1:49.068	4

■ Car 28 - 5 seconds added to race time - track limits ■ Drivers in red eligible for BRSCC Masters Trophy

POLE POSITION

1 Jack HARDING	2 Tom ROCHE
3 Jon GREENSMITH	4 Brian CHANDLER
5 Liam MURPHY	6 Jamie GODDARD
7 John DAVIES	8 Will CHAPPELL
9 Tom COLLINS	10 James BLAKE-BALDWIN
11 Simon GODDARD	12 Richard BRELAND
13 Garry TOWNSEND	14 Richard WICKLEN
15 James ASPINALL	16 David HENDERSON
17 Carl GARNETT	18 Steve DOLMAN
19 Simon ORANGE	20 Ray WORLEY
21 Simon FLEET	22 Jeremy CROOK
23 Jim HART	24 David WILLOUGHBY
25 Gregg CATTON	26 Roy STEPHENSON
27 Michael LAWSON	28 Ian MCDONALD
29 Alex KING	

● Grid slots show in red indicate drivers eligible for Masters Trophy.

Jack Harding leads James Blake-Baldwin through the Brook chicane.



Race 2: Two out of two for Harding after epic contest

Yorkshireman's second win overshadowed by amazing showdown between title rivals.

The second race of the meeting was full of drama, controversy, exquisite close racing and two safety car periods which would set up one of the most exciting final laps in the championship's history.

The front row pairing of Jack Harding and Tom Roche made great starts to duke it out side-by-side through Turn 1. Evenly matched, Harding had the advantage of the inside line for the Deene Hairpin as the pack closed up in the squabble to gain an early place or two.

An optimistic late-braking manoeuvre from Garry Townsend ended in disaster when he failed to slow his car down in time to make the apex and collided with Liam Murphy. This caused the pair to spin in front of the mid-pack, but amazingly everyone missed the stricken pair. Both would rejoin but at the very back.

Thanks partly to the confusion following the Townsend/Murphy incident Blake-Baldwin exited the hairpin in sixth and made his intentions clear by making short work of first Davies by Kirby and then picking off Chandler with a great move around the outside of Tarzan. A corner which moments later would

OVERALL PODIUM

1. J. HARDING
2. J. GREENSMITH
3. J. BLAKE-BALDWIN

MASTERS TROPHY

1. S. GODDARD
2. R. BRELAND
3. S. ORANGE

catch out Gregg Catton who found himself beached in the gravel trap.

As the field streamed across the timing line for the first time Harding just edged out Roche, while in their wake Greensmith and Blake-Baldwin battled door-to-door in their fight for third. Chandler was up next followed by Davies while Will Chappell, Simon Goddard, Tom Collins and Richard Breland

Simon Goddard headed the Masters Trophy competitors.



completed the top ten.

Harding's tenure of the lead was somewhat shortlived as Roche passed the AK Automotive run driver yards later at the Deene Hairpin. Any thoughts of Harding instantly fighting back were curtailed when the safety car was scrambled to give the recovery teams time to extricate Catton's stricken car from the Tarzan kitty litter.

The action resumed a lap later with Blake-Baldwin taking the initiative by lunging up the inside of Harding at Tarzan to claim second - setting up the longed for battle between the two main title protagonists. And it lived up to expectations. Roche's plan was to back Blake-Baldwin into the field and it appeared to be working well as a seven car train followed nose-to-tail behind the lime green machine.

Things were equally tight at the other end of the field with Simon Orange demonstrating similar tactics to hold back the advances of Ray Worley, Simon Fleet, Steve Dolman and the recovering Townsend and Murphy.

As in the first race - after the initial flurry of place changing over the opening laps the race for podium positions settled down with drivers seemingly happy to follow rather than attack. Indeed there was very little to write home about between laps five and eight save for some choice mid-pack manoeuvres which saw Richard Wicklen, James Aspinall and Carl Garnett gain places at the expense of Breland, David Henderson and Worley respectively. In fact the mid-section of the race would prove problematic for the Masters Trophy front runner as he slipped down the order.



James Aspinall celebrated his birthday in style thanks to some 'go-faster' graphics courtesy of Paul Sheard.

At half distance things began to hot up at the front with Blake-Baldwin becoming increasingly impatient with Roche's constant blocking. The Welshman's objective to back the field up was having the desired effect as the first 11 cars ran nose-to-tail, covered by not much more than three seconds. With cars in such close proximity, contact was perhaps inevitable and so it proved on lap six when a frustrated Blake-Baldwin ran into the back of the leader, unsettling his car in the braking

"At the end of the day we're here to race not to pussy-foot around."

zone for Tarzan. The knock-on effect of this was to delay both Roche and Blake-Baldwin on the exit of the corner allowing Harding to draw alongside Blake-Baldwin for the run to the Brook Chicane. Despite having the inside line for the left-hander Harding couldn't make the move stick and ran wheel-to-wheel through the complex before running shoulder-to-shoulder all the way around the banking to the Deene Hairpin.

As Roche once again tried to hold up the

Roy Stephenson speeds along the start/finish straight.



Tom Roche hounded by James Blake-Baldwin exiting the Brook chicane.



progress of those behind on the hairpin's apex, Harding clipped the rear of the Blendini machine sending both it and Blake-Baldwin wide.

With the lead pack so tightly bunched this little tap resulted in both Harding and Greensmith sneaking through. Chandler also fell behind Davies and Chappell as he lost momentum trying to avoid a collision.

Half a lap later and the excitement was put on hold once again when the safety car was called into action after Steve Dolman had slammed into the tyre wall exiting Tarzan.

This set up a potentially riveting two-lap sprint to the flag headed by Harding and Greensmith, but all eyes were on the green and blue roadsters occupying third and fourth.

Chandler regained a place at Chappell's expense at the Brook chicane. Roche was once again defending hard, desperate to keep his key opponent behind him covering the inside line for every corner, forcing Blake-Baldwin to take the wide line at every opportunity. The strategy seemed to be working until they reached Yentwood on the final lap when a cunning move by Blake-

"It's all getting a bit too heated. I think they both need a good talking to personally. I know they both want to win the title but how far do you let it go."

Baldwin resulted in the Surrey driver getting a crucial cutback to give him the advantage for Chapman. Only to see his hard work undone when Roche pulled off an identical manoeuvre to gain the undercut to retake the position on the approach to Pif-Paf. Not about to give up, Blake-Baldwin tried around the outside of Gracelands where he ran out of road but undeterred amazingly kept his foot in to give him track position for Tarzan, where he locked up and drifted wide opening the door once again for Roche.

The pair emerged from the corner as one and further side to side contact saw Roche's door mirror go flying and the resulting pause in momentum saw Blake-Baldwin gain the advantage with Roche swamped by Davies and Chandler.

Somehow Roche gathered himself together to pull off a great late braking move on Chandler into the chicane to regain one of the positions.

Seconds later Harding took his second win of the day from Greensmith with a visibly thrilled Blake-Baldwin seizing the final podium position ahead of Davies, Roche and Chandler. Chappell, Collins, Simon Goddard

and Wicklen rounded out the top ten.

Jack Harding said of his second SuperCup victory: "That was so much harder than the first race. Tom got past me to take the lead thanks to loads of slipstream and when James also got by with the help of a tow I thought 'Okay, I'll sit behind them and let them fight it out.' But it was a similar scenario to Donington, where they just backed each other up.

Speaking of how he hit the front he said: "We came into the chicane and I managed to get past James for second but shortly after he tried to go around the outside of me at the hairpin and have a go at Tom at the same time. Tom attempted to block him, went a little bit wide and got a bit squirrely which slowed him down mid-corner. I then tapped the back of Tom which ultimately pushed them both wide and gave me the run out of the corner."

Harding's joy was tempered by a post race visit to the Clerk of the Course's office. "I've been handed a seven place grid penalty for the contact with Tom, but at least I get to keep the win so I'm happy enough with that." Optimistically he added: "I'll be starting



from seventh for the final race and as both James and Tom have shown, if I can get a good start then hopefully I'll be there or thereabouts by the end of the first lap."

A delighted Jon Greensmith took a well-deserved second place and said: "I saw Tom and James coming so I let them past to see if we could all work together to catch Jack, then I thought I'd just wait and see what happened. "I know what happened now," he laughed. "It all kicked off in front of me and I thought 'Okay I'll take that.'"

Before sagely adding: "It's all getting a bit too heated. I think they both need a good talking to personally. I know they both want to win the title but how far do you let it go? After all, at the end of the day it's only a club championship."

He continued: "Jack's on form, he's got that car really well set up. I think Alan Henderson has helped out a lot there, but I don't begrudge him at all - he's a good driver."

"When the second safety car came out I was waving trying to catch Jack's eye to tell him to just go and not try to defend on the restart. And that's what he did - spot on."

Fourth placed John Davies said: "I'm

pleased with that. I've not done many rounds this year, obviously I was helped by what happened to James and Tom but you've got to be in it to win it."

"I got a good start and managed to pick up a few places going around the banking which got me up to sixth and I was having a great race with Brian and Will. After the safety car restart I got a run on Brian and managed to out-brake him into the first hairpin. Tom [Roche] was holding everyone up ahead of us so we slowly started to reel them in which made a train of five cars for third at one point."

"This year lap times have really closed up across the whole field which I think is definitely down to the tyres. When you're approaching the limit on the Avons you can feel that they are about to slide before they let go, whereas with the old Federals you had to trust that they'd stick, as they'd never give you any warning that they were about to let go."

Fifth place went the way of a frustrated Tom Roche who was surveying damage to his car caused by the contact with Blake-Baldwin: "I've just spoken to James about it and the problem is that if you're in the lead and you

"The side-by-side stuff that's fair enough, we both gave as good as we got. Okay perhaps it was a bit too close but that's good racing - that's fine. But you can't just make the car in front disappear."

defend and someone goes straight into the back of you - what are you supposed to do? That's what I'm angry about."

"The side-by-side stuff that's fair enough, we both gave as good as we got. Okay perhaps it was a bit too close but that's good racing - that's fine. But you can't just make the car in front disappear."

He explained what happened: "Basically I defended on the inside going into Gracelands so James couldn't go down the inside but he just whacked me which sent me totally sideways. I kept James behind me but the other two [Harding and Greensmith] got past. Then again into the hairpin he'd hit me so hard it's broken something on the back of the car. I'm struggling to keep going around and he's still hitting me."

"At Donington, James led the whole way and I didn't hit him off - it's got to work both ways. If somebody defends well - you can't just get frustrated and hit them off. I've been to see the Clerk, but unfortunately I only have a forward facing camera, so although you can hear it you can't see who's doing the hitting. James has also gone up so we'll see. It's such a shame because the racing's been so good..."



Simon Orange.



Jim Hart.



Jack Harding defends from Jon Greensmith and Tom Roche.



David Willoughby.



Richard Breland.



Jeremy Crook negotiates the Brook chicane on his way to 20th.

Brian Chandler followed Roche home and commented: "I was sixth in the end - which was a bit rubbish really. However, I might get promoted after it all kicked off between Tom and James and that's what messed up my race.

"Towards the end of the race Tom and James got together and the whole pack then swallowed them and I was kind of sandwiched in the middle and I thought there was no way I was going to hit the pair of them so I backed right out of it and unfortunately lost two places. Had it not been for that I believe I would have been a happy fourth or fifth.

"I'm loving it, the pace is a lot slower than I thought, the top guys are properly braking on the apexes to slow everything down and

"I'm loving it, the pace is a lot slower than I thought, the top guys are properly braking on the apexes to slow everything down and back everyone up. That's probably why you've been seeing ten cars battling for the lead."

back everyone up. That's probably why you've been seeing ten cars battling for the lead. I know it's going to get fraught between them two for the last few races. So perhaps I need to get in front of them, but these cars are so evenly paced that overtaking is quite hard because it takes the guy in front to realise that he's being overtaken and be the bigger man and back out of it. Obviously all us racing drivers have got egos so that rarely happens."

Garry Townsend who was involved in an opening lap clash with Liam Murphy said: "I was approaching first hairpin and there was a nice big gap in front of me. I was biding my time then all of a sudden it just closed up, obviously I didn't mean to hit Liam. It wasn't intentional because it ruined my race just as much as any one else's.

"But, at the end of the day we're here to race not to pussy-foot around. Every single car out there will have a mark or two, nobody intentionally hits you. I've never complained about it and I've been hit loads of times.

"After that Ray Worley blocked me for two laps - if you know someone's quicker you let them past but he just blocked me from one side of the track to the other. Then when I did dive down the inside of him I out-braked myself so I lost what I'd gained," he shrugged.

Liam Murphy added: "I got a good start and was half-way around the hairpin when 'bang'. I was spun around and returned stone-dead last.

"It would have been better if it had happened in the final race because I'm going to have to start from way back now."

Jon Greensmith puts in a typically strong performance to take second.



DRIVER TRACKER

GRID POSITION	LAP 1	LAP 2	LAP 3	LAP 4	LAP 5	LAP 6	LAP 7	LAP 8	LAP 9	LAP 10	LAP 11	FINISHING POSITION
1 Jack HARDING												1 Jack HARDING (-)
2 Tom ROCHE												2 Jonathan GREENSMITH (+1)
3 Jonathan GREENSMITH												3 James BLAKE-BALDWIN (+7)
4 Brian CHANDLER												4 John DAVIES (+3)
5 Liam MURPHY												5 Tom ROCHE (-3)
6 Jamie GODDARD												6 Brian CHANDLER (-2)
7 John DAVIES												7 Will CHAPPELL (+1)
8 Will CHAPPELL												8 Tom COLLINS (+1)
9 Tom COLLINS												9 Simon GODDARD (+2)
10 James BLAKE-BALDWIN												10 Richard WICKLEN (+4)
11 Simon GODDARD												11 Jamie GODDARD (-5)
12 Richard BRELAND												12 James ASPINALL (+3)
13 Garry TOWNSEND												13 Richard BRELAND (-1)
14 Richard WICKLEN												14 Liam MURPHY (-9)
15 James ASPINALL												15 David HENDERSON (+1)
16 David HENDERSON												16 Carl GARNETT (+1)
17 Carl GARNETT												17 Simon ORANGE (+2)
18 Steve DOLMAN												18 Raymond WORLEY (+2)
19 Simon ORANGE												19 Simon FLEET (+2)
20 Raymond WORLEY												20 Jeremy CROOK (+2)
21 Simon FLEET												21 David WILLOUGHBY (+4)
22 Jeremy CROOK												22 Garry TOWNSEND (-9)
23 Alex KING												23 Jim HART (+1)
24 Jim HART												24 Alex KING (-1)
25 David WILLOUGHBY												25 Ian McDONALD (+4)
26 Gregg CATTON												26 Roy STEPHENSON (+1)
27 Roy STEPHENSON												27 Michael LAWSON (+1)
28 Michael LAWSON												28 Steve DOLMAN (-10)
29 Ian McDONALD												29 Gregg CATTON (-3)



Tom Collins on his way to another top ten finish.

RACE 2 RESULT

FASTEST LAP

DRIVER: JACK HARDING LAP 10 TIME: 1:44.235 SPEED: 70.80 MPH

POSITION	NUMBER	DRIVER	CAR	LAPS	RACE TIME	GAP	DIFFERENCE	AVERAGE MPH	BEST LAP TIME	BEST LAP
1	43	Jack HARDING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:44.886			62.21	1:44.235	10
2	5	Jonathan GREENSMITH	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:45.904	1.018	1.018	62.16	1:44.856	10
3	2	James BLAKE-BALDWIN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:49.231	4.345	3.327	62.00	1:44.671	4
4	33	John DAVIES	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:49.787	4.901	0.556	61.97	1:45.250	4
5	25	Tom ROCHE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:50.459	5.573	0.672	61.94	1:44.943	4
6	176	Brian CHANDLER	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:50.881	5.995	0.422	61.92	1:44.991	4
7	4	Will CHAPPELL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:51.216	6.330	0.335	61.91	1:44.988	5
8	20	Tom COLLINS	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:51.623	6.737	0.407	61.89	1:45.073	5
9	46	Simon GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:52.044	7.158	0.421	61.87	1:45.202	5
10	76	Richard WICKLEN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:52.098	7.212	0.054	61.87	1:44.925	5
11	91	Jamie GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:52.607	7.721	0.509	61.84	1:45.390	7
12	28	James ASPINALL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:52.777	7.891	0.170	61.83	1:45.627	11
13	811	Richard BRELAND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:54.400	9.514	1.623	61.76	1:45.622	6
14	3	Liam MURPHY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:55.152	10.266	0.752	61.72	1:45.091	5
15	36	David HENDERSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:55.495	10.609	0.343	61.71	1:46.705	4
16	19	Carl GARNETT	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:57.314	12.428	1.819	61.62	1:46.179	5
17	67	Simon ORANGE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	21:59.209	14.323	1.895	61.53	1:47.280	4
18	40	Raymond WORLEY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:01.187	16.301	1.978	61.44	1:47.568	4
19	21	Simon FLEET	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:01.404	16.518	0.217	61.43	1:46.997	4
20	77	Jeremy CROOK	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:02.123	17.237	0.719	61.40	1:47.010	5
21	41	David WILLOUGHBY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:07.956	23.070	5.833	61.13	1:48.758	5
22	223	Garry TOWNSEND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:10.181	25.295	2.225	61.02	1:46.128	5
23	27	Jim HART	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:10.212	25.326	0.031	61.02	1:49.000	6
24	152	Alex KING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:11.790	26.904	1.578	60.95	1:49.535	5
25	85	Ian McDONALD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:13.395	28.509	1.605	60.88	1:48.991	6
26	189	Roy STEPHENSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:14.101	29.215	0.706	60.84	1:48.639	6
27	96	Michael LAWSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	11	22:17.059	32.173	2.958	60.71	1:48.826	5
DNF	52	Steve DOLMAN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	6	12:01.407	5 Laps	5 Lap	61.38	1:47.149	4
DNF	13	Greggy CATTON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	0						

Drivers in red eligible for BRSCC Masters Trophy

James Blake-Baldwin just gets the advantage over Jon Greensmith to take the lead at Yentwood.



Race 3: Return to winning ways for Blake-Baldwin

Following the dramas of the first two encounters it was business as usual for James.

FOLLOWING Jack Harding's seven-place grid penalty it was Jon Greensmith who inherited pole position for the final 20-minute contest of the meeting. He shared the front row with a fired-up James Blake-Baldwin keen to get back to winning ways. John Davies and Blake-Baldwin's arch rival Tom Roche sat behind, ahead of Brian Chandler and Will Chappell with Tom Collins on row four alongside the demoted Harding. But could he fulfil his promise of making the top three by the end of the first lap?

At lights out it was Greensmith who got the jump on the rest to lead the pack around the banking to Deene. His lead was somewhat short-lived though when Blake-Baldwin cued up a fantastic dive up the inside into Yentwood. Once in clear air he immediately set about building a gap back to the chasing pack - a group which also contained the fast-starting Chappell, Roche, Harding, Liam Murphy, Davies and Chandler.

Halfway around the second lap Roche sneaked past Chappell at Kirby, with Harding following in the Welshman's wheel tracks, but

OVERALL PODIUM

1. J. BLAKE-BALDWIN
2. J. HARDING
3. J. GREENSMITH

MASTERS TROPHY

1. S. GODDARD
2. R. BRELAND
3. G. TOWNSEND

try as he might he could do nothing about the growing gap ahead to Greensmith and Blake-Baldwin. I

n fact it seemed that it would be just a matter of time before Harding would usurp the multiple MX-5 Mk1 Champion to claim the final podium place. And so it proved on lap five when Harding made the position his, with a brilliantly judged move on the brakes

Simon Goddard and Richard Breland locked in battle once again in the Masters Trophy.



POLE POSITION

1 Jon GREENSMITH	2 James BLAKE-BALDWIN
3 John DAVIES	4 Tom ROCHE
5 Brian CHANDLER	6 Will CHAPPELL
7 Tom COLLINS	8 Jack HARDING
9 Simon GODDARD	10 Richard WICKLEN
11 Jamie GODDARD	12 James ASPINALL
13 Richard BRELAND	14 Liam MURPHY
15 David HENDERSON	16 Carl GARNETT
17 Simon ORANGE	18 Ray WORLEY
19 Simon FLEET	20 Jeremy CROOK
21 David WILLOUGHBY	22 Garry TOWNSEND
23 Jim HART	24 Alex KING
25 Ian MCDONALD	26 Roy STEPHENSON
27 Michael LAWSON	28 Steve DOLMAN
29 Gregg CATTON	

Grid slots show in red indicate drivers eligible for Masters Trophy.



Richard Breland.



Ian McDonald.



Liam Murphy had another rollercoaster of a race.



Garry Townsend leads Carl Garnett and David Henderson.



Gregg Catton.



Simon Orange locks up entering Yentwood on lap one.

into Deene.

Behind, a highly entertaining scrap for fifth between Chappell, Murphy and Davies came to a premature end when Murphy spun out while braking for the Brook chicane.

However there was an equally captivating three-way tussle being played out just behind featuring Chandler, Collins and Jamie Goddard. In fact the field was peppered with racy threesomes. Simon Goddard, Richard Wicklen and James Aspinall were nose-to-tail disputing 11th, while Jeremy Crook, Simon Fleet and Ray Worley feuded over 19th with Alex King, Roy Stephenson and Michael Lawson equally close towards the tail. Everything was in place for another typical action-packed SuperCup encounter.

Meanwhile up front where Roche had failed,

"I feel like I've aged this weekend, I'm going to go home and have a good sleep and a beer I think. It's been really frustrating to be honest with you, but to come out on top at the end you can't ask for more than that. But then if it was easy we wouldn't do it would we?"

Harding succeeded in closing the gap down to Greensmith and the pair were bumper-to-bumper by the mid-way point.

A slight error from Greensmith at Kirby on lap seven was all the invitation Harding needed to pounce. But with Blake-Baldwin three seconds up the road the gap was surely too much for Harding to close in the remainder of the race.

The fight over fifth had also intensified and was now a five-car affair fronted by Davies, who'd got the better of Chappell and in doing so dragged Collins, Chandler and Jamie Goddard into the mix. A lap later and Chappell had dropped to the tail of that particular train.

But if that had looked close, then if anything the fight for the final top ten position was even closer. Aspinall headed a six-car squabble pursued by Richard Breland with Simon Goddard, Wicklen, Garry Townsend and the recovering Murphy all blanketed by just one and half seconds.

With the race entering its second half Worley had found himself a worthy adversary in Paul Sheard-run Steve Dolman with the latter narrowly having the upper hand.

Alex King called it a day with mechanical issues at this point and was joined on the sidelines within two laps by Fleet, Simon Orange and Stephenson.

In the end there wasn't enough time for Harding to truly threaten Blake Baldwin, despite consistently recording faster laps than the race leader and eating into his lead

to such an extent that by the flag he was less than a second adrift of a jubilant Blake-Baldwin.

Greensmith finished third in what had become a somewhat lonely race ahead of an equally lonesome Roche. Collins came out top in the quest for fifth, shadowed across the line by Chandler, Davies, Jamie Goddard and Chappell, with Aspinall rounding out the top ten. Breland took Masters trophy honours in 11th, with Simon Goddard and Garry Townsend finalising the Masters podium crossing the line in 15th and 16th respectively.

A visibly relieved James Blake-Baldwin said: "It's been a rubbish weekend in general but in the end we've managed to get a good result. I can't really complain to be honest, although I

"Alan's been helping me loads with driver tuition and he's given me his data logger. I've never had one before and it's made a huge difference to my driving and consistency."

still have a steward's enquiry relating to Race 2 to find out about later."

Talking about his race win he added: "I really concentrated for the first half and knew that the tyres would go off so I kind of managed the gap back to Jack. I thought he would be pushing really, really hard to catch me and that if he did get up to me my tyres would have been a little bit better than his, which is why I backed off a bit and yeah he nearly got to the back of me as we were about to cross the line."

"I feel like I've aged this weekend," he said wearily. "I'm going to go home and have a good sleep and a beer I think. It's been really frustrating to be honest with you, but to come out on top at the end you can't ask for more than that. But then if it was easy and less stressful we wouldn't do it would we?"

Capping off a brilliant meeting, second-placed Jack Harding said: "I thought for a minute I was going to get the hat-trick of wins there. I was reeling James in at a good rate towards the end, but it had taken me too long to get past Jonny.

"Obviously I'd been going at quite some pace to get up there and as the tyres went off I couldn't catch James at the same rate as I had before."

He explained: "I had to back off and stop sliding the car as much and if there had been another lap I might have had him, but I can't really complain with two wins and a second."

He added: "I'm kind of surprised at my performance this weekend. I always wanted a win but I didn't think it would come that easy. Alan's [Henderson] been helping me loads with driver tuition and he's given me his data logger. I've never had one before and

John Collins hounds Will Chappell through Chapman corner.



Brian Chandler heads a gaggle of cars including Tom Collins on the approach to Tarzan.



An apt sponsor for Jeremy Crook.



Jon Greensmith defends from Jack Harding.



it's made a huge difference to my driving and consistency. And obviously AK have done a brilliant job with the car, absolutely amazing and if it wasn't for the help of my sponsors ITG I wouldn't have made it onto the grid at all."

A frustrated Jon Greensmith claimed third and said: "The car just went off AGAIN! It's not been 100 per cent all weekend and I'm not confident with it around here. It's a very technical circuit and I've not managed to get the set-up right whereas Jack has got it spot-on."

"I'm happy 'ish' but it could have been better, once you've had a win you want more. Everything's disappointing now if I don't finish on the top step."

"I think I've been lucky to get away with no scrapes this weekend. It's been a bit hectic out there. It was really manic around the first two corners and I had to back out of it and get out of the way to avoid anyone taking me out."

Fourth-placed Tom Roche commented: "Right from the off I knew there was a problem with the car. It had massive oversteer everywhere, obviously as a result of what happened in yesterday's Race 2."

"It's a shame we didn't find the damage overnight. We checked everything but couldn't see anything obviously broken, but it would appear that the drive shaft has bent from where James hit the rear wheel meaning there was a vibration throughout

that race and that's knackered the diff now - it's whining."

He continued: "Considering the damage fourth wasn't a bad result. It was a bit frustrating really, just driving around and you can see the guys in front but there's nothing you can do about it. You want to push a bit harder but you just can't."

Fifth place went the way of Tom Collins who said: "Brian [Chandler] didn't make it easy for

"Yesterday I had front-running pace, today I had no pace whatsoever - a second slower just by rotating the tyres. Nothing other than putting the fronts on the back and the backs on the front. Obviously I won't be doing that again."

me at all, he had every corner covered and I just kept selling him dummies going into the first hairpin... I kept going to the outside every time and he would come across to cover, then I thought on one lap I would go right and he started to come across and then I switched to go inside of him, and that's how I got past him."

"Then he tried to get down the inside of me when I was behind John Davies but I think he

Jack Harding being hunted down by Tom Roche.



Michael Lawson and Ian McDonald.



Richard Wicklen is the meat in a Goddard sandwich. Simon in front, Jamie behind.



out-braked himself, which had the knock on effect of pushing the pair of them wide which allowed me to get up the inside of both of them to get fifth."

He conceded: "That was much harder than Donington. I think if I'd managed to get away from them earlier then I might have possibly caught Tom, because I could see him ahead of me and despite me having to defend he wasn't pulling away, but it just wasn't meant to be."

He added: "I've never raced at Rockingham and I'm not a fan, it's really hard on the tyres, so overall it's a really good result."

Sixth placed Brian Chandler said: "I have never fought so hard for such a lowly position. I made a slight change to the car thinking it wouldn't make a huge difference because it was only tyre related, and it was like night and day. Yesterday I had front-running pace, today I had no pace whatsoever - a second slower just by rotating the tyres. Nothing other than putting the fronts on the back and the backs on the front. Obviously I won't be doing that again."

He added: "The cars are so evenly matched that it makes it really hard to overtake, I've not had that much fun in a long time."

So just 60 minutes of racing remain, before the identity of 2016's BRSCC MX-5 Supercup champion can be revealed. Next up is the hallowed tarmac of Silverstone's International circuit for what will certainly be a tense triple

header. The championship decider could go down to the very last corner of the last race - it's really that close a call.

If you want a dramatic set-up for a championship finale, then you need look no further than the final three races of this season's ultra-competitive MX-5 Supercup. With tensions running high in the midst of some spectacular racing at Rockingham, the scene is set for a title fight that potentially could conclude in epic fashion.

Things couldn't be much closer between the two main protagonists with just a solitary point separating James Blake-Baldwin from Tom Roche. Both are former winners of the sister MK1 MX-5 championship and are vying to be the first driver to clinch both BRSCC Mazda titles.

While it might appear to be a two-horse race for the crown, mathematically at least, there's a third driver in the frame.

Jon Greensmith who also has a Mk1 MX-5 championship to his name secured a long-awaited maiden Supercup victory in the pouring rain at Donington and has been a thorn in the side of the lead duo ever since. His season-long consistency, coupled with a recent improvement in form has seen him move to within 30 points of Blake-Baldwin. With over 300 points on offer at Silverstone he will be pushing hard to cause an upset and if fate or the weather plays into his hands, he may just do that!

Alex King.



Steve Dolman chases Ray Worley.



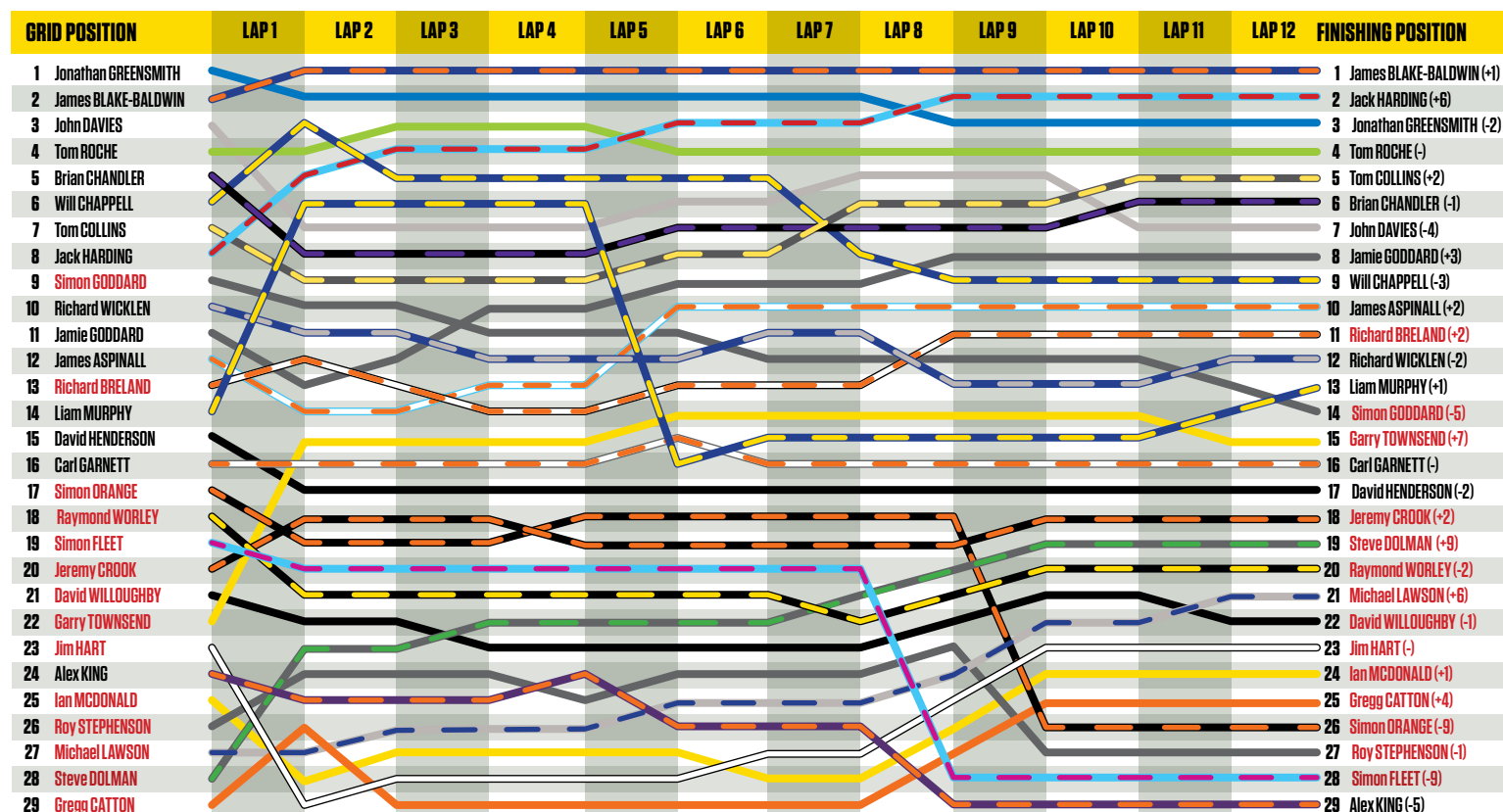
Will Chappell.





All smiles on the podium for (l-r) Jack Harding, James Blake-Baldwin and Jon Greensmith.

DRIVER TRACKER





Despite missing the opening two meetings Simon Goddard is pulling himself into contention for the Masters Trophy.

BRSCC Mazda MX-5 SuperCup2016
MastersTrophy
POINTS TABLE AFTER 16 ROUNDS

POS.	NUMBER	DRIVER	TOTAL
1	40	Raymond Worley	416
2	223	Garry Townsend	383
3	41	David Willoughby	344
4	46	Simon Goddard	344
5	21	Simon Fleet	318
6	77	Jeremy Crook	315
7	52	Steve Dolman	299
8	27	Jim Hart	277
9	85	Ian McDonald	275
10	69	George Grant	219
11	13	Gregg Catton	206
12	811	Richard Breland	152
13	96	Michael Lawson	134
14	71	Geoff Gouriet	110
15	67	Simon Orange	98
16	18	Paul Sheard	66
17	11	Nick Dougill	54
18	8	Andy Coombs	49
19	189	Roy Stephenson	39

RACE 3 RESULT
FASTEST LAP
DRIVER: JACK HARDING LAP 6 TIME: 1:44.502 SPEED: 70.62 MPH

POSITION	NUMBER	DRIVER	CAR	LAPS	RACE TIME	GAP	DIFFERENCE	AVERAGE MPH	BEST LAP TIME	BEST LAP
1	2	James BLAKE-BALDWIN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:08.888			69.79	1:44.538	3
2	43	Jack HARDING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:09.684	0.796	0.796	69.74	1:44.502	6
3	5	Jonathan GREENSMITH	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:14.349	5.461	4.665	69.49	1:44.600	2
4	25	Tom ROCHE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:20.523	11.635	6.174	69.15	1:44.900	2
5	20	Tom COLLINS	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:28.426	19.538	7.903	68.73	1:45.337	6
6	176	Brian CHANDLER	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:28.890	20.002	0.464	68.71	1:45.474	2
7	33	John DAVIES	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:29.896	21.008	1.006	68.65	1:45.116	3
8	91	Jamie GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:30.397	21.509	0.501	68.63	1:44.860	3
9	4	Will CHAPPELL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:30.751	21.863	0.354	68.61	1:45.165	3
10	28	James ASPINALL	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:34.356	25.468	3.605	68.42	1:45.704	3
11	76	Richard WICKLEN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:37.001	28.113	2.645	68.28	1:45.995	2
12	3	Liam MURPHY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:37.362	28.474	0.361	68.26	1:45.063	3
13	46	Simon GODDARD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:38.529	29.641	1.167	68.20	1:46.038	2
14	811	Richard BRELAND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:41.742	32.854	3.213	68.03	1:46.340	5
15	19	Carl GARNETT	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:43.132	34.244	1.390	67.95	1:46.767	3
16	36	David HENDERSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:43.970	35.082	0.838	67.91	1:47.180	4
17	223	Garry TOWNSEND	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:44.148	35.260	0.178	67.90	1:46.542	3
18	77	Jeremy CROOK	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:56.989	48.101	12.841	67.24	1:47.700	7
19	52	Steve DOLMAN	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	21:59.004	50.116	2.015	67.14	1:47.033	4
20	40	Raymond WORLEY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:00.299	51.411	1.295	67.07	1:48.238	3
21	96	Michael LAWSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:16.122	1:07.234	15.823	66.28	1:49.185	3
22	41	David WILLOUGHBY	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:18.649	1:09.761	2.527	66.15	1:48.616	4
23	27	Jim HART	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:28.007	1:19.119	9.358	65.69	1:50.071	6
24	85	Ian McDONALD	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:28.855	1:19.967	0.848	65.65	1:50.621	12
25	13	Gregg CATTON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	12	22:30.62	1:21.736	1.769	65.56	1:50.256	10
DNF	67	Simon ORANGE	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	8	14:38.610	4 Laps	4 Laps	67.19	1:47.578	6
DNF	189	Roy STEPHENSON	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	8	14:52.627	4 Laps	14.017	66.14	1:48.397	7
DNF	21	Simon FLEET	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	7	12:53.004	5 Laps	1 Lap	66.83	1:47.906	3
DNF	152	Alex KING	Mazda MX-5 Mk3	7	13:06.497	5 Laps	13.493	65.68	1:49.824	3

■ Cars 223 and 811 - 5 second penalty for exceeding track limits ■ Drivers in red eligible for BRSCC Masters Trophy

ROCKINGHAM: Trophy winners' gallery

ROUND 14



1st: Jack **HARDING**

ROUND 15



1st: Jack **HARDING**

ROUND 16



1st: James **BLAKE-BALDWIN**



2nd: Tom **ROCHE**



2nd: Jon **GREENSMITH**



2nd: Jack **HARDING**



3rd: Jon **GREENSMITH**



3rd: James **BLAKE-BALDWIN**



3rd: Jon **GREENSMITH**

NEXT MEETING: SILVERSTONE, 15th & 16th October 2016

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