

Classic and Clubman, Dundrod - 18th July 2022.

Circuit Catalunya, 7-mins heats.

The Sykes Transporter was just edging out of the yard, the crew looked back at the forlorn Maserati sat in the corner. Should they take it, efforts had focused on the Jag with an early test run last week. As caution overtook the crew they stopped and loaded it so at least a spare was available.

A myriad of beasts trumpeted out calls as many a beady eye fixed on a brightening horizon, as the sun rose over the trees it not only pushed away the grey of the night, painting the trees, hedges and grass with greens, browns and yellows, the sky blue it also drove off the early showers leaving only the scent of damp soil in the air. The birds and animals who had proclaimed its arrival settled down to the mundane tasks of the day.

The damp was driven out of the gravel and dust of the Irish roads as pristine tyres are rolled from trailer or box van. Heavy feet carry blurry eyed mechanics as the cars are prepared for this years Tourist Trophy event around the Dundrod circuit.

Jaguar had ruled the roads for some time with the XK120 regularly scoring victories, the Monkman crew slaved over a new XK to replace the previous car on which the patina had finally replaced solid metal.

Inwood tested his maroon machine alongside the Tetley blue XK. John Rees was tuning up a lone red Aston Martin DB2 and the silver Healy Silverstone. Team Sykes ran the dark blue C type, then to put in some laps with the Maserati. Strangely the Maserati looked to shift faster and behave better, was it the heat, this caused a change of plan for the coming race.

As the cars were pushed to the line the Monkman crew spotted something not to their liking with the Old English White machine and swapped over to an untried D type in British racing green.

The D type scampered away on red lane with The XK of Allan and John T fighting in the early laps before the race settled down with Russ leading Allan in second followed by John T, Dave and John R.

On yellow Russ continued his lead, but now with Allan on blue closing the gap after pushing past John T on red. The red Maserati struggled on white with a number of excursions into the greenery. One such collision with a hedge occurred to a similarly afflicted John T who like a true gentleman helped the Sykes car back on to black lane, before he left with the keys to the Maserati. A simple slip he said. John R stalked the field, the tall Aston was a handful, but Sykes could not hold him back letting John R through to fourth.

Initially John on yellow took the lead, but a charging Russ demoted him and Russ was followed through by Allan. Allan and John T squabbled over second till a loose weight from the blue Jag allowed Alan clear. He chased down Russ and took the lead. The stricken blue Jag was reeled in by the Maserati in for Sykes to pass into third with three laps left of the heat.

Following a stiff brew and a tea cake racing got back under way. A refreshed Allan took the lead, but he was hounded by John T. Russ dropped to the back for the first lap and pushed to make up lost ground past John R and then Dave, but he could not get back to the duelling leaders. Both swapped the lead, with white lane suiting John T better than red did Allan.

John T led away for heat five more confident on black lane. Allan pushed through on yellow but could not hold it and lost time tangling with a hedge, Russ took up the mantle and showed his heels. Alan was back in fourth, but quickly started to re-coup places to retake second. John T seemed to be holding station till on a blind bend he found the rear of Sykes Maserati his car catapulted over the hedge and into the field. Valiantly he dragged the car back to the pits where his crew pulled fleece

from the radiator and wiped blood of the bonnet. This allowed Sykes then John R to move up and the car was only seen for a short run before the heat ended.

The final heat, John T was back on form and chased down Allan, then led away as mutton was served in the paddock. Russ and Allan contended second till a slip up by John promoted them both to contend the lead. With Allan on white coming out in front. The Sykes team seeing little progress made swapped to the C type to see how it compared for the last run on Red.

Overall Russ took the win from Allan, John T, Dave and John R.

Position	Driver	Laps	Fastest Lap	Avg. Lap	Median Lap		
1	Russ Monkman	254.279	8.948	9.85	9.606		
2	Allan Inwood	251.163	8.674	9.916	9.508		
3	John Tetley	199.712	9.116	12.591	9.599		
4	Dave Sykes	183.696	10.062	13.606	10.626		
5	John Rees	139.537	13.385	17.935	15.156		
Position	Driver	Laps	Fastest Lap	Avg. Lap	Median Lap		
1	Russ Monkman	43.462	44.149	41.017	39.524	42.932	43.195
2	Allan Inwood	40.148	43.697	42.001	40.787	40.467	44.063
3	John Tetley	36.637	31.606	34.293	42.515	14.197	40.465
4	Dave Sykes	33.502	23.57	34.398	29.825	28.906	33.495
5	John Rees	25.412	25.829	17.474	23.506	22.051	25.264