

Toyo Tires 7 Race Series

Silverstone Race Report

Firstly a massive thanks to everyone that took part in the opening two races of the Toyo Tires 7 Race Series at Silverstone, with a fantastic grid of 47 cars. Whilst the sky at times looked ready to offer some dampness both Friday and Saturday remained dry.

With 45 minutes of free practice on Friday drivers were given the opportunity to fine tune their cars in preparation for qualifying in the afternoon. New for the 2017 season is the 'Code 60' flag system, used instead of a safety car and requiring drivers to slow to 60kmh to enable recovery of any stranded cars. The system works very well and, particularly at longer circuits such as Silverstone, reduces the prospect of loss of race time under a safety car.

However, the system does require a large slice of driver discipline particularly as most cars do not actually have a speedo in place, so whilst there will always be an element of 'gaining' the lap times can be monitored by the timekeepers and any necessary action taken. Compared to the traditional safety car system, where everyone bar the last car loses ground to chasing cars, the Code 60 maintains the same gap between cars. More importantly drivers are more alert to monitoring marshal posts... waiting for the first sight of a green flag, we just all need to decide if the 'flag out' is the same as the 'flag unfurled'... which might have caught a couple of drivers out..!

The start of Race 1 saw a withdrawal from the grid of Richard Ainscough with a broken driveshaft, however the marshals quickly removed him into the pitlane and the red lights went off and the race was on. The front running R300's were soon providing the customary Caterham race, with no more than 2 seconds covering the first 8 cars and whilst the group slowly reduced there was still a very intense battle for the front 6 places containing Killeen, Richards, Leitao, Araujo, Jenkins and Brown.

Meanwhile in the 1600cc Class the leading cars of Redding, Hayman-Joyce and Stansfield were clear from 4th place... by no more than a second or two until a slight coming together with Redding and Hayman-Joyce put them both back and allowed the chasing group to overtake them.

Shortly afterwards the new 'Code 60' was shown to allow the removal of a car from the Farm complex and within a matter of 4mins 36secs the recovery was dealt with, a far shorter period of time than use of a more traditional Safety Car. When the green flags came out and the race was on...

On the last lap of the race the front pack of R300's were rapidly closing in on the tail end of the 1600cc class and at the exit of the Vale/Club complex, whilst Killeen took to the left Jenkins took to the right and unfortunately clipped Micklewright causing a spin and, leaving very little space for the following pack to avoid, resulting in a red flag and the end of the race.

Counting back to the previous lap saw Danny Killeen take the win with Clive Richards 2nd, guest drivers Eduardo Leitao, Hugo Araujo and Jose Pires taking 3rd, 4th & 5th places leaving Justin Armstrong in 6th, albeit 3rd place for the UK Class of drivers.

The 1600cc Class results gave the win to Mark Stansfield, with Martin Jeffs 2nd and with his first time racing at Silverstone and first time in the Supersport car, having been the Caterham Academy winner in 2016, Ben Giliias came home in 3rd place.

Race 1

R300 Class Results;

1 - Danny Killeen
2 - Clive Richards
3 - Justin Armstrong
FL - Phil Jenkins - 2.21.219

1600cc Class Results;

1 - Mark Stansfield
2 - Martin Jeffs
3 - Ben Giliias
FL - Ben Giliias - 2.28.478

With a gap of a couple of hours until the second race it gave all drivers and guests an opportunity to take lunch in the 7 Race Series hospitality awning and to chat over the events of the first race before taking to the grid for Race 2.

Yet again the close nature of single specification racing started to show and a chain of 8 R300 cars led the pack nose to tail. Whilst the leading group managed to show a small break at the front the 1600cc cars were maintaining their own battle further down the pack with Redding and Hayman Joyce the leading two.

The first part of the race saw Clive Richards cross the line on three occasions, with Killeen leading up until lap 6 however Thacker was able to take to the front and with a battling pack behind was able to take a small lead and maintain it during the balance of the race, taking the win by just over 3 seconds. However, the battle for the remaining places continued with a nose to tail race and at the line a gap of just over 2 seconds covered 2nd to 7th! With Anthony Barnes and Richard Ainscough taking 2nd & 3rd.

The 1600cc class battle was being joined by guest drivers Luis Lisboa and JJ Magalhaes and contact between the lead two of Hayman-Joyce and Redding at Vale enabled both guests and the closely following Stansfield and Jeffs to sneak past. However, undeterred Hayman-Joyce was able to regain contact with the front and was first across the line at the chequered flag.

However, in the course of the contact at Farm Hayman-Joyce was deemed to have gained an unfair advantage, at the cost of Redding, and following a post race intervention by the Clerk of the Course was given a time penalty, demoting him back behind Redding and into 4th.

Race 2

R300 Class Results;

1 - Paul Thacker
2 - Anthony Barnes
3 - Richard Ainscough
FL - Clive Richards - 1.21.743

1600cc Class Results;

1 - Mark Stansfield
2 - Martin Jeffs
3 - Lucy Redding
FL - Mark Stansfield - 2.28.722

Once again a massive thanks to all drivers that took part and to Creventic for allowing us to join their 24hr Silverstone race meeting.

Full results can be found here - <http://www.24htceseries.com/2017/24h-silverstone-2017/results>

The next Toyo Tires 7 Race Series event is at Brands Hatch GP circuit on 1st May, see you all there...