



Anglesey

Rounds seven, eight and nine of the Saker Challenge took place at Anglesey on the 25th and 26th June. There were four races, but the results of races two and four were combined to make one result.

It was Fluent Motorsport's car 43, with driver Tim Wheeldon, who set fastest lap in qualifying to take pole in race one, with a 1:41:295, over 1 second ahead of car 61, Mark Burton in P2.

For race one, the weather had improved and the track was dry. Wheeldon took advantage of pole and made a strong start, building up a slight advantage that hovered around a second over Mark Burton in car 61. By lap eight, Wheeldon's lead was three seconds and by lap fifteen it was sixteen and a half seconds. On the radio, his mechanic, Scott, was telling him to slow the pace down and by the time he crossed the chequered flag, four laps later, the lead had dropped to twelve seconds over Burton, who finished only one second ahead of Neil Plimmer in his debut Saker race. Wheeldon was elated, especially having won the last race at Snetterton.

Sunday dawned bright and warm and the conditions were perfect for racing. Race two for the Sakers saw Wheeldon line up in pole position. He held p1 off the line again and shot off into the distance, putting six seconds between himself and Steve Harris in car 36, in 2nd place.

Mike Whittaker in the JPR car 48 moved into 2nd place on lap three, but by lap four, Wheeldon had pulled out an eight second gap. Unfortunately, he had worked his front tyres too hard in the opening laps and with his tyre pressures increasing, and a consequent lack of grip, the gap had dropped to four seconds by lap ten.



The Sakers in action

The team were on the radio to Wheeldon, keeping him informed of the now steadily decreasing advantage over car 48, while he struggled to maintain grip by nursing his overworked tyres. To his relief, the race finished with Whittaker a mere 1.7 seconds behind and Graham Pattle in car 61 (who was sharing the racing with Mark Burton) another 1.7 seconds behind that. Victory in this race had secured Wheeldon's pole position for race four, making a clean sweep for Fluent Motorsport and pole positions. However, it was not quite over, as this race was combined with race four, so the final result would not be known until the chequered flag after the last race.

For race three, Wheeldon lined up on the front of the grid again, alongside Burton in car 61. He got another great start and built up three and a half seconds over Whittaker in car 48, who had overtaken Burton on lap one. The gap back to 2nd place stabilised at around two and a half seconds until halfway through the race, when Wheeldon's tyres started to go off again and his lap times dropped by as much as a second.

The Wheeldon/Pattle fight for 1st place in race four was incredibly exciting.



With four laps to go, Whittaker had brought the gap down to under a second whilst pulling out a five second gap back to Burton in 3rd. With the car becoming increasingly difficult to handle, Wheeldon eventually crossed the line in first, seven tenths of a second ahead of car 48, who was only three seconds ahead of car 61.

Wheeldon's race engineer, decided to change the set up on the front of the car, in an attempt to stave off the overheating that he had suffered from in the previous races. Again on pole, but this time knowing his tyres were hindering him, he made another great start and set off to create another gap - this time three seconds over Whittaker, who was closely followed by Pattle.



Plimmer, Whittaker and Harris battled for podium finishes.

Yet again, the tyre gremlins came and took away his grip. Pattle had overtaken Whittaker and was driving brilliantly, despite being on worn tyres himself. He had hunted Wheeldon down and by lap ten, the gap was under a second.

For the next six laps, the gap stayed below one second while Pattle harried Wheeldon at every corner. He defended well, keeping his lines and Pattle struggled to find a way past. On the last lap at the last hairpin, he tried to out-brake Wheeldon, but ended up outbraking himself.

Wheeldon had defended the corner well, but lost all momentum and as both cars struggled for grip to race towards the final turn, there was nothing between them. Wheeldon had the line into the final bend and managed to cross it a mere two tenths of a second ahead of Pattle. Whittaker finished 3rd, in what was a great Saker debut for him.

Wheeldon said: "The race weekend at Anglesey was probably the finest of my racing career - I doubt I'll ever achieve something like that again. Everything went right, from the setup changes, to achieving pole in every race and to Scott making sure the car was as good as it could be and keeping me sane on the radio when my tyres had gone off. I was convinced I was going to lose the lead. But most of all, it was brilliant fun."



Wheeldon was delighted - three races, three wins!

Anglesey Photographs

To view photographs from Anglesey, please click on

<http://www.motorsport-imagery.com/anglesey2011saker>

Thank you to David Goose!

TV Schedule

Saker Challenge - Anglesey (15 Minute Highlights)

RACEMAX, SKY SPORTS: **SKY SPORTS**

Thurs 7th July:

18.00hrs (Sky Sports 4)

Fri 8th July:

02.00hrs (Sky Sports 3) and 14.00hrs (Sky Sports 3)

Sat 9th July:

03.30hrs (Sky Sports 2)

Sun 10th July:

06.00hrs (Sky Sports 3) and 14.00hrs (Sky Sports 3)

Saker Challenge - Snetterton & Anglesey (30 Minute Highlights)

MOTORS TV: **MOTORS TV**

18.25hrs on Wednesday 3rd August plus repeats over the following week (full schedule TBC)



NEXT ROUND



**Oulton Park
Saturday 30th July**

Finally...

I look forward to seeing you all at Oulton! Don't forget to set a reminder about the TV coverage!

Kindest regards

Roxie Marandi Rose
Saker Sportscars UK/Fun Cup UK
Race Co-ordinator

