



North Western
Centre

CNC HEADS SPORTS SALOON CHAMPIONSHIP 2026 - RACE REPORT

Rounds 1 & 2 - Oulton Park

Classes A, B, D & G – Qualifying

After the morning qualifying session it was Andrew Southcott's MG Midget Lenham on pole, but just 0.316 secs from Chris Roberts' BMW M4. "It was overheating and I didn't really get a clear lap," said Southcott, a former race winner returning to the CNC grid after a year out. "The car was absolutely sound. I had a bit of understeer on the last lap, but I think I was overdriving as I was four seconds up on my best, hit traffic and just missed pole," Roberts replied.

Roddie Paterson was next quickest in his Caterham C400. "Mechanically it's fine, but I lost grip so I am trying to find where and why," he said. He had Mark Primett alongside, debuting his ex Southcott MG Midget, but with the engine from his Banks Europa. "The front brakes were overheating, so I need to adjust my style or slow down," he reckoned. Fifth best was CNC debutant Paul Rankin in his Westfield Aero Race, with George Foxlow alongside, having his first outing in Dad Tim's Escort RSR.

Paul Masters's was hoping to start this season better than last, but his Westfield Wide Body had other ideas and blew the engine after three laps, but remained seventh best. Masters absence moved debutant Gavin Dunn up a place in his BMW E36 M3, who just managed to out qualify fellow debutant Andy Thomas in the Blockley Racing Ginetta GTA. Thomas last raced in FF1600 about five years ago, "it was my first time in the car and I soon realised it's such a big heavy thing after a Formula Ford," he said.

Bod Buckby had a difficult session and only managed 10th in his Caterham. "I broke the gear linkage in free practice and did the whole of the qualifying session in fifth gear," he explained. "I only managed to do two quick laps," said Jamie Cryer, after qualifying his Ginetta G20 a few tenths behind Buckby, while they had Anton Landon's Fisher Fury close too on his CNC debut. Richard Wright was out for the first time in his Ginetta G55, his CNC debut as well. "I just need more time in the car and it's been a long time since I last raced," he said.

Having had a one-off at Donington last season, Andrew Armiger was making his Oulton Park debut in the family Vauxhall Tigra. "There were a lot of yellow flags with cars off, but all seemed to be running well," he reckoned. 15th best was Marshall Groves with his Vauxhall Vectra. "It took me a while to get up so speed, but I lost brake and power steering fluid. It was handling OK though, so not bad," he explained.

Garry Wardle was out on his treaded tyres to save the slicks for the race on his Audi 3 TCR. "We will be OK in the race on our slicks," he added, after just holding off Deri Davies' Darrian T90. With brother, Alek, sporting a five a side football injury, it was just Connor Modro in the family Westfield Aero's. "We seemed to have got a hole in the wheel arch. There was no front grip though, the engine was fine, but we just need to make a few adjustments," he explained. Steven Parker's BMW M235i and Jason

Hennefer's Fiesta ST180 rounded off the top 20. "It was nice and cool with the aircon on, but with more grip on the slicks it was loading the brakes and got a bit warm," said Parker. Hennefer wasn't so lucky. "Coming up Deer Leap there was a knocking sound, so I lifted and pulled off, the engine had gone," he said as his day came to a premature end.

Jim Price was next in his Vauxhall Tigra, "it felt quicker and smoother," he reckoned, after keeping Paul Goodlad's VW Scirocco and Paul Wright's Subaru Impreza at bay. Wright is the father of Paul, a Time Attacker and making his CNC debut too. Simon Graveley reckoned his VW Golf GTi was "all good, but only got one clear lap in traffic." Nick Haynes was debuting his TVR Chimaera, "incredible to the Fiesta I had. It's like a hefty, grunty Caterham and I love it," he said.

Bob Claxton was celebrating his 84th birthday and had no issues with his VW Golf GTi, but Gary Warburton found his new engine in the Spaceframe Mini more than a handful. "350bhp is too much, I felt that I was just holding onto it. Then my mirror came loose, I couldn't see so came in," he explained.

Debutant Stuart Burnett was the final qualifier in his Spire GTR, preparing for his first ever race. "We had a fuel issue though, it kept cutting out and I got towed back in," he said. One notable absentee was Simon Allaway, after his Lotus Esprit V8 had a CV joint fail in free practice. "It failed spectacularly and was stuck on the end of the driveshaft," confirmed.

With the large grid, Classes E & F ran with the Welsh Sports/Saloon Championship

Classes A, B, D & G– Race One

The start was delayed when Groves' Vectra had to be recovered on the green flag lap. "I powered off the grid OK then a front hub snapped going down the Avenue," he explained. With Masters and Hennefer both absent too, it was 25 cars that finally came under starters orders.

Primett led down the Avenue, from Rankin, Roberts and Buckby, but both Paterson and Southcott were at the back. "I thought it was overheating on the grid, it was stuck in second and blew a fuse which had to be replaced," Southcott explained. "There was a wire off the starter solenoid, so I started from the pitlane," Paterson added, where he had been joined by Foxlow whom had elected to start from the pitlane.

Primett was flying, but Roberts was hanging on. Rankin was under pressure from Buckby, but Cryer and Davies were closing in, but it all changed on lap three. Primett still led over Hilltop but Roberts was pressing. "I went to brake and it just didn't slow down, it was foot to the floor," he explained after spin and stall left him recovering in ninth. Roberts just managed to avoid him and was left with an 11 secs lead with Buckby now second after he ousted Rankin. Davies, Armiger, Cryer and Modro were in close contention too.

By the end of lap four Buckby's hold on second was reducing, as Rankin fought back, bringing Davies, Armiger and Modro with him, while Primett was back up to seventh. Cryer had dropped to ninth behind Wardle, and Foxlow was into the top 10. "We were keeping close, good racing and then the brakes went," said Cryer. The sort out for second continued and Buckby managed to gap his rivals briefly. But by the end of lap six Primett was poised to retake Rankin for third, while behind them Davies still led Modro and Armiger, but Southcott had come flying through the field and was 10th behind the Wardle and Foxlow dual. Primett got third into Cascades a lap later, but the challenge had extended Buckby's second place advantage again, while Davies began to press Rankin for fourth, with

Southcott closing in after taking Modro for sixth. Burnett had been an early retirement with continuing fuel pick up issues, and Thomas had joined him too. "I went off and was stuck between two barriers at Shell, but should have been more patient," Thomas explained.

Modro was the next casualty though, pulling off at Knickebrook on lap eight with clutch failure. A lap later Rankin had gone too, "it coughed and spluttered so I was short shifting, then the rear driveshaft broke," he said. There was still plenty of drama still to come, Buckby had to give best to both Primett and Southcott on lap eight, but Southcott wasn't done yet, and led by the end of the following lap.

From last to first Southcott took the win by 8.714 secs over Roberts. I hadn't really got a clue where I was lying and then got the lead on the main straight," he said. Any hopes Primett had of taking second disappeared when he spun again at Lodge on the last lap and recorded a DNF, but Roberts still couldn't relax as he had Paterson shadowing him to the flag. "I had more grip and went faster, but then I lost the clutch and had to wave Andy through," Paterson explained.

Buckby finally finished fourth, just holding off Davies, "those guys were so quick. It was nice to have my gears back but I wrecked the rear tyres," he admitted. With Armiger another late casualty, with a misfire due to a loose wire, Wardle shook off Foxlow to secure sixth. "It was a busy race, every time I pulled away I got caught again," said Wardle. Cryer had managed to close on Foxlow towards the end but had to settle for eighth, while Landon and Richard Wright rounded off the top 10.

Dunn, Price, Parker and Goodlad all finished on the lead lap too, while Paul Wright, Warburton, Graveley, Claxton and Haynes were the final finishers.

Classes A, B, D & G – Race Two

Paul Wright, Modro, Dunn and Rankin were also missing from the grid as they lined up for race two and with Price pulling off too, it was down to 21 starters, but included Allaway starting off the back.

Paterson won the race into Old Hall after taking Primett, but Roberts took them both on the opening lap, with Primett dropping to fourth behind Southcott. The lead three had broken clear by the end of lap two, with Southcott challenging, after demoting Paterson. Primett was still in fourth, from Landon, Thomas and Buckby, with Davies eighth after taking Cryer and Wardle completing the top 10.

Southcott's push for the lead succeeded on lap three, but it proved to be shortlived. "Stuck in third gear in race one and now fifth in race two, so had to pit," he explained. So Roberts was back in front again, from Paterson, Primett, Landon and Thomas, before a growing train for sixth led by Buckby, from Davies, Allaway and Cryer. But Landon couldn't hold on and conceded, with Davies, Allaway and Buckby all getting by.

At the front it had become fairly settled, after Allaway took Davies for fourth. Landon continued to lose ground though, with both Foxlow and Wardle getting by, having shaken off Cryer's attentions. Gradually Primett's third place advantage began to reduce, and as they crested Hilltop for the ninth time the Champion was ahead. But it remained a comfortable win for Roberts, by over 10 secs from Paterson. "It was sound, but I couldn't keep up with Andy's MG," Roberts admitted. "I tried really well but at least it's still in one piece," Paterson replied.

Allaway held onto third, but had further drama when his car caught fire in parc ferme. "I thoroughly enjoyed it, the tyres were wrecked and even though it caught fire," he admitted. Primett made the flag

this time in a solid fourth.” I spun again at Knickerbrook. I still had no brakes as soon as I went for it, but it was manageable,” he reckoned.

Davies was fifth but both Wardle and Foxlow managed to take Buckby from sixth on the last lap. “I had a bump with Jamie at the start, so I tried to cool it off a bit,” Davies admitted. “It handled like a dream in another good race,” said Wardle, “a good clean race, the tyres gone and Garry got at Cascades on the last lap,” Foxlow added.

“The car was jumping up and down and felt like a puncture, but it lost me the places,” Buckby explained, before confirming part of the chassis had broken. Landon and Thomas had both fallen back midrace to finish ninth and 10th. “A great start, but then the quicker cars just picked me off,” Landon admitted. “I just wanted the flag after losing the brakes and could see Jamie closing on me,” said Thomas.

Cryer was next home recovering from a spin, while in 12th Richard Wright was the unlapped runner. Goodlad, Haynes, Graveley and Claxton also made the finish, but Parker, Armiger and Burnett had all been early casualties and were later joined by Warburton after his Mini’s gearbox gave up.

Classes C & E – Qualifying

Due to the size of the original entry, the Class E & F were combined with the Welsh Sports & Saloons. Matt Hibbert’s Class E Honda Civic Type R was comfortably quickest over Class F’s Rob Wakelin in his Civic. But Wakelin only had 0.050 secs in hand over Louie Dobson’s Civic.

Cavan Taylor’s Renault Clio was next quickest, just pipping Howard Hunt’s MG ZS, while Peter Koukoulas’ Toyota ME2, Jonjo Lee’s mini Cooper, Jonathan Dacres’ MG ZR and Brian Gilson’s Renault Clio rounded off the nine qualifiers.

Classes C & E – Race 1

Wakelin set the pace, from Richard Hibbert’s Civic and Hunt, but Hibbert closed in and was ahead from lap four, with Hunt following three laps later.

Hibbert took the flag nearly eight seconds clear of Hunt, while Taylor also took Wakelin, leaving the Class F winner in fourth overall and a lap down.

Dobson, Koukoulas, Lee and Gilson completed the finishers, after Dacres retired three laps in.

Classes C & E – Race 2

In the second race Matt Hibbert spent the early laps chasing the Welsh contenders. But he gradually worked his way by and with the overall leader running out of fuel on the last lap, he not only won the CNC classes, but the race overall.

Wakelin had bit of dual with Hunt before taking charge from lap five for second. Taylor was a close fourth, well clear of Dobson and Koukoulas, with Lee and Gilson the final finishers after Dacres retired on lap three.

