

CNC HEADS SPORTS SALOON CHAMPIONSHIP 2026 - RACE REPORT

Rounds 12 & 13 – Oulton Park

ROBERTS CROWNED CHAMPION WITH WINNING DOUBLE!!

QUALIFYING

With wins in both races at the Oulton Park finale in his BMW M4, Chris Roberts became the CNC Heads Sports Saloon Champion for 2026 by just one point from former multiple champion Paul Dobson.

There were dramas before qualifying started when Stuart Burnett hit the pitwall in his Spire GTR during free practice, with the car engulfed in flames. Fortunately Stuart walked away relatively unscathed.

It was Mark Primett who secured pole though in his MG Midget, 0.546 secs quicker than Roberts and on his last lap of the session. "After the session was red flagged I had a flat battery and took a while to restart. I think something may have broken at the front too," he said. "I was quickest at the end too, I am safe in class so it's all good," Roberts added. Anton Landon was next up in his Fisher Fury, just a fraction off Roberts and on his last lap too. "It felt good so I assume everything is OK," he reckoned. Alongside was a returning Ross Hampson in his BMW M3, first time out since his Donington smash. "It felt really good. I started at the lowest power setting and maximum traction, then pitted and moved it on a bit," he explained.



Heading row three was Andrew Armiger's Vauxhall Tigra. "There was still some slippery patches, but the car felt OK and I was pleased with our set up," he said. He had Ryan Nelson's Ginetta G56 GTA next to him. "It wasn't a bad lap and I was reasonable in traffic," he replied. Andy Thomas' Ginetta G56 GTA and Jas Sapra's BMW 1M were just 0.145 secs apart on the next row, and close to Nelson too. "It

cut out on me a few times and then it seemed OK," Sapra explained. "It was a hard session to get a clear lap, the car was good but it's slicks for the race," Thomas added.

Andrew Southcott's MG Midget Lenham only managed three before being sidelined. "It broke a halfshaft and part of it was stuck in the diff," he explained. Jamie Cryer lined up next to him in his Ginetta G20, "no dramas," he reckoned. Steven Parker was happy with what could be his last meeting in his BMW M235i. "All good, came in to check tyre pressures and off we went again," he said. "I had a big slide at Cascades as it's all new at the rear, otherwise OK," replied Paul Dobson, whose Mazda RX7 was still in with a chance of the overall title.

There was more bad luck for Paul Rankin, whose Westfield Aero race was soon out of the action. "There's a seriously leak, it's everywhere," his crew confirmed. The Honda Civics of Rob Phillips and

Rob Wakelin were next quickest. "I lost third gear, I think it bent the selector, but it will be fine," Wakelin reckoned.

Jason Hennefer had hoped he had cured his Fiesta ST180's misfire. "I thought it was going to be OK, but still got it," he admitted. While just behind him was Matt Jones who was fairly happy with his Ford Focus RS Turbo that he was sharing with David, his dad.

Debutant David Shead was next in another Honda Civic, followed by Garry Wardle's Seat Cupra TCR and debutant Nick Jones' Ginetta G56 GTA. Wardle decided to withdraw from the meeting after the session. "I am looking at CNC for next season. I found it quite slippery and then the red flag so I had no heat in the tyres," said Jones.

Instead of his usual Vauxhall Vectra Marshall Groves was out in Riccy Walker's Mini Cooper F56, he was doing the first race and Walker the second. "My first time in the car and on old tyres, but felt great," said Groves. William Bartlett's Renault Clio and Simon Graveley's VW Golf GTi followed, before Jack Ives' Caterham, the solitary Class C entry.

"The car was startlingly quick," said Richard Hibbert about his Honda Civic Type R. "Quicker than the driver for sure, but it went well and I was consistent too," he added. Jonjo Lee reckoned his Civic didn't have enough grip. "I was on a semi slick but I will change for the race," he said. Cavan Taylor's Clio was next up. "I seemed



fast on my own but not in a group, plus a few other issues," he reckoned. "Fantastic, a little tail happy but that settled," added Louie Dobson, whose Civic was vyeing for third overall in the Championship.

Chris Stone managed to seize the brakes on his Civic during the red flag period, while completing the line-up was Bob Claxton's VW Golf GTi, Errol Taylor's Toyota Yaris, Brian Gilsenan's Clio and Georgina Bartlett who was due out in race one, before handing the family Clio to brother William.

RACE ONE

With poleman Primett starting from the pitlane, Roberts led Armiger, Hampson and Landon as they charged down the Avenue on the opening lap. Jones' Ginetta was soon parked up and as Armiger crested Hilltop he slowed too and pulled off at Knickerbrook. "The stub axle went, it was a good start though," said Armiger. With the safety car out for a couple of laps Hampson was into second, from Landon, Nelson, Sapra and Southcott.

From the green flag Roberts tried to gap his rivals, but Hampson hung on and was side by side over Hilltop, before Roberts held the line and the lead through Knickerbrook. Landon was still in third, but Southcott snatched fourth from Nelson into Cascades, with Sapra soon following him through, as Thomas closed on Nelson, after he had slipped to sixth.

Southcott's charge took him from fourth to lead over Hilltop on lap six and the gap soon began to open, with Hampson having lost ground to Roberts for second and Landon now solo in fourth. Although Sapra was still fifth, Nelson was hanging on, with Thomas still chasing, while eighth placed Cryer had Primett reeling him in.



Paul Dobson was having a solo run in 10th, as were Parker and Phillips behind him, but behind them Groves was catching Hennefer. Apart from Primett taking Cryer for eighth on lap eight, the rest of the top 10 held station until lap 10, when leader Southcott joined Armiger parked up at Knickerbrook. "It snapped the halfshaft,

the same one as in qualifying," he explained.

Roberts was back in front with a 5.23 secs lead over Hampson, with Landon still solo in third, while Sapra and Nelson continued nose to tail in the fight for fourth and Class A victory, but with Thomas making it a three-way battle. Hampson gave his all over the last lap and managed to reduce Roberts' lead to 3.393 secs, but he also picked up a track limits penalty. "I tried but was never really able to challenge him. I did lead for a few yards into Island, looked in my mirror and braked too late, so was on the grass, with Anton right behind me. A great race though," said Hampson. "I had to try so hard to shake him off, especially when he was braking later. But the traffic finally gapped us I think," Roberts replied.

Landon retained a clear third to win Class C, "the BMW's were way too fast for me. It kept me on my toes though, so I have earned a drink," he added. Nelson managed to retake Thomas to continue his fight with Sapra for fourth. But on the penultimate lap it got too close, "I had the inside line over Hilltop and he hit my rear wheel, it punctured and I was out," said Sapra. They had both received track limit penalties too. But although fourth on the road, Nelson's penalty dropped him behind Thomas and also decided the Class A victory.

"I was faster than Jas but behind him, which allowed Andy to catch us, but once ahead I got clear," said Nelson. "Brilliant, I hung back a bit as I thought something was going to happen and it did," Thomas replied.

Cryer completed the top six, retaking the place after Primett had pulled off. "I could see them again but not catch them, but think it took me half of the race to wake up," Cryer reckoned. "I had made a storming recovery from the pitlane start, no clutch and then I heard a clunk and the A frame on the chassis had broken," Primett added.

Class E winner Dobson was next home, again in a



solitary race. "I had an early battle with Jamie, but couldn't stay with him," he said. Parker, Phillips and Groves looked set to complete the top 10 until Philips engine let go on the last lap. "I could have pushed to try and catch Dobbo but didn't want to wreck the tyres," said Parker. "What a lovely car, set up was good and I was mindful it wasn't my car when I was chasing Rob," Groves added.

Phillips retirement brought Matt Jones in 10th, "I had kicked up a bit of dust at Knickerbrook, when the diff pulled me over a bit, enjoyed it though," he said. Next home was Hennefer, "I backed off in the second half of the race as it was jumping out of fourth gear," he explained. The Civic's of Shead and Hibbert followed. "Perfect people to race with, it was superb," Hibbert commented.

Graveley was 14th having lost out to Hibbert with a few laps left, while Lee finally got clear of Wakelin too. "I lost third and fifth gears, so the hairpin was interesting. Lots of driving too and then lost fifth too and I lost ground," Wakelin explained. Louie Dobson held off Cavan Taylor to win Class F, "it was a bit smoky and oily and on my own a bit," said Dobson. Class C winner Ives and Stone completed the top 20, with Georgina Bartlett, Errol Taylor, Claxton and Gilsenan the final finishers.

RACE TWO

After the days casualties it was down to 25 cars for the final race of the year, with poleman Primett among the absentees.



After the initial first lap sort out, Armiger led Roberts, Landon, Hampson, Nelson and Thomas, but the field soon began to spread out. But on lap three Hampson took Landon for third and soon started to close on the lead duo. Armiger held on until lap four when Roberts got by into Island, leaving the erstwhile leader under

pressure from Hampson over Hilltop.

Hampson was second before the end of the lap and started to chip away at Roberts' lead, but on lap seven the challenge was over, with Hampson heading for the pits. "I was catching Chris from second and caught a backmarker into Knickerbrook. There were blue flags but he didn't see me and turned in. My front left caught him and it damaged the track rod end and put the steering out," he explained.

Armiger was back into second, well clear of Landon, before an increased gap to fourth placed Nelson, after he had contact with Thomas. "I lost it on the exit of Island and knew Andy would be close. I expected him to go outside, he went inside and we collided," Nelson explained. With Thomas out, Cryer was up to fifth with Dobson completing the top six.

It was a fairly routine run to the flag for Roberts, clinching another double win and crowning him 2026 Champion. "It didn't come that easy, after I had taken Andrew into Island I didn't want to back off at that point. I could see Ross, then he dropped back but couldn't see what happened and didn't know whether to relax. Taking the flag though felt ace, a weight lifted after all our hard work," he said.

Although Armiger held onto second, there was a determined charge from Landon on the final lap. “He kept catching with the backmarkers,” said Armiger. “He was so fast all the time though, he gapped me then I caught him, and just went for it on the last lap, but it was too much,” Landon admitted, after taking the flag 0.582 secs adrift.

Nelson was on his own in fourth after his earlier incident, while Cryer and Dobson remained solo too as they completed the top six. Dobson was confirmed as Championship runner-up by just one point. “I enjoyed that, set some personal bests and just stayed focused,” said Cryer. Dobson however completed his final lap with a spin exiting Lodge. “The tyres had gone off and all the other excuses, but I lost it showboating,” he admitted. Parker came in seventh, “it’s been a great day, no issues at all apart from running out of tyres,” he reckoned.

Hennefer, Hibbert and William Bartlett completed the top 10. “The gearbox is going, but I managed to work around it,” Hennefer admitted. “Once I got passed the black Honda I got a gap, but brakes and tyres were going so just brought it home,” Bartlett added.

Shed’s Honda joined the retirements pitting after nine laps and 11th placed Lee was almost caught on the line by Riccy Walker, after he had taken Cavan Taylor on the last lap too. “I had a laugh, a play, a few moments and some good battles,” said Lee. “I made places then got stuck a bit, but got Cavan on the line and almost got Jonjo too.” Walker added.

David Jones and Ives were next to the flag, before Louie Dobson clinched Class F and third in the overall championship, followed to the flag by Graveley. “I could have passed him on pace, but backed off when he nearly lost it, as I didn’t know where he was going,” Graveley explained. “I went off at Druids and had to fight hard to get back on, very eventful,” Louie admitted.

Stone continued to make the finish after his incident with Hampson, while Errol Taylor and Claxton completed the finishers.



Words by Peter Scherer

Images by PS Images

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