



AUTOSPORT INTERNATIONAL BTRDA CLUBMANS RALLYCROSS CHAMPIONSHIP,
ROUND 3, PEMBREY CIRCUIT, 7th AUGUST 2021

FOR THE first time since 2019 the Autosport International BTRDA Clubmans Rallycross Championship made a triumphant return across the Welsh border to one of its spiritual homes at Pembrey on August 7th and 8th for a double header round, the third round seeing an entry of just over 70 cars across the seven classes.

Saturday's round would see a clear leader of the overall Championship emerge at the end of play in the shape of Jason Bleasdale in the **AS Performance Super Modified** division. The Vauxhall VX220 pilot clean-swept all three heats and blasted off the line in the A Final to take the glory for the third consecutive meeting, only Fred Ling was able to hold a candle to him having finally ironed out his Fiesta ST's mechanical gremlins from the opening two events. Todd Crooks was meanwhile an early casualty in the heats with engine problems with his BMW Mini while Gary Cook failed to start the A Final with his Fiesta, and it was left to Phil Chicken to take his Citroen C2 to the final podium spot albeit almost 30 seconds in arrears of the two dominators. Behind the Citroen Andrew Hawkes was the first BMW Mini home just ahead of Jason Bleasdale with Tomasz Wielgosz (Saxo) next, ahead of a trio of BMW Minis piloted by Steve Brown, Bradley Turner and Leigh-Anne Sedgwick, the latter pair having topped the B Final.

Harry Vaulkhard (Saxo) had been joint leader of the Championship overall coming into Wales having taken two A Final wins in the **SG Haulage Ltd Production** class, but following a rather cagey start to his season reigning overall champion Dale Ford kicked his season into top gear at Pembrey. Like Bleasdale the Saxo pilot swept all three heats but didn't quite have things all his own way in the A Final as Rory Denning's 106 pushed him all the way, Ford holding on to win by less than half a second in a fine battle. Vaulkhard meanwhile was pipped for third by a similar margin by Maciej Florczak in his 106, further back Mark Henry in the unique Alfa Romeo topping a scrap with category sponsor Steve Gaunt's Clio and B Final winner Mike Dresser in the family Civic. Earlier B runner-up Simon Corfield's Peugeot 206 suffered dramas early on and finished a lap down and unclassified, while Karl Jarvis's distinctive blue Saxo and the very smart new Clio of Ryan Randall were in the midfield mix only to drop out when gremlins struck.

Attrition was also the name of the game yet again in the **Steve Gaunt Trailer Hire Pre-'95 Classic** category. After an incident in the heats champion Marc Jones day came to a halt allowing Vince Bristow's BMW to win two heats and Lee Wood's stunning Motaquip Mk2 Escort to take the other. Paul Pascoe's Sierra Cosworth took the B Final with David Ewin – the Fiesta EVO smartly repaired after its Blyton rollover – joining him at the back of the grid for the main event. There was more drama at the start of the A Final as Richard Moroney's Escort Cosworth cannoned off welcome returnee Andy Grant (Corsa) and was collected by the Peugeot 205 of James McBain. The latter and Moroney were out on the spot as Wood and Bristow scrapped for the lead with the Nova of David Attiwell keeping them honest, Wood eventually capturing his maiden A Final win by just over a second in the Escort. Attiwell completed the podium while the Fords of Pascoe, Ewin and Mark Finch (Fiesta) all pulled up with various maladies leaving David Martin's 205 and Grant's Corsa the only other finishers.

The **Cooper Tires Clubman 4x4** category made its seasonal debut and also saw the first appearance of the new Bell Rallycross-developed BMW Mini Countryman 4x4 cars, with a trio of examples appearing. They were joined by the Escort of Derrick Jobb, the latter taking heat three after Martin Hawkes' Countryman had won the first two stanzas, and the pair had an enjoyable scrap for A Final honours. Straight line speed on the tarmac told for the Ford and the experienced Jobb prevailed for victory by just over a second, Adrian Turner completing the podium three seconds in arrears and Countryman prime mover David Bell some way back in fourth.

There was controversy among the **Cooper Tires Production 4x4** division which sadly marred a close and competitive day's racing. Dan Beattie and Paul Davis won the first two heats in their Subaru with the Mitsubishi





of Bradley Sampson taking heat three, before the latter topped a fine scrap with Beattie to secure the A Final victory. Sadly both Sampson and Aaron Shaw's Impreza would be disqualified after failing post race scrutineering, handing Beattie the spoils ahead of Davis and Chris Baker's Subaru. The victory was a reward for Beattie who after transporter problems en route to Wales had to drive his (fortunately road legal) race car over 100 miles to Pembrey on the public highway!

Entries perked up in the new **AVO Suspension UK Modified** category, with Lydden Hill victor Max Weatherly (Swift) topping the opening heat, the similar mount of David Watt and the newly re-liveried Saxo of Jonny Chrisp winning the others. Weatherly made it a double in the A Final for his second main event win of the season despite Chrisp's best efforts to chase him down, Watt completing the podium and Chris Wheeler's new Fiesta sadly a non-starter.

Southwest duo Max Langmaid and Owen Robbins carved up the **Questmead Ltd/710 Oils Junior Rallycross** class between them, Langmaid taking two heats to his fellow Swift pilot's one. Robbins got the best getaway in the A Final but Langmaid clattered him aside after a couple of corners to relive memories of the duo's ORCi Ministox battles on the short ovals in seasons gone by, and Langmaid held off his rival for the spoils. Kacper Potyra had non-started in two heats which hampered his grid position but he finally completed an A Final without suffering punctures and completed the podium in his Saxo ahead of Corey Padgett who topped a fine battle with the similar Suzuki of Max Watt and Alfie Campbell in the VW Lupo. James Hawkes became the latest member of his extensive Rallycross family to make his bow in the sport and completed the finishers in his Swift, while Lydden winner Caitlin May was sadly a non-starter.

Several teams were left with overnight repairs and many others present mucked in to help them, the remainder lighting up the barbecue and relaxing ahead of Round Four the next day.

Another feature present on almost all cars were orange heart-shaped stickers, affixed in memory of motorsport volunteer marshal Robert Foote who lost his life in a tragic accident at Brands Hatch the previous weekend. Full credit to David Ewin for organising the stickers, and well done to all the drivers for showing solidarity and paying respect to the "Orange Army".

Dave Goddard

