



## Historic Touring Car Association Championship - Round Three

30-31 March 2019

Wakefield Park

The third round of our championship was held at Wakefield Park on 30 & 31 March, 2019. This was an HSRCA meeting. With an initial field of 29 cars, we ultimately saw 26 cars available for a Saturday morning practice session prior to qualifying.

Saturday morning dawned overcast with considerable rain overnight. The practice session was on a wet track with light rain. Some chose to wait until qualifying, hoping a dry track would be available.

When qualifying commenced, the circuit was still wet. The consensus was wet tyres were required. For some, this proved to be an issue. Minis are known for their ability to conquer wet conditions, their front wheel drive providing superior traction. Alex D'Onofrio proved this in practice being third fastest. Likewise Chris Thomas who showed he's not afraid to push his Torana in the wet. He finished practice and qualifying in first place. Next in qualifying was Adam Walton in his Mustang with Adrian Macri third in the Chev Camaro. Bill Attard was next in the first of the 'small cars'. The first Nb qualifier was Francis Meier in his Cooper S. One to watch when racing commenced would surely be Jamie Tilley who, due to a lack of suitable wet weather tyres, qualified in fifteenth place in the Mustang. Other competitors worthy of comment were Vince Harmer making a welcome appearance in his Volvo 164, David Stone in a Mustang, the Peter and Chris O'Brien in their respective XY Falcons and Andrew Glidden from Tasmania in his Cooper S. Alex D'Onofrio was credited with completing one lap and would start rear. Unsurprisingly a few cars had off-track moments, usually in the vicinity of the 'fish hook'. After qualifying, the sun came out and except for a light shower on Sunday afternoon, races were held on a dry track.

When the lights went out to begin the six-lap race one, an excellent field of 26 cars left the grid. Chris Thomas made the most of his pole position and made a good start. The rest of the field successfully negotiated the first two corners with some positions changing as they drove up the hill for the first time. Geoff Pike spun off at the top of the hill while Douglas Burton came off the track and stopped near the 'fish hook'. For the duration of the race, positions changed throughout the pack. Having started at the rear of the grid, Alex D'Onofrio finished in a credible eighth place and the first Nb finisher. Adam Walton and Adrian Macri exchanged places several times with Walton finishing in front by one tenth.



Jamie Tilley made good progress, eventually having a good battle with Peter O'Brien with the result in favour of O'Brien. Bill Attard spun at the top of the hill. Believing the cause may have been a deflating rear tyre, instead of a trail of oil, he finished in tenth place, just ahead of David Noakes. Chris O'Brien showed his Falcon was performing well, as he moved up several places to finish in second place. Non-finishers were Graham Russell, Andrew Glidden, Douglas Burton and Geoff Pike.

The second race was on Saturday afternoon, and it was the HTCA NSW Trophy race. From the front row Chris Thomas made the most of the start, heading Chris O'Brien into turn two. It didn't take long for Chris O'Brien to drive the Falcon past the Torana with apparent ease. Having started in third place, Adrian Macri appeared set to join the leading pair. However he completed a 360 degree spin as the Camaro headed up the hill. He soon recovered to begin a chase through the field. The two Cortinas, Robert Ingram in his Lotus Cortina and Peter Walsh in the pushrod GT were never far apart with the Lotus powered car finishing ahead of Walsh. After finishing in seventh place in race one, Dale Parry left the circuit out of the 'fish hook', eventually finishing in twelfth position. Peter O'Brien and Adam Walton enjoyed the contest with the Falcon finishing less than half a second in front of the Mustang. The first in Nb was again Alex D'Onofrio and again in eighth place. Jamie Tilley set the fastest lap in this eight lap event and finished in third place. Francis Meier and Nathan Stevenson retired after completing four laps.

Race three was again eight laps. The first two races set the scene for two action packed Sunday races. At the front Chris O'Brien made the most of a good start from pole position. Chris Thomas was passed by Jamie Tilley while Dale Parry made amends for the previous race by closing in on Adam Walton's Mustang. Peter O'Brien, Adam Walton, Dale Parry and Bill Attard were in close company and raced hard but cleanly. For several laps the quartet were close to the limit as each attempted to gain an advantage. Several times there were locked brakes at the end of the front straight yet no contact. Chris O'Brien and Jamie Tilley were at the front with Chris Thomas maintaining contact in third. The Falcon was being driven well and braking wasn't an issue. Jamie Tilley then attempted to pass the Falcon on the front straight. As the Falcon took a later apex through the kink, Jamie Tilley took a tighter line with wheels on the ripple strip. Into turn two, Chris O'Brien gave his opponent just enough room; however, the Mustang didn't have the corner exit speed and the Falcon powered away up the hill. This was the finishing order with Adam Walton holding onto fourth ahead of Dale Parry, Bill Attard and Peter O'Brien. Munday, Roberts and Burton found three into the 'fish hook' isn't always possible, resulting in contact. D'Onofrio retired after one lap, enabling Nathan Goulding to be first in Nb. Other retirements were Ingram, Munday and Burton.



The final race was also eight laps. Dale Parry brought his Mustang to the formation grid but was unable to start, as the gearbox had jammed in first gear. When the lights went out and the race began, the same trio, Chris O'Brien, Jamie Tilley and Chris Thomas, asserted their positions at the front. David Noakes, having driven to the grid, failed at the start, and sedately drove to the infield and took no further active part in the event. Having progressed to fifteenth position in race three, Vince Harmer retired after one lap.

Chris O'Brien and Jamie Tilley engaged in a tense battle for first place. It seemed at every overtaking spot each was driving to the limit with no concessions given. Tilley again used the kink as his chosen opportunity to take the lead from O'Brien. On this occasion he was successful, with credit to both for racing hard and cleanly. Adrian Macri made his way to fourth position behind the Thomas Torana. The trio of Walton, O'Brien and Attard were next followed by Nathan Goulding in eighth place and first Nb finisher. Jamie Tilley set a new lap record of 1:07:5, eclipsing his father's best time at any HSRCA event at Wakefield Park.

Trophies were awarded on Saturday afternoon, following the completion of the Trophy race, at a get-together catered for by Roses Café, to their usual high standard.

Trophy winners were:

Nc Class

- First place - Chris O'Brien
- Second place - Chris Thomas
- Third place - Jamie Tilley

Nb Class

- First place – Alex D'Onofrio
- Second place – Nathan Goulding
- Third place – Bob Munday

The Anglomoil Best Driver Award was presented by Eric Eden, NSW Sales Manager for Anglomoil and went to Peter O'Brien, who showed great skill in coming from 13<sup>th</sup> position in qualifying towards the front of the field in races one and two.

The Bowdens Own Best Presented Car went to Chris O'Brien, who turned out a magnificent XY Falcon – a testament to the hard efforts of him and his crew to bring it to a very high standard following an unfortunate incident at Phillip Island only 21 days earlier.

Fuel vouchers were won by Geoff Pike and Rod Wallace.



The weekend was a great success, with exciting racing from a large field of Nb and Nc cars - a great mix of makes, with Falcons, Toranas, Mustangs and Camaros, Cortinas, Minis, Mazdas and even a Volvo. As always, vehicle presentation was excellent. Racing was close and fast and there were duels within each race - at the front, and in the middle of the pack.

Of particular note was the presence of the second generation of racers, with their fathers watching on keenly – Peter and Chris O’Brien, with their father, Bill, David Noakes senior and junior, Vince and Adrian Macri, Brad and Jamie Tilley, Mike and Peter Walsh, and Ken and Chris Thomas.

The sons did their fathers proud – possibly too proud - and it will be interesting to see in later rounds if some fathers can match the pace set by their offspring!!

We now look forward to our next championship round at Sydney Motorsport Park on 8 and 9 June.