



Historic Touring Car Association Championship - Round Four

8-9 June 2019

Sydney Motorsport Park – Gardner Circuit

The fourth round of our championship was held at Sydney Motorsport Park on 8 & 9 June, 2019. This was an HSRCA meeting. Large fields were present for Regularity Group S and Group N. Some categories were small and were combined with other groups. Brad Tilley brought the ever-popular and former TCM championship winning XY Falcon and this was driven in Supersprint by Jamie Tilley. A former Group Nc car, it drew plenty of attention over the weekend.

The HTCA NSW again filled the roles of CAMS officials. Vince Macri was in attendance as the CAMS Technical Delegate, Pete Cotterill as the CAMS Eligibility Officer and Martin Macri as the Group N Driving Standards Officer.

The entry list comprised 29 cars, many of which took part in the Friday practice.

Saturday morning saw a very thick fog over the circuit. At the Drivers Briefing, competitors were advised that the commencement of the meeting was dependent on the weather clearing sufficiently to enable line of sight between flag points. This led to a late start for the event. When Group N qualifying commenced just after 11:00 am, the fog was still present, although it had cleared sufficiently to enable proceedings to begin. Other categories had created a dry line around the circuit, however off-line the rest of the track surface was still damp.

Jamie Tilley was fastest qualifier in the Mustang, over one second clear of Ben Wilkinson's Mustang with Chris Thomas the first Torana in third. The first Nb car was the Alex D'Onofrio driving his Mini into ninth position. This was one of ten Minis entered for the event. John Shuttle's Jaguar MK 2 was a welcome inclusion while Laurie Griffiths' Capri was having its first race since Bathurst 2018, now fitted with a new engine.

Race one was five laps and saw the return of Ben Wilkinson who brought his Mustang home in first place just ahead of Chris Thomas in the Torana, with Jamie Tilley third. Chris Thomas set a new class record in his Torana, achieving 1:46.615. The first three cars all achieved fastest lap times of 1:46. In Group Nb Alex D'Onofrio was first finisher in eleventh place with Matt Windsor and Nathan Goulding next in Lotus Cortina and Mini respectively. Two cars failed to finish, Paul Battersby and Doug Burton both in Minis.



Race two was the HTCA NSW Trophy race which saw a dry track. Jamie Tilley asserted himself at the front and set a new lap record of 1:44.46. Chris Thomas was in second place followed by Ben Wilkinson. Alex D'Onofrio was again first in Nb in tenth place followed again by Matt Windsor and Nathan Goulding.

Early in the race Darryl Hansen had a quick spin, having rear end grip issues in his Mustang yet recovered to finish in eighth place. Adrian Macri was adapting to changes to the Camaro and finished in fourth place. Further back Paul and John Battersby finished in positions 19 and 20 ahead of John Shuttle. There were two non-finishers, Ken Lee and Francis Meier in their Minis.

In contrast to Saturday's dismal weather, Sunday was sunny when competitors entered the circuit for the third race. On the first lap, the Safety Car signs flashed around the track. Ben Wilkinson's Mustang was off the circuit on the left side out of turn one with what was later diagnosed as a differential failure. Laurie Griffiths' Capri was off the track on the right side of turn one after the removable steering wheel had detached. Several laps were held behind the Safety Car before the lights went out for a three lap dash to the finish. Jamie Tilley repeated his first place result from the previous race, with Chris Thomas again in second, and Adam Walton bringing his Mustang home in third. In Group Nb, Alex D'Onofrio finished in ninth place and was again first in class, with Matt Windsor following in his Lotus Cortina and Nathan Goulding in third place in class. A higher attrition rate saw non-finishers Craig Robertson, Adrian Macri, Steve Pitman, Ben Wilkinson and Laurie Griffiths, all with work to do if they were to be ready for the final race of the weekend.

There was a long wait until our final event which was race four. Darryl Hansen decided son Matt should drive his Mustang in an effort to determine the cause of poor rear end grip. He would start rear of grid with Adrian Macri and Laurie Griffiths. When the lights went out and the cars left the grid, Hansen and Macri rapidly made progress through the pack. As the drivers established positions it wasn't long before the Safety Car lights were displayed. When we approached turn nine we saw a line of fluid across the circuit at the turn-in point. Although this was later identified as coolant rather than oil, following several laps behind the Safety Car, the chequered flag was displayed, the race declared as a non-event in the timing results. Although disappointing, this was understandable due to the potential safety risk.

Trophies were awarded on Saturday afternoon, following the completion of the Trophy race, at a gathering of members where catering was magnificently provided for by Sweet and Savoury Café of Austral.



Trophy winners were:

Nc Class

- First place - Jamie Tilley
- Second place - Chris Thomas
- Third place – Ben Wilkinson

Nb Class

- First place – Alex D’Onofrio
- Second place – Matt Windsor
- Third place – Nathan Goulding

The Anglomoil Best Driver Award went to Laurie Griffiths, who showed great skill in coming from 19th position in qualifying to gain some spots in both Race 1 and Race 2.

The Bowdens Own Best Presented Car went to Nathan Goulding, who turned out a beautiful Mini.

The Fuel voucher was won by Peter O’Brien.