

VRCBC April Showers and Spring Sprints

Mission Raceway Park, BC

April 4th & 18th, 2010

The Vintage Racing Club of British Columbia's first two events of the year were a study in contrasts. The first weekend was wet and cold; the second was beautiful. Some cars ran perfectly both weekends, while others struggled with early season gremlins.

The two thundering Camaros of Paul Kuckein and Dennis Repel finished first and second respectively in both races of the very appropriately named April Showers event. Paul didn't set a qualifying time so he had to start from the back of the grid both times, while Dennis was giving his beautiful yellow example its maiden run. The midfield pack of VRCBC regulars Mark Brown (Lotus Seven), Glen Gibbons (Alfa GTV), Jim Latham (Volvo 122S), Peter Valkenburg (Volvo PV544) and Al Harvey (MGB) all qualified within two seconds. Unfortunately, Glen had to drop out after seven laps in the first race and wasn't able to start in the second. The rest of this group finished in the same order in both races, with Mark's Lotus in front and Al's MGB splitting the two Volvos. Evan Williams qualified his Dino but was unable to start either race.

Only two weeks later, the Spring Sprints enjoyed summer-like weather. Unfortunately, some club regulars were unable to make it due to last minute snags. Ivan Lessner's venerable big Healey was still disassembled, while Geoff Tupholme's very quick Mini Cooper was waiting for key parts that were stuck on the Heathrow tarmac because of Icelandic volcanic ash. In practice and then qualifying, Dennis Repel set his fastest times so far in his new Camaro before it succumbed to some fuel surge issues. Peter Valkenburg, Mark Brown and Al Harvey all qualified within a half second of each other. Jim Latham was struggling with a too-high final drive ratio, and was over a second adrift. Evan Williams suffered from some unsolvable ignition problems during practice and was done for the day.

Dennis led for eight laps of the first race before having to quit with water pump gremlins, putting an end to his weekend. There is a lot more to come from this combo though. A few weeks before, the Camaro had hit 360hp at the Club's first Dyno Day. Mark's Lotus got the jump on the rest of the pack at the start and then held on for the win when Dennis dropped out. Al's MGB and Peter's Volvo chased Mark hard but couldn't reel him in. Jim struggled with his incorrect gearing and slowly lost ground to these two. At the start of the day's second race, Jim made a valiant, tire-smoking, but ultimately futile attempt to out-brake Al's MGB into Turn 1. This race then ran out as a repeat of the first. Al tried to hold on to the Lotus but eventually Mark pulled away to win, with the two Volvos finishing third and fourth.

Everyone who finished the races had something to be pleased with. In spite of his incorrect gearing, Jim got his Volvo below 1:25 for the first time ever. Peter was very happy with the performance of his former championship winning PV544 on its new tires. Al's MGB ran perfectly and he really enjoyed finishing ahead of Jim Latham for the first time. The most pleased of all however was Mark Brown, who said it was the first time he remembered being in the winner's circle since: "...sometime back in the mid-'90's at Cadwell Park, when I spun out of the lead down to tenth place and then recovered to win!"

Some newcomers and many more of the regulars are expected for the next VRCBC race on June 13th. Everyone will be using this event as their tune-up for the Club's big British Columbia Historic Motor Races (BCHMR) at Mission, during the July 16th – 18th weekend.

April Showers Weekend Results

Race #1

1. Paul Kuckein/Chev Camaro 1:20.045
 2. Dennis Repel/Chev Camaro
 3. Mark Brown/Lotus Seven S3
 4. Jim Latham/Volvo 122S
 5. Allan Harvey/MGB
 6. Peter Valkenburg/Volvo PV544
- DNF Glen Gibbons/Alfa Romeo GTV

Race #2

1. Paul Kuckein/Chev Camaro 1:19.339
 2. Dennis Repel/Chev Camaro
 3. Mark Brown/Lotus Seven S3
 4. Jim Latham/Volvo 122S
 5. Allan Harvey/MGB
 6. Peter Valkenburg/Volvo PV544
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Spring Sprints Weekend Results

Race #1

1. Mark Brown/Lotus Seven S3 1:23.046
2. Allan Harvey/MGB
3. Peter Valkenburg/Volvo PV544
4. Jim Latham/Volvo 122S
5. Dennis Repel/Chev Camaro

Race #2

1. Mark Brown/Lotus Seven S3 1:23.952
2. Allan Harvey/MGB
3. Peter Valkenburg/Volvo PV544
4. Jim Latham/Volvo 122S