

Evo Caterham Academy

Event Report - Group One

Harewood Hillclimb – 5th June 2005

It was great to be back at Harewood again. I know I have said it before but I say again, it is a beautiful place to be, especially when the sun is shining, which unfortunately it wasn't! The hill nestles in a valley and runs through a working farm; it is a very demanding, technical course with a number of corners to learn. Harewood is actually the longest permanent hillclimb course on the UK mainland. The event is run by BARC Yorkshire Centre, who are always so welcoming and so helpful.

It was an early start and much to do in a short space of time. We were going to be second up the hill so this meant signing on, scrutineering and walking the course had to be done very quickly... this did not prove too much of a problem for most of you, apart from Dax and Lee, who turned up an hour later than everyone else, funny that considering Harewood is their most local circuit! Thanks go to Jonathan (Aye Up) Medley, former Academy competitor and now Harewood fanatic, for walking you down and up the hill, lots of information can be obtained from walking the course with someone who has competed there often. Jonathan agreed to be there at 7.30 so that you had a good chance of walking before signing on.

Scrutineering was over, and then it was time for a briefing from the Deputy Clerk. Some of you had attended the Harewood Driving School the previous Thursday and there was some concern regarding driving standards and enthusiasm!! I think most of you agreed that this briefing was in order and it must have made an impression. Your behaviour on and off the track was probably the best I have seen at Harewood, especially in the wet!

It was also good to see lots of family and friends supporting you, unfortunately the weather wasn't being very kind, it was cloudy and wet but the forecast was encouraging for later on....

The day consisted of two practice runs and three timed runs, weather permitting. It was very difficult trying to keep drivers and cars dry, and a call for Caterham Brolly girls was heard more than once!

There were a large number of cars to get through each run as the meeting was full. The weather did not help... Practice was full of activity, several spins, Chippys and Country Corner catching a few people out, and Quarry Curve at the top of the hill was turning out to be the place to watch! We had time for two practice runs and one timed run before lunch.. At the end of the first timed run Richard McCann was in front, followed by Gary Halcrow and OJ. David Pierpoint appeared to have an excess of oil in his car, and Ian Northern sounded to have problems finding his gears, and Julius had the most fun, managing to demolish the timing equipment coming out of Quarry Corner! This seemed a good time to break for lunch...

It was nice to see some familiar faces again at Harewood, Tony Poole currently contesting the Inter Championship turned up to give some friendly advice, James Kerr, ex Caterham Academy competitor, who now contests Hill Climb championships and is more than able to give expert advice on tackling this hill. James Sykes also turned up to support, having competed at Harewood himself last year in the Academy.

The rain was really coming down very heavily and did put a damper on activities in the paddock. Kevin Lewis, our deputy scrutineer was making himself busy, as were Nick and Simon from Midlands, sorting out minor issues.

Time for the second run, weather still mixed, alternating wet and dry runs, the second run was dryer and the times reflected this. All of you managed to take quite a few seconds off your first time, the quickest being Richard again, with Trevor second and Gary third. OJ, Simon and Lee not that far behind. Lots of you had your quickest time on this run, Sean, David and Andrew Walton all doing well. In was still having gear box problems and was not happy with the car.

The weather did not look like getting much better, and it was touch and go whether we would get a third run as the heavens opened again. It seemed that you would not be able to better that second run. But, somehow, the weather improved enough for you to get a good third run and 14 of you managed your best time. Vance was not having a good day until now, he got a fail on his second run and really wanted to get a good time in, so he was pleased with his result. Richard improved again on this run and managed to shave one tenth of a second off the Class Championship, previously held by Guy Harrington, his winning time being 66.55. Gary eager to improve his time had a spin coming out of Country Corner, which scuppered his plans for a win. Trevor didn't manage to improve his run with 67.88, OJ and Simon both improved but not enough to contest the lead.

So, Richard McCann took a win again, with Trevor second, Gary third, OJ fourth and Simon fifth. Well done boys, sorry I was not at prize giving but I am sure you were well supported. Thanks to those of you who stayed, it was a long trip home for most of us and I understand that not everyone can stay.

You all did extremely well coping with the ever changing weather conditions, and not one tow truck in sight! Well not for the Academy anyway. I was very very impressed.

Thanks again to all your supporters, Gary seemed to have enough for everyone, great to see so much enthusiasm! There seems to be a bit of a pattern appearing now, but as we all know, championships are not won until the final event.

Looking forward to seeing you all at Castle Combe, let's hope the sun shines.

Kim Denning
Championship Co ordinator

