



Race Report

Silverstone: May 15th 2004

Drivers: Paul Dobbing.
Tim Hartland.
Chris Fellows.

Pit Crew: Pete Shaw.
Dave Robinson.
Jon Fellows.

Sponsors: Fellows Burt Dalton & Associates Ltd.

Weather: Dry, Hot and Cloudy

Track: Dry

This was the second Race of the 2004 Uniroyal Team Challenge season and had attracted a grid of only 16 cars, this was due to the race being rescheduled: It should have taken place on 3rd May, which was Bank Holiday Monday. Unfortunately due to this rescheduling we had lost an hour off the Race length, so this was only a 3hr Race. The extended break since the race at Donington has allowed us to sort out some outstanding work on the car. This consisted mainly of modifying the Car up to Evo 3 standard; putting it on a weight gain plan, as it was 10kg under weight at Donington, and fitting a PI Systems Data Logger. However, we can only use the PI system for Testing, but at least it will allow the drivers to analyse and hone their driving skills. We arrived at the circuit on a gloriously sunny Friday afternoon only to find the Inner Paddock area packed with pretentious Porsche and Radical owners. So off we toddled to slum it in the outer Paddock, at least until we could gain access to our Garage later on that evening.

Testing

The Series organisers had booked a 40-minute exclusive Test session, which commenced at 1705. Unfortunately Chris could not make the Test session due to a prior engagement, which allowed Tim to spend some time getting to know the circuit; as he had never raced at Silverstone before. Paul took the reins first to get the car warmed up and to set up some laps on the Data Logger, after five laps he came in and Tim took over; after downloading Paul's lap data. Tim put in a steady 15 laps and returned to the Garage, as it was now free, at the end of the Test session with soggy rear brakes; this had also been noticed by Paul during his few laps earlier. Tim's lap data was downloaded and Paul and Tim went off to analyse it over a hard-earned cuppa. The Mechanics, the unsung heroes, set about recovering the car ready for the race. Investigation of the soggy brakes showed that the rear Brake Master Cylinder was leaking internally and this was replaced. Paul went missing whilst the hard work had been going on. He eventually did us proud though, cooking a cracking chilli for dinner, after we had found him fraternising with the JPR Motorsport crowd with a beer in his hand. I told him there was no 'l' in 'Team' and no 'F' in beer either! Paul took the hint and got the beers in!

Qualifying

Saturday soon came around after a quiet Friday night and a full stomach. It was up early and back into the garage to finish off the previous night's work. The Car sailed

through scrutineering; it was all up to the Drivers now!

The one-hour qualifying session started promptly at 09:55. Paul went out first to complete his mandatory three laps and to warm-up the car ready for Tim and Chris. On the second lap Paul put in a fast lap time of 1:14:423, this was to be a repeat of Donington and stood as the teams' fastest qualifying time; however, this was only good enough to put us in 5th position. Chris went out after Paul and soon settled into a good rhythm and after 17 laps we called him into the pits for the change over. Chris's fastest qualifying lap time stood at 1:15:041, hot on the heels of Paul. Tim went out last and soon began to find his rhythm and started to put in quicker and quicker lap times. Tim returned to the pits after 11 Laps and a fastest lap time of 1:15:158; this was another commendable effort, as he has never raced at Silverstone and was only his second race in the VW. The Car was recovered for the Race without any further problems and a well-earned lunch was taken snatched prior to the race.

The Race

Although we had attained 5th position in the qualifying session, the Uniroyal Team Challenge's methodology for calculating the grid positions (drawn out of the Hat) put us in 12th. The race order was to remain the same as the last race at Donington, Paul was to start the race with Chris out second and Tim bringing up the rear. Starting on the 6th Row on the grid would at least give Paul something to aim at and he lined the car up on the starting grid without incident.

The race got under way and Paul made a reasonable start off the grid, losing one position, moving down to 13th. Paul settled down into his usual rhythm and started to pick off the cars in front one by one, by lap 10 he was up to 6th place. As the race progressed Paul had managed to attain 2nd place on lap 13 with Team Honeywell (Car 53) leading, but not for long! The Safety Car came out which, unfortunately for Paul, bunched the cars up again, and so he had lost some of the ground he had gained during the previous few laps. Undeterred, when the Safety Car returned to the Pit Lane 3 laps later, the race was back on and after a further 2 laps he was in the lead. This was short lived though, on the next lap the Team Honeywell Car had nudged Paul going into Brooklands and both went spinning off. Paul managed to recover and rejoined the race in 7th place, meanwhile, the Team Honeywell car could only rejoin in 11th.

Paul came in to the Pits on Lap 23, soon after the Fuel board came out after the first 30 minutes for a driver change only. We had calculated to triple stint on the fuel, so Paul and Chris swapped over without incident and off Chris went. The driver change had gone a little slower than anticipated, we still need to practice the driver changes as we were a little slower than most of the other teams and Chris rejoined the race in 10th place. He soon settled into a good pace and began to move up the field. Lap 29 saw Chris move up to 8th place and after a few more Teams had completed their mandatory Pitstop he had gained a few more places, by Lap 31 he was up to 6th. Chris kept up a good place and it was not long before the Fuel Board was being displayed again, 30 minutes soon pass by when you're having fun!

Chris came in to the Pits to hand over the reins to Tim; this was still just a driver change. The actual driver change had gone a little smoother, but we were still to slow at getting the car back out into the race with the new driver. Tim left the Pits and rejoined the race for his first stint at the wheel, picking up where Chris had left off in 6th place; things were looking good. Tim settled down into the routine and his 30-minute session went by without incident, keeping up a consistent pace he kept hold of his 6th place position. This delighted Tim's girlfriend, Diana, who had flown in from the USA the day before and was watching from the Pit Wall.

Another 30 minutes passed and the mandatory Fuel Window opened again at 14:28, Tim arrived in the Pits after completing Lap 69. He leapt out of the car and this time, Fuel Can at the ready, we dumped in a full load of 30 litres. Paul was in the car next, he was strapped in and raring to go. He joined the track in 7th position and he soon settled into his race with ease. Once all the Teams had completed the mandatory Pitstop and the lap times had stabilised Paul was in a comfortable 6th place. Lap 81 saw us move up to 5th place as Beetlejuice Racing (Car 11) had to retire with Clutch/Gearbox problems. Paul kept his cool and pace and held his position well for the rest of his session. The Fuel Board came out again at 14:58 and Paul came in for a much needed break. Only the Drivers were changed this time and Chris took over for his second session of the afternoon.

Chris's second stint saw him joining the circuit on lap 93 in what looked like 6th place and went out into the field guns blazing. Again it took some time for the race to settle down while the other Teams were carrying out their Pitstop to get an accurate picture of our race position. Once it had settled down, Lap 99, we found our selves in 4th place with the KTL Warehousing Team (Car 89) hot on Chris's Tail. Chris had a storming few laps holding off his pursuer but a tiny error going into Copse scrubbed off too much speed and the KTL Warehousing car was through, and we dropped down into 5th place. Chris regained his composure well and carried on pounding out steady laps and by the end of his 30-minute session managed to hold his position in the race. Chris came in to the Pits on Lap 115 for the mandatory Pitstop, and had to be dragged out of the Car. Another Fuel uplift was carried out and Tim was strapped in ready for the last session.

Tim rejoined the race in 5th place with renewed vigour and his confidence high. Tim put in a valiant effort and managed to hold onto his place admirably and his last session flew past without incident. The chequered flag came out at 15:59 after 3 hours of racing and 139 laps, we were 3 laps behind the leader so that came at 136 laps for us. Tim brought the team home in a very respectable 5th place and, for the first time, the car was returned with no bits missing! A hearty well done to all in the team, it was a great team effort and our best finish yet in this series.

I would like to take the opportunity to especially thank Dave Robinson and Jon Fellows for their assistance in the pits; Paul's Mum for supplying lunch and Diana for supplying the mechanics with chocolate cakes on the Friday evening.

Race Statistics

Driver	Paul		Chris		Tim	
Session Number	1st Session	2nd Session	1st Session	2nd Session	1st Session	2nd Session
No of Laps	23	24	23	22	23	21
Total Session Time	31:07.275	28:46.652	30:18.236	28:36.644	30:54.397	28:12.462
Average Overall Lap Time	01:21.186	01:18.611	01:19.054	01:18.029	01:20.626	01:20.593
Average Race Lap Time ¹	01:15.161	01:14.530	01:16.212	01:14.925	01:17.034	01:16.901

Fastest Laps						
Lap Number	20	90	27	111	62	135
Lap Time	01:13.683	01:13.727	01:14.704	01:13.876	01:15.675	01:14.941

¹Note – Average race lap time is calculated from an average of the overall lap times less the out lap, the in lap and any Safety Car laps.

PETE SHAW
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