



MRO CHAMPIONSHIPS BRANDS HATCH GP

Everyone's a winner

They contested their latest rounds with style and assurance on a very significant stage, and in stark contrast that led to the abandonment of the MSVR opening round of the Bennetts British Superbike Championship when it snowed. This time everyone present at Brands Hatch became winners when in front of a sun drenched crowd riders from the MRO did themselves and their club proud during the guest races, which occurred as a result of that postponement.

Sam Bishop, the 21-year-old bricklayer from Norwich now heads the Pirelli-Metzeler MRO Superstock 1000 Championship after a blistering double success around the famed Brands Hatch GP circuit. However, the victories didn't come from pole position.

Eighteen years have passed since Tim Bourne (no 33) posted a fastest qualifying time, but even with a lose tank cover on his Yamaha R1 the Ashford rider made pole position his for the opening Pirelli Metzeler Superstock 1000 race, but was unable to make

good use of the place. Sam Bishop made the hole-shot on board the Kester Cunningham John Yamaha R1. But by lap three Mark Lister had taken control on his Orwell Motorcycles Suzuki GSX-R.

But Bourne had cut through traffic to arrive in front on lap four and reminiscent of days gone by, for a few laps at least, he was oozing poise and style and the race win looked to be his. But

after running wide at Surtees a couple of times it was obvious the former Team Green rider was in some trouble. With two laps to go the ever-predatory Bishop assumed the advantage once more as Bourne dropped back to third. At this stage a vast top six

conflict had manifested with Snetterton winner Peter Baker getting the better of Michael Goodfellow and Alex Symon for the fourth spot. First round winner

Lee Hodge had occupied sixth on his Glynn Racing Suzuki GSX-R for most of the race and this never altered despite his attempts to make the top three. But out front it was Bishop who finally got the monkey off his back with a classy victory, his first of the season.

'This is great for all my sponsors,' said Bishop. 'I knew I was faster at some bends, particularly Druids, but I got by both of them going into Paddock on lap six. I came across back markers at Graham Hill on the final lap but that was OK. I managed to hold the lead and nailed it around the GP circuit and won it. Before the race I altered the rebound by a couple of clicks, put two new Pirelli- Metzeler on and that was that.'

Once Bishop had shaken off the attentions of Goodfellow in race two he was away this time reading plus-4 then plus-6 by mid distance. Goodfellow held on to second from Baker and Carl Nelson (no 35), but as a result Bishop now leads Peter Baker by ten points going into the next rounds at Silverstone.



At his home circuit Jack Sim (no 36) got a flier in the opening Triumph Triple Challenge race powering the SS Racing Daytona 675 to an advantage, albeit a slender one. It had been on the cards all season so it was no surprise to see Lance Carrey take pole position. The Hailsham, rider who came through the Bemsee club championships, was trying to make something happen in the early stages tucking in behind Mark Cheetham who had taken up position on the tail of Sim.



Mid distance Cheetham, who was out of action last season due to a crushed hand, appeared strong and dealt with Sim to take the lead overall and head the TDG Cup competition as well. In the meantime Carey was holding station in third but leading the Michelin Young Guns class. Josh Wainwright (no 55), who had been completely kitted out with new raceware by Aye Gee prior to the event, sat behind Carey for much of the race in fourth but an opening just wouldn't happen for the Thamesmead rider.

Cheetham, the former MRO Powerbike ace, began to ease clear of Sim towards close while Wainwright, the wise riding 18-year-old, stayed calm to collect second in class behind Carey. Stuart Mitchell and Manxman Tim Venables, who both did well in the last rounds at Cadwell Park, finished fifth and sixth respectively.

TDG Cup riders Cheetham and Sim were both in the thick of it at the start of race two, but although Sim got the second spot from Cheetham at Druids early on the Chorley rider was having none of it and got the position back at half distance. Carey had another impressive departure and at the expense of Sim occupied second and was joined by Manx Michelin Young Gun Mark Cringle, who had overcome the problem which reduced his straight-line speed by 10mph in the first race. Mitchell was also having another fine outing and squeezed Cringle into fourth with Cheetham getting the verdict over Carey at close.

