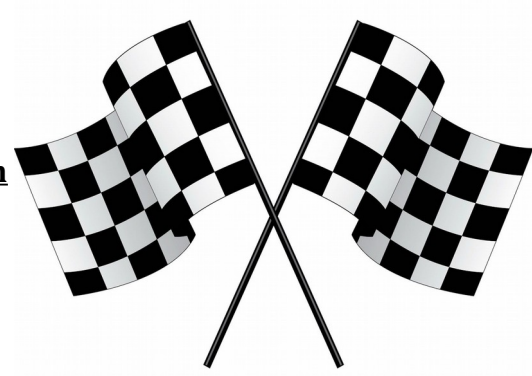




Hathern Stockcar Club English Open 2023



The 2023 national series for the 1/12th stockcars kicked off in style at Hathern Raceway on Sunday the 12th of February for the opening round alongside the English Open championship. Current holder of the title Matthew Bennett was not in attendance for this event therefore meaning it was all to play for as 41 drivers from all over the country battled it out to become the English Open champion for 2023.

Pre meeting favourites included Rugby's Ryan Cattell who on the Friday night tied the club lap record around Rugby with a sublime drive. Other's include Brandon, James and their father Graham Eccles who were the top 3 in last year's national series and surely you'd expect to see them at the top of the rankings after a day's racing. Other's included Urmston's Anthony Wyper, Matt Philpott, Adam Gilbertson and Emily Jacklin. All drivers who have been performing extremely well so far this year and certainly someone you'd put money on making the final. You can't rule out the Scottish boys either, in particular Gary Riddell who has really upped his game in recent years and slowly but surely is becoming a serious threat for the top boys who want to take home the honours.

It was an early start for myself and the Hathern track elves who were up nice and early to help get the track out and all the chairs and seating arranged before everyone turned up. A big thanks to everyone involved. The doors opened just before 9am and in bundled a busy flow of toolboxes and cars as drivers waved in to get set up and prepared for free practice. Around 45 minutes of free practice allowed everyone to get to grips with the iconic coffin track which we would racing on. A track which many people love, but also a track that some struggle with because of the challenging range of corners with the top half being wide open and the bottom being nice and tight.. Or as I like to call it an ideal track to fence a few!

The format: 4 rounds of qualifying heats with your best 3 to count towards your qualifying position. The top 7 qualify straight into the final, whereas the next 9 race in the consolation with the top 2 from that race joining the remaining finalists.

Before heat one started, a brief presentation was made to congratulate last years winners and runners up of the national series. Brandon Eccles was national points champion for 2022 alongside Emily Jacklin who won the junior national points. Many congratulations to them both. The drivers then received a quick safety briefing from Allan Inness and Graeme Beckett before a guest picked the concourse winner for the best looking car. This went to Scotland's Lennon Cuthill.



Qualifying rounds

Round 1 started off as expected, with most drivers trying to drive safe and take their time with overtakes as they tried not to make any silly mistakes that would affect their lap scoring. Ryan Cattell continued his fine form from Rugby on the Friday night as he stormed to victory in his opening heat. He in fact topped the rankings after the opening round with 102 laps.

Closely behind him was none other than the current world champion Brandon Eccles who also won his heat on 101 laps. Anthony Wyper, Graham Eccles, Gary Riddell and Rich Harding were other names who were high scoring in their first race of the day.

Round 1 race winners

Ryan Cattell
Richard Harding
Brandon Eccles
Graham Eccles
Tommy Johnson
Noah Bailey



Round 2 once again had a number of drivers who impressed, but one person stood out to the rest and managed to set a new lap record around the coffin track .. That person was Ryan Cattell who smashed the record with 107 laps. I believe Allan Inness mentioned after the meeting that this record has been set for around 16 years. Quite unbelievable when you think about just how quick these cars are getting nowadays!

Leighton Holroyd, who has returned to the section after a few years away was another driver to keep an eye on. He sneaked under the radar in his second outing and managed 102 laps after a bright opening start to his day. Matthew Philpott also hit the 100 lap mark with an impressive drive. Rich Harding had a strong heat with 99 laps with Anthony Wyper on 97 laps. Max Harding, James and his father Graham Eccles all tied on 95.

Round 2 race winners

Max Harding
James Eccles
Tim Bailey
Anthony Wyper
Graham Eccles
Ryan Cattell



After a brief halt in proceedings for lunch, round 3 got underway with racing becoming closer and closer as the rounds went on. It was clear to see that the gap between qualifying and not qualifying for the last 16 was going to come down to the wire. Ryan Cattell continued his fine form from the morning with an impressive 105 laps. He knew full well this was plenty enough to give him a front row start for the grand final, even with one round left to go. No one was even close to him and luckily for Ryan he had a final round without no pressure to do what he likes!

Leighton Holroyd was the only driver in round 3 to come close to Ryan, with 101 laps you'd also start looking at jotting his name on the list for a top 7 placing. Anthony Wyper, Rich Harding, Brandon Eccles and Graham Eccles were other drivers who impressed in round 3 giving them round 4 to relax and enjoy the fact they didn't really need another high scoring visit in order to make the main event. Gary Riddell impressed in this set of qualifying rounds leaving him with a possible chance to join the names above if he had one more good round in his final outing. Alfie Jones and Adam Gilbertson were very much on the cusp of a final spot, but needed a little bit more in the tank! Who was going to join the selected few?

Round 3 race winners

Anthony Wyper
Brandon Eccles
Noah Bailey
Ryan Cattell
Gary Riddell
Stuart Clarke



The final qualifying round of the day was very much all to play for. We had a number of drivers all borderline as to whether or not they'd reach the consolation event yet alone the final! The talent that has been on show is quite astonishing really. Out of 41 drivers, we had roughly 24 that all were in with a shout of a top 16 spot. Some big names that were very much in last chance territory included Kev Falconer, Emily Jacklin, Pete Riddell, Stuart Clarke, Tommy Johnson, Noah Bailey and Sam Jacklin.

It was Anthony Wyper who topped the standings for round 4 with an impressive 105 laps in his final qualifying round. World champion Brandon Eccles was close behind on 102, however the best improved driver in the final round was Adam Gilbertson who very much saved his day with 101 laps to sneak him into the consolation event after an underperforming opening set of heats for his own standards. Other names to mention were Gary Riddell who had another strong qualifying heat gaining him automatic entry into the final.

Round 4 race winners

- Brandon Eccles
- James Eccles
- Graham Eccles
- Alfie Jones
- Ryan Cattell
- Anthony Wyper



After the 4 rounds of qualifying were complete, we had our top 16 for the consolation and final grid. As you can see in the photo below, it shows just how close it was with Pete Riddell missing out to fellow Scottish driver Kev Falconer on joint laps.

BRCA NATIONAL MEETING - OFFICIAL SCORE SHEET												
English Open												
DATE OF MEETING- 12th Feb 2023												
TRACK- Hathern												
CLASS- St												
Car No.	Drivers Name	Round1 Laps	Round2 Laps	Round3 Laps	Round4 Laps		Round1 Points	Round2 Points	Round3 Points	Round4 Points	Best 3 Laps	To FINAL
904	Ryan Cattell	102	107	105	94		10	10	10	10	314	1
30	Anthony Wyper	98	97	99	105		9	10	10	10	302	2
1	Brandon Eccles	101	94	98	102		10	9	10	10	301	3
401	Leighton Holroyd	95	102	101	96		9	9	9	9	299	4
530	Graham Eccles	99	95	97	97		10	10	9	10	293	5
600	Gary Riddell	98	87	98	97		9	7	10	9	293	6
291	Rich Harding	98	99	94	90		10	7	9	6	291	7
629	Alfie Jones	92	92	97	97		9	8	9	10	286	
3	Adam Gilbertson	91	90	93	101		8	8	8	9	285	
95	Matthew Philpott	94	100	91	91		9	8	8	9	285	
192	Max Harding	92	95	91	96		7	10	7	8	283	
532	James Eccles	93	95	94	93		7	10	9	10	282	
150	Stuart Clarke	94	92	94	93		8	5	10	9	281	
247	Tommy Johnson	93	94	93	90		10	6	7	9	280	
117	Noah Bailey	90	87	98	91		10	7	10	6	279	
619	Kev Falconer	93	90	96	89		8	7	9	7	279	
7	Peter Riddell	92	89	95	92		8	9	8	7	279	
21	Emily Jacklin	90	90	94	93		8	9	8	7	277	
737	Sam Jacklin	91	89	87	94		6	7	7	8	274	
226	Gordon Mutch	89	91	86	90		6	4	7	6	270	
717	Brian Cuthill	89	83	95	85		6	6	8	8	269	
217	Tim Bailey	96	90	92	93		9	10	6	8	269	

Ryan Cattell smashed the qualifying rounds and put himself on pole position for the grand final on 314 laps combined. The next closest was Anthony Wyper who was a further 12 laps behind. It don't sound a lot to anyone who is reading this for the first time, but 12 laps is a massive gap especially considering just how tight the rest of the field were. Could anyone stop Ryan?

Brandon Eccles, Leighton Holroyd, Graham Eccles, Gary Riddell and Rich Harding all progressed automatically into the grand final ahead of Alfie Jones who will start on pole for the consolation race. Only two drivers could qualify from the consolation and into the final so it was squeaky bum time for a few of the big boys to try and up their game. The drivers in green all progress into the consolation however for the likes of Pete, Emily and Sam, it was the end of their chances for an English Open title... Or maybe it wasn't for all!!



Consolation Race

The consolation was the next race on track after a short break to allow drivers to re-charge their batteries and check over their cars. Alfie Jones goes into the consolation as pre-race favourite, however you'd have to expect a challenge from the likes of Matthew Philpott and James Eccles in particular. You also had Kev Falconer and Stuart Clarke ready to pounce! With these two, anything could happen. Bumpers were certainly going to be flying in left, right and centre!



The green flag dropped and the consolation event was underway! After a calm start, the racing soon burst into action with a helping hand from Stuart Clarke and Kev Falconer. The racing started to become a little scrappy with everyone trying to dodge the carnage, other than Stuart who was very much in the thick of the action putting his front bumper to good use. Kev was the innocent party at the time however after a hard hit from Stuart, this sparked Kev into McNobby style as his new title is known!

While all this was going on, young Noah Bailey was keeping his nose clean and maintaining his race pace with a number of consistent lap scores. Himself and Adam Gilbertson were both in a good position at the half way point while pole sitter Alfie Jones was trying to chase them down. Also in the mix was James Eccles and Tommy Johnson who was doing extremely well considering this was his first F1 national!

As the race began to reach it's climax, it was clear to see it was a five car race with only two of them being able to sneak onto the back row of the final grid. The race didn't really settle down as everyone was being kept on their toes by a certain few!! In the end though it was Noah Bailey who surprised the odds and claimed the win with 94 laps, a lap ahead of Adam Gilbertson who also managed to qualify for the main final.

Unfortunately for James Eccles and Alfie Jones who were a lap down on Adam Gilbertson, this was the end of the road for two of the upcoming stars of the 1/12th oval. Credit goes to Tommy Johnson who finished on 91 laps in 5th, with Matt Philpott in 6th, Max Harding 7th, Kev Falconer 8th and Stuart Clarke bringing up the rear after a lively display.

Congratulations to Noah Bailey and Adam Gilbertson who join the rest of the finalists in the main event!



White and yellow championship

Next up on track was the white and yellow race. A new championship event set up for the lower graded drivers to get themselves some silverware against their fellow graded opponents. As you can imagine, the race had plenty of crashes in however we also spotted a lot of control and maturity from the drivers including Zella Harding and Hayden Cattell who are the future stars of our section. You best keep an eye out for these names in the future!!!

Also in the race we had girl racers Lucie Jones and hot off the back of her junior Dutch Open championship Chloe Mitchell. Pre race favourite Sam Jacklin was another driver in the race along with Alan Harding, Michael Clague, Andy Jacklin and Peter Watson. With this being the first time this race has taken place in the national series, it was very much an open book as to how it was going to go!

There was plenty of carnage from the word go as expected, but it was nice to see a different kind of race. We didn't have a stand out superstar driver in the race dominating, it was in fact a tight fought battle between pretty much everyone. Unfortunately for young Hayden Cattell a mechanical issue forced him out the race just after the half way stage. His face dropped when he knew it was game over. Nevertheless, his time will come once he gains some more experience racing with his dad at Rugby and at the remaining national events.

It was eventually Sam Jacklin who was able to sweep aside the rest of the opposition and claim his first win of the day. A well earned victory considering the amount of miles he has done in the past few weeks! Peter Watson earned a creditable 2nd and youngster Lucie Jones finished 3rd.

Full results

- 1st – Sam Jacklin 79 laps
- 2nd – Peter Watson 76 laps
- 3rd – Lucie Jones 71 laps
- 4th – Chloe Mitchell 70 laps
- 5th – Andy Jacklin 65 laps
- 6th – Alan Harding 65 laps
- 7th – Michael Clague 55 laps
- 8th – Zella Harding 54 laps
- 9th – Hayden Cattell 34 laps



Junior English Open championship

Next up on track was the junior's English Open championship and after a brilliant result in the last race for Noah Bailey, surely he'd be fancying his chances at another win against his fellow junior drivers. He was up against pre-race favourite Emily Jacklin who was hunting down another junior title to add to her impressive collection already. Scotland's Lennon Cuthill was someone you couldn't rule out either. He has been flying around the Scottish tracks lately and knows full well he has the capability to compete against the very best.

To no surprise, it was quite a scrappy opening to the race with drivers keen on starting off the front foot. Emily Jacklin managed to make a break early on from the rest of the field however Noah Bailey and Lennon Cuthill were closely following her behind. Disaster struck for Lennon Cuthill half way through the race as a mechanical issue forced him out of contention which left a two car battle for the title. Lucie Jones sadly had an early finish to her race with a technical problem of her own which also halted her progress.

As the buzzer went off to signify the end of the race, it was Emily Jacklin who took the chequered flag with 85 laps ahead of Noah Bailey on 83 laps. Chloe Mitchell finished in 3rd on 65 laps.

Full results

- 1st – Emily Jacklin 85 laps
- 2nd – Noah Bailey 83 laps
- 3rd – Chloe Mitchell 65 laps
- 4th – Zella Harding 59 laps
- 5th – Lennon Cuthill 50 laps
- 6th – Leo Harding 48 laps
- 7th – Hayden Cattell 47 laps
- 8th – Lucie Jones 43 laps

It's fantastic to see so many juniors involved at the moment. We have a really special hobby this, the fact youngsters like Hayden Cattell, Zella and Leo Harding get to race against all different age groups including Tony Perry who I believe is in his 70's. It's bonkers when you think about it.



English Open Championship 2023



The final race of the day was the English Open championship for 2023.

Ryan Cattell has dominated proceedings all day long and was firm favourite to take home the title. However, this is stockcar racing and anything can happen! One race, no second chances, winner takes all. Anthony Wyper joined Ryan Cattell on the front row with Brandon Eccles sitting in the prime position right behind for a first bend lunge. Leighton Holroyd joins him on the 2nd row. Row 3 consists of Brandon's dad Graham Eccles, alongside Scottish driver Gary Riddell who you can never rule out. Rich Harding and consolation winner Noah Bailey make up row 4 and Adam Gilbertson starts right at the back.

Judging by Noah's reaction below .. I reckon he's just realised who he's up against!!!



GENTLEMAN, START YOUR ENGINES!

The buzzer went off and we were away! A great start by Ryan Cattell allowed him to get up to speed almost immediately and into his stride as he looked to dominate the race. This slowly started to become a real challenge as a few track blockages and unfortunate tangles dropped him down the order ever so slightly. One mistake in this race and you easily lost a few places it was that close.

Brandon Eccles, his father Graham Eccles and Leighton Holroyd were all neck and neck after the opening few minutes however it was Anthony Wyper who was keeping himself clean and patient away from all the tangles who lead the way by a couple of laps. Leighton Holroyd was getting himself stuck in with a couple of hard shots on his fellow rivals at the mid way point which looked good to watch, but the same time costing him those vital seconds that were so precious for those lap scores.

Consolation winner Noah Bailey and runner up in the consolation Adam Gilbertson weren't off the pace either. They were maintaining a good race pace but one or two cheap mistakes were costing them a shot at the top. Gary Riddell after a terrible start getting tangled up in the early stages was fighting a losing battle throughout the race unfortunately for him. He had the pace, but a brief bad patch in a race as short as what we run can be extremely deadly. Rich Harding found the pace a little too much to keep up with this time around, but certainly didn't hang around with a few pieces of bumper work to spice things up in the latter stages.

Pole sitter Ryan Cattell was still plodding away and appeared to be gaining ground on the leaders, but just ran out of time as the five minutes were up and that was it.. Race over!!! Race control quickly shut down the screen on the laptop so no one could see the results until they were announced in the presentation later on. There was a lot of tension in the air as drivers eagerly waited to find out how they got on.

Eventually, it was Anthony Wyper who kept clear of his closest rivals to take home the English Open championship for 2023. He was followed home by Brandon Eccles in 2nd, Graham Eccles in 3rd and Ryan Cattell in 4th .. All of which were tied on 97 laps, two behind winner Anthony Wyper.

Full results

Well done to our new English Open champion Anthony Wyper 99 laps
2nd 97 laps Brandon Eccles
3rd 97 laps Graham Eccles
4th 97 laps Ryan Andrew Cattell
5th 95 laps Leighton Holroyd
6th 92 laps Adam Gilbertson
7th 92 laps Noah Bailey
8th 90 laps Richard Harding
9th 89 laps Gary Riddell

So that's it for the opening round of the national series! A big well done to all our winners and many thanks to everyone who contributed towards this event.

Concourse winner – Lennon Cuthill

Best white – Pete Riddell

Best yellow – Sam Jacklin

Best blue – Tommy Johnson

Report by Stuart Clarke.

BRCA
BRITISH RADIO CAR ASSOCIATION

1/12TH F1 STOCKCARS

RUGBY RACEWAY
ROGERS HALL, DEERINGS ROAD, HILLMORTON, CV21 4EN

DOORS OPEN 8.30AM

START TIME 9.15AM

THE CONTACT CAPITAL PRESENTS
NATIONAL SERIES ROUND 2

SATURDAY 4TH MARCH

Signs Done By **JIMBO SIGNS**

Round 2 of the national series for 2023 on Saturday 4th March. The doors will be open at 08.30am with drivers briefing at 9am followed by practice.

Just like last year, we will be running practice in your allotted heat. This means if you are in heat 1 of round 1 you will be first out on track. You have 5 minutes to get yourself familiar with the track before the next heat goes out. (This is to prevent a free for all on track of 10+ cars at one time).

Refreshments will be available during the day. A raffle will be held during the afternoon. If you arrive early please remember Rogers Hall is a residential area so we ask if you could remain as quiet as possible please.

Bookings are already active online the BRCA website. You have until the 25th of February to get yourselves booked in for this event so you haven't got long!! Any problems with bookings please let me know and I will help you.

Please also note, we are running our opening round of the Rugby Shootout series on the Friday night from 8pm. The doors will be open from 7pm and guest drivers are welcome. I am already aware of a few drivers who are planning on coming over on the Friday night to race, so nearer the time I will make a booking list on the Rugby Stockcar Club Facebook page so we have a rough idea on numbers. It's going to be a busy night so we won't be waiting around!!!! If you are going to be late, you need to message myself and inform me.



**3rd Place –
Graham Eccles**



**2nd Place –
Brandon Eccles**



**1st Place –
Anthony Wyper**