

Pembrey Perfect For Colburn

So the second meeting of the SAXMAX championship had come, and on the Friday, some of the drivers were lucky enough to test while a few were missing due to school exams. For Zoe Wenham this was her first meeting in SAXMAX so she wanted to get as much testing in as possible, to learn more about her car and to learn the circuit. Unfortunately her car had an oil leak so she had to abandon the first session. Aaron Trigwell, who was also testing, had to abandon the first session due to a problem with his exhaust. But with the help of the Formula Vee team AHS; they managed to weld it up in time for the second session of the day. Marcus Niall and Matthew Weller spent their time getting to know the track again as they had both raced there last year and Chris Warburton was pleased to be setting times within a fraction of the lap record, he wants to thank Joe Ferguson for giving him some driver coaching. Declan Armstrong managed to get to the circuit in time for the afternoon sessions after having two exams in the morning.

Fortunately for the youngsters, the weather was clear and dry for the first qualifying of the weekend. All 18 drivers went out with high hopes, unfortunately Josh Cook suffered with ECU problems so felt he couldn't put in good lap times. Ferguson Motorsport were more than happy with both their cars being on the front two rows. Joe Ferguson in second place and Patrick Fletcher in fourth. Abbie Eaton did extremely well to qualify on third spot even though she did not test the day before. The Worthing based driver James Colburn was more than happy to have qualified on pole, Declan thought his qualifying was poor, "after being held up in traffic, 11th was the best I could manage". Zoe Wenham was stumped after setting her fastest lap on lap one"! It looked positive to be a close race after the top ten cars were all covered by less than two seconds.

The weather got even better as the SAXMAX competitors waited to be called up for the first race of the weekend and most were extremely pleased at the thought of no rain. Patrick Fletcher found he had a problem with his clutch as he attempted to leave to join the grid, so had to go into pit lane to sort it out, this was very disappointing for him as he had done well to qualify on fourth earlier in the day. Another who had problems was Alexander Lennon and was unable to start the race, but a happy James Colburn lined up on pole, with Joe Ferguson along side him. Abbie Eaton was on her own on the second row. Behind her were Andrew Tibbs and Chris Warburton (who now had a clear path in front of him). On the fourth row were Aaron Williamson and Patrick Mason. Jamie Brown and Josh Cook finished off the top ten.

As the lights went on all the drivers were waiting ready to go. Jamie Brown stayed stationary as the lights went out and Declan Armstrong did a fantastic job in avoiding him by squeezing between the pit wall and Jamie's car. Shaun Clay had a very good start and made up a place by the second lap. Abbie Eaton also got a fantastic start and was already on a mission to overtake the two boys in front. On the third lap she managed to catch up with Colburn and Ferguson who had been battling ahead of her and went up into second place at the first corner. James Colburn then managed to start pulling a gap of nearly two seconds by the fourth lap. Behind him was Eaton and Ferguson, followed by

Andrew Tibbs and Chris Warburton having a close race together. As the front runners were about to complete the lap, Ferguson had a slide at Honda which let Eaton pull a bit of a gap. James Colburn crossed the line with 2.9 second lead, and then followed were Abbie Eaton, Joe Ferguson, Andy Tibbs and Chris Warburton all fighting for second place. Marcus Niall and Anton Spires were really close throughout the beginning stages of the race, behind them Patrick Fletcher (who had sorted out the problem with his car) was catching newcomer Zoe Wenham. On lap eight, Ferguson had managed to retrieve second place, but unfortunately a couple of laps after that, Eaton was late on the brakes which moved her up to second and Tibbs managed to gain third. The lap continued to go downhill for Ferguson as Chris Warburton overtook at Brooklands. Two laps from the end, Zoe Wenham's car lost all power and was disappointed that she couldn't finish her first race when she pulled off near to the start/finish line. James Colburn won by a good lead of 6.22 seconds, also taking fastest lap, with Abbie Eaton behind him, taking her second podium of the year and the Wisbech based driver, Andy Tibbs finished off the top three. Following the podium finishers came Chris Warburton, Patrick Mason, Aaron Williamson, and after contact knocked his steering, Joe Ferguson in seventh, finishing off the top ten were Declan Armstrong, Josh Cook and Anton Spires, who did really well to work his way up from 16th.

After really strong winds on the Saturday night, the weather changed for the worse on Sunday. It was pouring down with rain, and a few of the drivers were nervous as they hadn't driven in these conditions before. But nevertheless, they went out, all still hoping to do well. Chris Warburton had held pole for a few laps at the start of the session, "but then I started to push too hard and made mistakes for the next four laps". Aaron Trigwell felt he struggled to string together a good lap, "I could get the corners right, just not all on the same lap!" Marcus Niall and his team were in a bit of a rush on the Sunday morning, "I arrived late but managed to get out in time for qualifying, we only had ten minutes to change from a dry set up to a wet – pushing it a bit fine!" Unfortunately the session had to be red flagged after Andrew Tibbs had a massive accident. Thankfully he was ok, but is unable to carry on with the rest of the season.

After an extremely long wait, the cars went out onto the grid. Aaron Williamson had a very impressive qualifying session and was able to start from pole position, James Colburn who won the race on Saturday, was beside him. After sorting out some problems with his car, Declan Armstrong qualified third, only four tenths off pole, with Abbie Eaton alongside him. Patrick Fletcher was on the third row on his own after Andy Tibbs' accident in qualifying. Joe Ferguson, Chris Warburton, Patrick Mason and Jamie Brown completed the top ten.

The lights went out and Abbie Eaton made a brilliant start once again and made up a place by the first corner, as did James Colburn who took the lead from Aaron Williamson. Josh Cook was another who had a great start and made 5 places by the hairpin. A slide from Abbie Eaton caused her to lose eight places due to wrong tyre choice and a lot of under steer, was disappointing after her start. Shaun Clay went off on the third lap, but was able to rejoin five places down the order. A few laps into the race, Patrick Fletcher and Patrick Mason went off at Spitfires, when Mason went to re-join at Diben, Chris Warburton and Matthew Weller came round, so Warburton braked hard to avoid Mason, but Weller didn't have enough time to react and went into the back of

Warburton causing a lot of damage to both cars, Weller retired to the pits but Warburton battled on. As the leaders came up to the straight, Colburn was leading by just under five seconds, he had his sights set on another win, and following him were Aaron Williamson and Declan Armstrong who were having a very close race, six seconds behind the pair were Joe Ferguson and Josh Cook who were constantly swapping places throughout the laps, but as a dry line started to appear, Ferguson pulled away. On lap seven, after working immensely hard to gain some places back, Abbie Eaton overtook Jamie Brown to take sixth place. James Colburn managed to pull a 7.46 second lead, ahead of Aaron Williamson and Declan Armstrong who were still very close, followed by Ferguson and Cook, then Eaton, Brown, Mason, a lapped Zoe Wenham (who was doing well for her second race and her first in the rainy conditions), and in a tight pack behind her were Alex Lennon, Marcus Niall, Aaron Trigwell, Patrick Fletcher and Anton Spires. Chris Warburton has sadly been black flagged due to exhaust noise and lack of ground clearance. A couple of laps before the end Shaun Clay came into the pits, but was able to rejoin the race in time to finish. James Colburn took the chequered flag to make it his second win of the weekend, with a very strong lead of less than seven seconds, Aaron Williamson took second after holding off Declan Armstrong throughout the whole race. Joe Ferguson came home in fourth followed by Josh Cook who started eleventh. Then came Abbie Eaton, Patrick Mason, Jamie Brown and Alexander Lennon who made eight places in the race, Patrick Fletcher, Aaron Trigwell who made up seven places, Marcus Niall, Anton Spires, Shaun Clay and Zoe Wenham.

After a very eventful and extremely wet Sunday... I'm sure everyone is looking forward to Anglesey in a couple of weeks..?! 😊