

Mini Challenge - Brands Hatch - 6&7 October 2007

In October 1994 Andover Racer Dawn Boyd first set foot in a racing car for a birthday present at Brands Hatch. Almost 13 years to the day she returned for a competitive race in the Dunlop Great & British Festival Mini Challenge. Dawn's own question to this fact was "Why didn't I do this sooner!?".

The Final round of the season resulted in Dawn's best racing yet.

With some much welcomed help from her team Advent Motorsport, Dawn steadily improved her driving during the Friday Track Day and Qualifying on Saturday saw Dawn beat her January pre-season practise times by 4 seconds. Averaging 1-minute lap times Dawn qualified in 7th place.

Race one was a standing start, something Dawn is frustratingly bad at recently and by the first corner, the infamous paddock hill bend, she was fighting to stay with the pack. Druids hairpin resulted in a large coming together of several cars, Dawn managed to squeeze her way round and found herself back in 7th place. Now the real race was on and as per usual she was fighting with Nik Rochez. This battle raged on for most of the race as every time she went for an overtaking manoeuvre Rochez blocked or cut in and Dawn had to back off to avoid incident. Two laps from the end Dawn was squeezed out towards the grass down Graeme Hill but she held firm and Rochez curled round her front wheel arch and off he span into the grass. Finally Dawn had the space to show her speed and raced to the line to come in 6th.

Race 2 was the last race of the afternoon and with some cheers from her supporters wearing her Hearn & Scott printed T-shirts Dawn was fired up for a good race. However, as she exited the pit lane to the grid Dawn realised there was something wrong with the car - either a weight had come off from a wheel or it was something more serious, Dawn was concerned and called for her mechanic as the cars assembled on the grid. With her wheels checked within seconds of the start, Dawn was off on the green flag lap still with a strange knocking noise like driving over cobblestones. Regardless, the rolling start saw Dawn keeping up with the pack as they flew over paddock hill bend as the cars bunched at Druids, Dawn fought her way through and found herself beside Rochez but with a great corner exit she was soon passed him.

Now her quest was to pass car 29, Andrew Cox. Several laps passed where every time she caught Andrew on the exit of Graeme Hill bend but couldn't quite find a way through before Clearways Corner. As the S Class cars began to catch the Club Class Dawn made several attempts to pass Cox into Clearways, including a brief touch but both cars continued. Eventually, on lap 16 of the half hour race, Andrew had a slower exit and Dawn was through, by now she was up to 5th place. Now the knocking from the car was getting louder and by picking up debris from the track after another incident Dawn thought her race could soon be over, but she battled with both the car and her own confidence when on lap 26 Graeme Parsons came off track at Clearways, Dawn was in 4th!! Willing the time to lapse before her car gave in it was an emotional moment as the Chequered flag finally came down at lap 32 for Dawn's best EVER race result, 4th place.

Dawn's first full season of racing has placed her 8th in class out of 18, 18th overall out of 46 and 3rd in the Ladies challenge, but most importantly finishing in her highest ever place has given Dawn a real buzz of excitement for the future. Dawn would dearly love to continue her quest for a podium in the 2008 season. If you or your company would like to get involved with sponsoring Dawn's racing please see further details and contact her via www.dawnontrack.co.uk .