

Steven in Seventh Heaven at Autotest Championship

The seventh round of the McMillan Specialist Cars Northern Ireland Autotest Championship seen the competitors travel to the North Coast, with the Coleraine & District Motor Club hosting their first autotest event of the season at the Northwest 200 paddock. Again, it was Steven Ferguson who was the pacemaker at this event, taking the win by 6.4 seconds from Andy Blair, with James Wilson completing the top three in his Mini Special.

In the Clubman category, it was Lawrence Baird in his Mazda MX5, who took the category win by 2.0 seconds. In the Advanced category, Gordon Clendinning in his Beach Buggy took the overall category win by 12.1 seconds.

Stewartstown's Steven Ferguson proved hard to catch, setting the fastest time on nine of the twelve tests on Saturday. With Ferguson taking the overall win, Wilson would be elevated to first in Class A, with uncle and nephew Peter Grimes and Christopher Grimes Junior taking second and third place, respectively.

Andy Blair in his Westfield took the honours in Class B, finishing ahead of Trevor Ferguson in his Silvia Stryker. Trevor's son Mark continued to show his development by taking third in the class.

In the Small Saloon class, Robin Lyons would take the class win and his final score of 791.2 seconds left him finishing sixth overall. Second in class went to Andrew Earney in his Mini Saloon.

The Large Saloon Class had three contenders at this event, with Newmill's Mark King taking the class win in his Vauxhall Nova, as well as finishing fourth overall only 0.4 seconds off third. Dungannon's Gary Campbell put in a passionate drive in his Vauxhall Nova to finish second in class and twelfth overall, with Damien Mooney taking third place in the class.

Dungannon's Jordan Burns continued to show his newly developed Ford Fiesta Special is a force to be reckoned with, as he took the Clubman Class A win, with Ian McCann taking second place in his Vauxhall Nova.

In Clubman Class B Gordon Buckley took the class win and finished seventh overall in the category, despite having overheating issues with his car during the day.

Clubman Class D was again made up of all Mazda MX5's and it was Lawrence Baird who took the class win from James Mansfield. Derek Harrison settled for third in class, after a penalty early in the day cost him precious time.

There was again a small but highly experienced and competitive turnout in the Advanced Category. Adam McMullan would take the Class A win, as well as finishing second overall in the Category, and Michael Workman would take the runner up spot in the class. Overall Advanced Category winner Gordon Clendinning would also take the Class B win. Robert Robinson would take the Advanced Class B win, as well as finishing fifth overall. Gareth Dillon in his Mazda MX5 took the Class D win as well as finishing third overall in the Advanced Category.

In the Production Car Class Andrew Molyneux Snr would take the class win, with his son Andrew Jnr in second.

With only three rounds to go Stewartstown's Steven Ferguson currently holds the Overall Championship lead by a comfortable nine points from David Thompson. Andy Blair is hot on the heels of Thompson, with only one point between second and third, with Mark King only three points adrift in fourth spot overall.

After the summer recess competition will get back underway on Saturday 5th August, with the event hosted by the Dungannon Motor Club. Will Steven Ferguson make it eight back to back wins or could Andy Blair in his rear wheel drive be able to take the top spot?

McMillan Specialist Cars Northern Ireland Autotest Championship Round 7

Overall Winner – Steven Ferguson

Championship Category:

Class A – James Wilson

Class B – Andy Blair

Class C – Robyn Lyons

Class D – Mark King

Clubman Category:

Class A – Jordan Burns

Class B – Gordon Buckley

Class C – No Competitors

Class D – Lawrence Board

Advanced Category:

Class A – Adam McMullan

Class B – Gordon Clendinning

Class C – Robert Robinson

Class D – Gareth Dillon

Production Car Category:

Class P – Andrew Molyneaux Snr