

## Ferguson Makes it Championship Number 9

In what can only be described as a sensational end to the season at the tenth round of the 2023 Northern Ireland Autotest Championship, sponsored by McMillan Specialist Cars of Antrim, the reigning Champion Steven Ferguson secured his tenth win of the season, as well as securing him the 2023 Overall Championship win, making it his ninth time of taking the title. Organised by the Autotest Drivers Club and hosted at Transport Training Services, Nutts Corner the competition was fierce throughout the classes and categories with competitors forced to work hard on the tight and tricky tests.

With Ferguson taking the Overall win, Peter Grimes was elevated to first place in Class A, leaving the others to battle it out for the remaining two places. This battle would be between father and son Chris Grimes Senior and Chris Grimes Junior, but it would be Junior who took the runner up spot in the class by 10.6 seconds from Senior, who settled for third.

In Class B, Andy Blair took his eight class win of the year, the Rear Wheel Drive Champion honours and third place overall in the Championship, with Trevor Ferguson and Paul Lowther taking second and third spot in class respectively at this event.

Robin Lyons and Andrew Earney were the sole competitors in the small saloon class in their Minis. Robin continued his dominance in Class C, taking his ninth class win of the season and finishing eighth overall.

In Class D, David Thompson claimed the class win, the Large Saloon Championship honours and second place in the Overall Championship. Newmill's Mark King was forced to settle for the runner up spot in both class and Large Saloon Championship and taking fifth spot in the Overall Championship. Damien Mooney took the third spot on the podium at the ADC event and in doing so claimed third in the Large Saloon Championship and tenth position in the Overall Championship.

In the Clubman Category, Jordan Burns was the man to beat, with Gordon Buckley coming home in second and Roger Gordon third in the category. Burns in his Ford Fiesta Special took the Class A win. Gordon Buckley would be the solo entry in Clubman Class B in his Westfield, leaving him to take the class win and runner up overall in the category standings. Clubman Class D was an all Mazda MX5's affair, with Roger Gordon taking the class win and finishing third overall in the category, Lawrence Baird took the runner-up spot with Ian Lowry in third.

With six highly experienced competitors signed up for the Advanced Category it would prove to be an interesting days competition. Adam McMullan and Ashley Lamont had a fantastic battle throughout the days event. McMullan in his Toyota Starlet Special just pipped Lamont in his MG Midget at the post, with only 0.5 seconds separating the two at the end of the day. Third in category would go to Scotland's Gordon Clendinning in his Beach Buggy, with the two Roberts, Robinson and Dickson finishing on exactly the same time of 576.6.

With the season now at its finish, Championship Co-Ordinator Mark King would like to take the opportunity to thank all the clubs who ran events so successfully throughout the season, he highlighted that their support and effort to make the championship happen was greatly appreciated by all the competitors. He would also like to thank all the marshals for their hard work and dedication to the events, and to the competitors for their continued support of the championship. His final thank you goes to McMillan Specialist Cars for their kind sponsorship of the 2023 Championship and he looks forward to working with them again in future, as they continue to develop and evolve the championship programme.

## **McMillan Specialist Cars Northern Ireland Autotest Championship Round 10**

**Overall Winner** – Steven Ferguson

### **Championship Category:**

Class A – Peter Grimes

Class B – Andy Blair

Class C – Robin Lyons

Class D – David Thompson

### **Clubman Category:**

Class A – Jordan Burns

Class B – Gordon Buckley

Class C – No Competitors

Class D – Roger Gordon

### **Advanced Category:**

Class A – Adam McMullan

Class B – Gordon Clendinning

Class C – Robert Robinson

Class D – Ashley Lamont