

‘MacLeod grabbed three podiums’  
British F3 series action, below

Photos: Jakob Ebrey



BRDC  
FORMULA  
FOUR

Palmer shines while points leader Russell has a subdued weekend

Will Palmer vaulted into contention for the BRDC F4 title with a double at Snetterton on a weekend that turned out to be damage limitation for leader George Russell.

Palmer scorched to two victories, his first in the main championship, while Russell was strangely off colour all weekend. The series’ pacesetter did take two podium places to retain his edge, but a tough last event has left things close for comfort with Arjun Maini also closing the gap thanks to his win in the reversed grid second race.

Palmer opened his account with a dominant victory in race one after surviving a scrappy first few laps. Russell denied Palmer pole with a late lap, although Palmer felt he had more time to find but his last flier ended prematurely due to red flags.

Palmer got the better launch when the lights went out to drag alongside Russell into Riches but Russell held the inside line and the two ran into Montreal together. The pair banged wheels and lost momentum, opening the door for Raoul Hyman.

“I knew if I stayed in touch

something would happen, and my luck was in,” said Hyman who inherited a one-second lead, but all was not well. “I was struggling with the car. I had terrible oversteer.”

Palmer slotted into third behind Russell after the contact, but got a better exit onto the Bentley Straight and claimed the place back a lap later. He then latched onto the struggling Hyman before nailing him for the lead into Agostini on lap three.

“It was good seeing the guys battle behind me,” said Palmer; “it made my job a bit easier. Raoul was looking lairy so I made my move when I saw the gap.”

Hyman defended hard to hold off Russell, who wasn’t happy with his Lanan machine. “We’re lacking straight-line speed,” he said. “I don’t know if the contact knocked something out.”

Russell continued his podium streak in race two, but was powerless to prevent Indian racer Arjun Maini from scoring the first victory of his F4 career. Maini inherited pole due to the reversed grid, which was ultimately Palmer’s undoing. He

started back in eighth and spent the entire race mired in traffic and was sixth after failing to make headway during the early laps. His cause wasn’t helped by a safety car on lap one to clear Nicolas Beer’s stranded car after a clash with Hyman, which earned the title chaser a time penalty.

Maini judged the restart perfectly and toured clear of Diego Menchaca, Russell and Hyman. Menchaca found himself an solitary second when Hyman attacked Russell, only for the points leader to work his way back ahead at the flag. “It’s consistency that pays in this championship so if I keep finishing on the podium I’ve got a good chance,” added Russell.

A tardy start put paid to Russell’s hopes of a hat trick of podiums. His fastest race lap was only good enough for fifth on the grid and he dropped to sixth on the first tour. Palmer got another strong start from pole and kept his head during a safety car period to lead the entirety in a relatively stale outing. Sennan Fielding was second ahead of Hyman and Maini.

Rob Ladbrook



Palmer laid down his title credentials with two wins

GINETTA GT5  
CHALLENGE



Chadwick’s wins helped him close in on title lead

Timely boost for Chadwick’s championship hopes with a double win

Two race victories allowed Ollie Chadwick to close within 11 points of championship leader George Gamble after a shortened weekend in Norfolk.

The GT5 Challenge only managed two of its three scheduled races after a delay following a big crash in British GT caused the final event on Sunday to be shelved.

Gamble will probably be pleased that race three was scratched as his weekend didn’t go to plan. He suffered a mechanical problem in race two.

The season’s race winners locked out the top four positions in qualifying with fourth-placed Gary Simms less than 0.9s away from polesitter Chadwick. It was the other front row starter, Gamble, who made the opening corner ahead of Chadwick, a fast-starting Nick Firth and Simms.

Chadwick’s challenge at Montreal on lap two put Gamble off-line and allowed Simms to also steal by and briefly lead before Chadwick retook the position at Murrys.

Dennis Strandberg was running



Chadwick with silverware

third on lap three but his race was ruined when he rotated on the entry to Palmers. That left Gamble to close in on the leader but his hopes vanished when he ran wide at Montreal two laps from home, promoting Simms in the process.

The G20 lead changed hands at Agostini on the final lap with Alex Preston slipping inside Stuart Pearson – who then tipped his rival into a spin at the following corner to reverse the positions only for the officials to slap a time penalty on the perpetrator.

Chadwick made wining race two

hard work. He had to start the race in fifth place after a race one penalty was applied, then messed up lapping a tail-end at Riches to fall back behind early leader Strandberg. Undeterred he closed back in and retook the lead at Nelson on the final lap having set up the Swede with a faster exit at Williams. Gamble was the early challenger but a sticking throttle required a brief pit visit and he trailed in 18th to gain six valuable points. Simms, meanwhile, overcame a ten-place grid punishment to fly through the midfield to make the podium with a well worked pass on Firth.

Callum Pointon demoted the smoky car of Nick Zapolski to claim fifth place while first Frederick Mortensen then Vic Covey and finally Luca Hirst tried to take sixth from the TDR ran car of Zapolski without success.

In the G20 class Pearson claimed victory having kept out of the reach of his rival Preston who was unable to close down his rival’s advantage.

Lewis Beales

INSIDE LINE

Sam MacLeod won a processional opening **Cooper Tires Formula Three** race to add to his victory tally. Having held off the early challenge of Martin Cao, MacLeod was comfortable to the flag. Cao’s second place was his seventh in succession. Andy Chang took too much kerb at Hamilton, which prompted a quick rotation. That elevated Peter Li into fifth place and he held off Chang’s recovery in the only major fight.

The decisive moment of race two came when MacLeod dived up the inside of race-long leader Camren Kaminsky at Riches, putting both on the grass, three laps from the finish. The former resumed behind winner Matthew Rao with the rotating Kaminsky lamenting a lost victory. Meanwhile, Cao’s run of second places ended in a cloud of smoke at Montreal.

It all went wrong at Montreal on lap eight when long-time leader Rao was attacked by Cao who ended up stranded at the hairpin. The closely following MacLeod picked his way through the chaos to lead with Rao eventually restarting and able to rejoin the train, courtesy of a safety car, to fight back to make the podium.

Persistent pressure paid off for Joe Fulbrook who took advantage of a slip by **VW**

**Cup** race leader Aaron Mason at Oggies to lead home for a second time this season. A similar slip lost Stefan di Resta the final podium position to the benefit of Lucas Orrock. Series leader James Greenway trailed in almost last with a turbo problem.

Di Resta proved a popular winner in the sequel, having passed Stewart Lines at Agostini on lap four. Mason charged through the minor places and very nearly denied the Scott his maiden victory. Greenway in his repaired car improved by some 20 places but another late problem meant he limped home in tenth.

Luke Caudle was able to convert his first **Mini Challenge** pole of the season into victory but he was hounded relentlessly by title rival Chris Knox who appeared to be quicker and just waiting for a mistake which to Caudle’s credit didn’t materialise while newcomer Neil Newstead was a lonely third.

Caudle made it a double in the reverse grid second race helped when contact was made between Lawrence Davey and Knox at Brundle when the latter tried to grab the lead. Caudle relieved Davey with a neat inside move at Palmers while Knox recovered to sixth with the penalised, for track limit offences, Davey fifth.

Lewis Beales

RESULTS

BRDC Formula 4 Championship (10 laps)

1 Will Palmer (HHC Motorsport) 18m 44.515s (95.04mph); 2 Raoul Hyman (HHC Motorsport) +3.050s; 3 George Russell (Lanan Racing); 4 Sennan Fielding (HHC Motorsport); 5 Nicolas Beer (Sean Walkinshaw Racing); 6 Gustavo Lima (Hillspeed). Pole position Palmer 1m 50.371s (96.83mph). Fastest lap Palmer 1m 50.371s (96.83mph). P Maini. S 20.

Race two (9 laps)

1 Arjun Maini (Lanan Racing) 20m 35.212s (77.87mph); 2 Diego Menchaca (Douglas Motorsport) +3.171s; 3 Russell; 4 Lima; 5 Palmer; 6 Struan Moore (Lanan Racing). FL Maini 1m 50.600s (96.63mph). P Maini. S 20.

Race three (10 laps)

1 Palmer 21m 41.319s (82.13mph); 2 Fielding +0.689s; 3 Hyman; 4 Maini; 5 Gaetano di Mauro (Petroball Racing); 6 Russell. FL Maini 1m 51.144s (96.16mph). P Palmer. S 20.

Ginetta GT5 Challenge (7 laps)

1 Ollie Chadwick (G40) 15m 35.002s (80.01mph); 2 Gary Simms (G40) +0.784s; 3 George Gamble (G40); 4 Callum Pointon (G40); 5 Dennis Strandberg (G40); 6 Matthew Flowers (G40). CW Chadwick, Alex Preston (G20). FL

Gamble 2m 09.978s (82.22mph). P Chadwick. S 25.

Race two (10 laps)

1 Chadwick 22m 07.227s (80.52mph); 2 Strandberg +0.096s; 3 Simms; 4 Firth; 5 Pointon; 6 Nick Zapolski (G40). CW Chadwick, Stuart Pearson (G20). FL Chadwick 2m 10.357s (81.99mph). P Gamble. S 25.

Cooper Tires British Formula 3 Championship (16 laps)

1 Sam MacLeod (Dallara F312 HWA Mercedes) 31m 16.973s (102.49mph); 2 Martin Cao (Dallara F312 HWA Mercedes) +2.193s; 3 Matthew Rao (Dallara F312 HWA Mercedes); 4 Camren Kaminsky (Dallara F313 HWA Mercedes); 5 Peter Li (Dallara F308 Volkswagen); 6 Andy Chang (Dallara F312 HWA Mercedes). FL MacLeod 1m 43.051s (103.71mph). P MacLeod. S 6.

Race two (18 laps)

1 Rao 31m 28.226s (101.88mph); 2 MacLeod +2.063s; 3 Chang; no other finishers. FL MacLeod 1m 42.718s (104.05mph). P Li. S 6.

Race three (16 laps)

1 MacLeod 30m 11.883s (94.38mph); 2 Chang +6.628; 3 Rao; 4 Kaminsky; 5 Li; no other finishers. FL

MacLeod 1m 43.110s (103.65mph). P MacLeod. S 6.

Milltek Sport Volkswagen Racing Cup (9 laps)

1 Joe Fulbrook (Golf GTI) 20m 22.389s (78.69mph); 2 Aaron Mason (Scirocco) +0.609s; 3 Lucas Orrock (Scirocco); 4 Stefan di Resta (Scirocco); 5 Stewart Lines (Golf GTI); 6 Josh Caygill (Scirocco). P Orrock 2m 07.803s (83.62mph). P Mason. S 28.

Race two (10 laps)

1 Di Resta 21m 33.699s (82.61mph); 2 Mason +0.201; 3 Orrock; 4 Fulbrook; 5 Howard Fuller (Golf GTI); 6 Caygill. FL Mason 2m 07.599s (83.76mph). P Caygill. S 28.

Power Maxed Mini Challenge (9 laps)

1 Luke Caudle 21m 19.837s (75.16mph); 2 Chris Knox +0.470s; 3 Neil Newstead; 4 Lawrence Davey; 5 Kevin O’Connor; 6 Keith Issatt. CW Caudle, Shane Stoney. FL Caudle 2m 10.410s (81.95mph). P Caudle. S 24.

Race two (10 laps)

1 Caudle 22m 08.014s (80.48mph); 2 Henry Duprey +4.725s; 3 Newstead; 4 Hamish Brandon; 5 Davey; 6 Knox. CW Caudle, Stoney. FL Caudle 2m 10.997s (81.59mph). P Duprey. S 23.