

Ford Fiesta Championship – Round 7 & 8 Castle Combe – 8th & 9th August 2009

General

Rounds 7 & 8 of the Competition Car Insurance Ford Fiesta Championship saw a visit to the 1.85 mile Castle Combe race circuit in Wiltshire. The team were running an extra car at this meeting with current Castle Combe Saloons Championship Leader, Jason Cooper, driving the spare NSR team car.

As this was the first time the team had visited Castle Combe, John and Nick opted to do a full day's testing on the Thursday. The morning sessions in the dry saw Nick put in some fast laps of 1.21.1 seconds which should be around the front of the grid. John reduced his lap times to around 1.24 seconds.

Jason went out on the Friday morning track day and although it was his first time in a Ford Fiesta ST and his first outing on Dunlop Slick rubber, he consistently put in lap times of 1.21 seconds, eventually achieving 1.20 second laps.



Round 7 Qualifying

The 15 minute qualifying session saw 34 Ford Fiestas take to the track in glorious conditions. With so many cars on track, it was difficult to put in clean laps but the team began to put in some hot laps.

Nick reduced his lap times to low 1.21 seconds with Jason even quicker in 1.20 seconds laps.

The session was brought to an early close with red flags after Rex Nye lost control at the Esses and hit the tyre wall hard. At the same time, Steve Papworth had a hub failure which pitched him into the tyres hard at Quarry Corner with substantial damage to his Fiesta ST.

At the end of the session Nick was disappointed to find himself well down the order in 7th position with Jason 4th and John in 16th position on the grid.

Qualifying Result

Nick Sanderson – 1:21.125 – Position 7th (1.130 seconds off pole)

John Findlay – 1:23.104 – Position 16th (3.109 seconds off pole)

Jason Cooper – 1:20.529 – Position 4th (0.534 seconds off pole)



Round 7

Nick knew he had a lot of work to do from 7th on the grid to catch championship leader David Ellesley who was sat on the front row of the grid. As the lights went out, Jason Cooper got a cracking start and took the lead into Quarry Corner.

Nick also made a good start and was up to 6th when the red flags came out due to a huge impact at Folly between a spinning Alan Donnelly and an unfortunate Stewart Croucher. It would be the end of the race weekend for

both cars with Alan fortunately uninjured but sore after the roll cage bent into his seat due to the high speed impact.

At the re-start, Nick again made a good start and moved up to 5th by the end of the first lap with Jason up to 2nd place. On Lap 2, Nick was far quicker than Mark Tilbury when Mark signalled he had a problem and Nick went flying past into 4th place and set about catching the leaders. However, after the race, it was alleged that yellow flags were out at this point although no marshal report was issued. This would have dire consequences for the race weekend.

On Lap 5, Jason took the lead from Ellesley and Durham in his first ever outing in a Fiesta ST. However, a mistake at Quarry with a missing gear change allowed David, Richard and Nick all through with Jason recovering in 4th place.

Nick reeled in David and was on his bumper when the chequered flag came out for the shortened race due to the red flag, with Nick in 3rd place.

After the race, Mark Tilbury placed a protest against Nick about the earlier pass and although there was no evidence from the actual marshal post, Nick was given a 4 second penalty and demoted to 5th place overall, after discussions with the clerk of the course who was considering an exclusion.

Nick also received 3 penalty points on his license but would at least start from 5th on the grid after losing his podium position, a drive which included the fastest lap of the race.

Round 7 Result

Nick Sanderson – Position 5th (5th Fiesta ST) – Fastest Lap 1:20.328

John Findlay – Position 11th (11th Fiesta ST) – Fastest Lap 1:22.442

Jason Cooper – Position 3rd (3rd Fiesta STR) – Fastest Lap 1:20.542



Round 8

Nick was raring to go after receiving the penalty the previous day which had effectively destroyed any chance he had of reducing the gap to championship leader, David Ellesley.

As the red lights went out, the field charged through Folly and up to Avon Rise into the tricky Quarry Corner. Nick was just going into the rise when he received a big hit on the rear quarter which he only just managed to control without hitting anyone.

There was a lot of dicing with David ending up running wide at Quarry and then receiving contact into the Esses which dropped him down to 6th place behind Nick who nipped through at the Esses.

Jason had moved up to 2nd place and was putting race leader Richard Durham under pressure. Nick was close behind Rory Bryant who made contact with Mark Tilbury at Bobbies which allowed Nick to close up onto his tailgate.

On the next lap, Nick made a move stick on Rory when he got a little sideways at Tower with Nick much later on the brakes and nipped up the inside for a clean move into Bobbies to 4th place.

He then set about getting past Mark who under pressure managed to improve his lap times with close dicing with Nick for the next 4 laps.

On Lap 9, Mark managed to get up the inside of Jason through Quarry after Jason ran a little wide and he was through into 2nd place. Nick thought about following Mark through but it was tight and Nick backed out with a trip over the grass up to Old Paddock Bend.

At the flag, Richard took a deserved win from Mark with Jason bringing home the NSR team in 3rd place with Nick close behind in 4th. John made up a couple of places coming home in 14th place.

Nick again took the fastest lap of the race with a 1:19.720 which is now established as the Ford Fiesta ST Lap Record.

Round 8 Result

Nick Sanderson – Position 4th (4th Fiesta ST) – Fastest Lap 1:19.720

John Findlay – Position 14th (14th Fiesta ST) – Fastest Lap 1:22.161

Jason Cooper – Position 3rd (3rd Fiesta ST) – Fastest Lap 1:20.411

Summary

The lack of dry testing at Castle Combe played a large part in John and Nick's performance over the race weekend as both drivers reduced their lap times considerably as the weekend progressed.

Jason drove two excellent drives over the weekend and is considering appearing at the final rounds of the championship at Brands Hatch and is looking at his options for 2010.

The next rounds of the championship are at Snetterton on 29th / 30th August.

Although the team has excellent backing from Kempster Ford and Orion Engineering, we still require further sponsors – we have marketing opportunities to suit all businesses / individuals – please contact via the website if you can help.

Championship Standings after Round 8 – ST Class

Position	Race No	Name	Total
1	39	David Ellesley	123
2	99	Nick Sanderson	115
3	8	Richard Kemp	84
4	1	Mark Tilbury	75
5	27	Rory Bryant	66
6	68	Terry Upton	51
7	63	Terence Clark	50
7	42	Stewart Scott	50
9	26	Steve Papworth	40
10	62	Cliff Pellin	35
11	9	Richard Durham	34
12	3	David Abbott	32
12	33	John Findlay	32
14	5	Al Daly	29
15	14	David Nye	26
15	35	Jason Cooper	26
17	13	Graham Field	21
18	66	Phill Simpson	18
19	30	Gordon Tomkins	17
20	18	Nick Pope	12
21	41	Will Arif	11
22	9	Paul Darringt6on	9
23	44	Ian Fletcher	0

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