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Round four of the stockcar national series finds us at the country's number one club, Urmston Radio Controlled Car Club, promoted by Alan Crossland, this is the one national meeting above all others where you want to make the final due to the usual high standard of racers that are in attendance at this meeting although we are down on the number of racers that usually support this meeting a low turnout of thirty-six, but I am sure that the racing will be up to the usual high standard. Upon arrival at the club it was noticeable that the club room had recently received a makeover, this entailed new electrical sockets at table height at every table in the room! this also explained the fresh coat of paint on the walls, over the past few years there has been a number of improvements at the Urmston club and I continually challenge Alan Crossland to surprise me with more surely there can't be much left for the club to improve upon, I just hope that the club continues to support the National series, although the club needs the support of the racers to make these meetings a success let's hope we get back to the high attendances of around fifty or so racers at next year's national meeting if the club decides to hold one. All the usual refinements are in place for this meeting, we have an on site spares shop providing everything that you could wish to purchase for you're race car, and the ladies in the kitchen were doing us proud with they're fantastic range of goodies that were on offer to tempt us. Plenty of notices boards around the hall displaying plenty of information about the club and also news from the previous national meetings as well, along with plenty of folders and scrap books containing the history of the club through reports and photos. The entr e of thirty-six made it nice and easy to organise heats containing six cars in each race, which gave us six heats in each round, with the best three rounds for each racer to count towards their qualifying total, with the top seven through to the final, followed by the next eight racers into a consolation race with the winner of that race progressing through into the final.

Round 1.

Winning heat one in fine style was Clive Buckler with 86 laps from Urmston club racer Carl Baker with 84, these two were chased by Peter Ayriss in third place with 82 laps with Irene Lancaster a further lap behind. Heat two saw a good win for Stuart Smith with 83 laps over Ian Johnson who was one lap behind in second place, in third position we had Jon Cutts with 76. Heat three winner Mark Foster recorded a healthy 84 laps, followed by Joe Brown with 82 laps, then we had a good battle behind these two between Allan Inness, Jason Reed and Debbie Jackson, at the finish of the heat Debbie Jackson took third place on a split time from Allan Inness after both racers had finished with 79 laps and Jason Reed was a lap behind these two. Heat four sprung the first surprise of the day's racing as Matthew Bennett took the chequered flag with 88 laps from Karl Spencer in second place with 83, then we had both Alan Bellis and Bryan Lee on 80 laps and in that order followed by Angela Yarwood with 78. Heat five produced a good tussle between Urmston club racer's Anthony Wyper and Mike Tomkinson, the lead was changing continuously between the two and at the finish they were separated by just 2.200 seconds as the both finished the race with 85 laps, the win going to Mike Tomkinson, third place was taken by Margaret Dunbar with 78. The last heat of the round, heat six was won by Ben Harding with 86 from Jim Wilson with 81 and the third and fourth place racers both finished with 79 laps, they were Andrew Cox in third and Darren Grace in fourth just 0.200 behind.

Round 2.

Rugby club racer Matthew Bennett collected his second win with an 85 lap score in heat one, in second place we had Clive Buckler with 79 followed by Steve Brown on 75 and Allen Hatcliffe in fourth with 70. We had the highest lap score of the meeting so far equalled in heat two, and the racer setting a high standard was Ian Johnson with 88 laps from Allan Inness in second with 83 closely followed by Peter Ayriss with 82 and Debbie Jackson just one lap behind with 81 as was Margaret Dunbar in fifth place with 80. Ben Harding collected his second win in heat three with 81 lap good enough to secure the win along with the ten national point's, a long way behind Ben in second place was Pete Clarke with 68 from Darren Grace who also finished with 68. Home club racer Stewart Smith took the win by the narrowest of margins in heat four his winning lap score was 85 in a time of 5 minuets and 0. 080 seconds and in doing this he took a national point from Karl Spencer who also finished the race with 85 but his time was 5 minuets and 03.610 seconds, third and fourth place was also decided by a split time after both Jim Wilson and Scott Williamson had recorded 79 laps each, third place taken by Jim by 2.230 seconds. Heat five went to Mike Tomkinson with 87 laps followed by Carl Baker with 85 and Mark Cooper in third place with 83, then we had both Irene Lancaster and Angela Yarwood on 81 laps and in that order at the finish of the race, unbelievably Jon Cutts registered a last place in this heat with a respective lap score of 80. Andrew Cox was another Urmston club member to secure a heat win in heat six his winning race score was 83 laps with Alan Bellis in close attendance with 82, long distance traveller Bryan Lee secured third place with 79 from Anthony Wyper in fourth with 77.

Round 3.

Collecting his second win of the day's racing was Mark Foster with 84 laps in heat one, he was chased by Carl Baker with 80 and Steve Brown on 76 laps in third place. In heat two we had Anthony Wyper equal the current highest lap score of 88 laps in securing the win from Karl Spencer who was just one lap behind, third place was taken by Darren Grace with 85 then we had two racers finishing with 81 laps they were Jon Cutts and Debbie Jackson, Jon complaining of a slow car and not being competitive. Heat three saw one of our Lady racers secure a national heat win with 82 laps a good result for Urmston club racer Angela Yarwood, second place went to Mark Cooper with 81 followed by Peter Ayriss in third with 80 and Bryan Lee with 79. Heat four was win number three for Mike Tomkinson with 82 laps good enough to lower the colours of Clive Buckler in second place with 81 and Andrew Cox with 80, and just one lap further behind was Jim Wilson with 79. Heat five has to be the pick of the heat's so far as Matthew Bennett not only beat Ben Harding but he also set the FTD score in the process of doing it with a scorching 89 laps to Bens 88, third place was taken by Alan Bellis with 82 followed by young Nicholas Cooper in fourth place with 74 laps. Heat six was won by Stewart Smith with 86 from Ian Johnson a close second with 85 followed by Joe Brown with 83 and Allan Inness with his lap score of 79.

Round 4.

In heat one Matthew Bennett collected his fourth win with 85 laps from Peter Ayriss in second place with 75 laps as was Jason Reed but he was right on his back bumper as the split time will testify as Peter's split time was 5. 03.330 and Jason's split time was 5. 03.350. Heat two saw another racer collecting his fourth win, this time out it was Mike Tomkinson achieving this with his winning lap score of 85 in heat two from Alan Bellis in second place with 83, in third and fourth place we had both Joe Brown and Jon Cutts in that order on 80 laps at the finish of the race. In heat three Ben Harding throws down the gauntlet to the rest as he secures the FTD lap score with a winning 90 laps in heat three, in second place we had Clive Buckler with 86 and third place was decided by a split time after Angela Yarwood and Andrew Cox had finished the race with 85 laps each third place going to Angela by 0.540 of a second, and just one lap behind these two was Carl Baker with 84. Ian Johnson collected his second win with 87 laps in heat four from Anthony Wyper on 85 and Mark Foster with 84. Karl Spencer posted his best lap score in heat five with 88 laps good enough to secure the win from Stewart Smith with 86 and Irene Lancaster in third place with 83, then we had three racers finishing the race on 80 laps, in the order that they crossed the finish line they were Mark Cooper, Allan Inness and Debbie Jackson. Heat six produced a low lap scoring race due to all of the racers being evenly matched, at the finish of the heat it was Darren Grace collecting a win with 77 laps from Bryan Lee with 76 and Margaret Dunbar with 75, young Nicholas Cooper took fourth place with 72 laps from Pete Clarke with 67 laps at the end of the heat.

The end of the qualifying heats meant heartbreak for some of the racers, and looking at the totals it suggested a group of racers were a little ahead of the rest in terms of high and consistent lap scores, but behind them it was a very close affair as things changed right at the end of qualifying with one or two racers getting the good lap score that they needed to make it into the consolation race, so a mention for some of the unlucky racer's, after a wretched day of racing and not being able to use his number one car due to radio interference was Mark Cooper missing the consolation by one lap as did Urmston racer Peter Ayriss, two racers that thought that they were dicing for last place in the consolation race after round three were Allan Inness and Debbie Jackson both unlucky to miss out after round four had been completed, and how often would you see Jon Cutts a former National Points Champion this far down the order, his best lap score of the heats was 81 laps in round three with his best heat position being third place, and just for the record four of the consolation qualifiers failed to win a heat, and a further three racer's only won one.

The Consolation Race

The eight racers through to the consolation race were,

| Name | Total |
|-----------------|-------|
| Clive Buckler | 253 |
| Carl Baker | 253 |
| Mark Foster | 252 |
| Andrew Cox | 248 |
| Angela Yarwood | 248 |
| Alan Bellis | 247 |
| Joe Brown | 245 |
| Irene Lancaster | 245 |

As I mentioned that a few racer's got the good lap score needed to qualify for the consolation race in the very last round after they had all had a poor one earlier in the rounds which made it hard to predict who would make it into the consolation, there were no less than six racers achieve this and had shot up the score board in the very last round and into the consolation.

The race itself was a good one with a number of racers in contention for the winning place that secures the remaining place in the final, at the end of the five minuets of racing it was Clive Buckler going forward into the final as he took the win with 82 laps from Alan Bellis in second place with 81, third place went to Carl Baker on 79, fourth, fifth and sixth place finishers all crossed the line with 76 laps in order they were Mark Foster, Joe Brown and Andrew Cox, seventh place went to Angela Yarwood with 75 followed by Irene Lancaster with 74.

The Final

The top seven qualifiers to make the final by right were,

| Name | Total |
|-----------------|-------|
| Ben Harding | 264 |
| Matthew Bennett | 262 |
| Karl Spencer | 260 |
| Ian Johnson | 260 |
| Anthony Wyper | 258 |
| Mike Tomkinson | 257 |
| Stewart Smith | 257 |

It was this group of racers that had dominated the heats with a total of 18 heat wins between them, both Matthew Bennett and Mike Tomkinson had won all four of their races with Ben Harding and Stewart Smith collecting three wins each, so discounting the FTD point which went to Ben Harding with his lap score of 90, a total of four racers could secure a maximum points haul.

These races provide some quality racing and how close it was, I was watching the monitor during the final and it was so close between the racers that a small mistake could drop you down by as much as four places at a time, just ask Mike Tomkinson and Karl Spencer, at the finish it was the reigning national points champion Ben Harding taking the win with an astonishing 89 laps, both second and third place finished with 87 laps, second place going to Anthony Wyper by a split time of 0.730 from Matthew Bennett in third, then we had an incredible four racers all finishing with 86 laps from fourth position down to seventh, in order along with their split time they were Ian Johnson (5.00.480) Stewart Smith (5.00.660) Karl Spencer (5.01.470) and Mike Tomkinson (5.01.580) these four were followed by the consolation race winner Clive Buckler in eighth position with 83.

| Name | F/Tyre In | R/Tyre Out | R/Tyre In | R/Tyre Out | G/Ratio | Speedo Type | Charger | Car Type | Chassi | Cells | Club | Grade | Qualif | Final |
|-----------------|-----------|------------|-----------|------------|---------|--------------|----------|-----------------|---------|-------|---------|--------|--------|-------|
| Ben Harding | Jap Med | 812 | Pink | Pink | 12/51 | Mard Mk.1 | Apex | Skint | Andert | 3300 | Rugby | Silver | 1 | 1 |
| Matthew Bennett | Jap Med | Jap Med | Pink | Pink | 12/50 | Mard 3 speed | Duratrax | Lecatt Pro | Lecatt | 3300 | Rugby | Red | 2 | 3 |
| Clive Buckler | Jap | Orange | SE | SE | 12/50 | Mard 3 speed | Quasar | Sminka | Andert | 1700 | Rugby | S/S | 8 | 8 |
| Ian Johnson | SE | Super 40 | Pink | Pink | 11/52 | Mard V12 | Apex | Bandit Pro Mk.2 | Mardave | 2000 | Hathern | S/S | 4 | 4 |
| Anthony Wyper | St | Jap 40 | Pink | Pink | 12/50 | Mard Mk.1 | Apex | Wipeout Pinky | Andert | 3300 | Urmston | S/S | 5 | 2 |
| Mike Tomkinson | SE | Jap Med | SE | Pink | 12/50 | Mard 2 speed | Apex | MTec Pinky | Andert | 3300 | Urmston | Blue | 6 | 7 |
| Karl Spencer | Jap | Super 40 | Pink | Pink | 12/50 | Mard 2 speed | Apex | Elite | Andert | 3300 | Rugby | S/S | 3 | 6 |
| Stewart Smith | Pink | Super 40 | Pink | Pink | 12/51 | Mard 3 speed | Apex | Self Build | Andert | 3300 | Urmston | S/S | 7 | 5 |

All of the finalist's received a trophy along with Angela Yarwood who received the Blue grade award as the highest blue grade racer as Mike Tomkinson had qualified for the final, her total lap's from the best three rounds was 248 which placed her in twelfth in the order of merit, the junior trophy went to Nicholas Cooper and his sister Kayleigh Cooper picked up the White grade award, best Yellow grade racer of the day was Alan Greig, and the concourse award was presented to Alan Hatcliffe, there was an extra trophy for the highest Urmston driver not in the final, the trophy went to Alan Bellis after he had finished in second place in the consolation race after qualifying in sixth place and moving up the order with his high finishing position from the consolation.

After four national rounds the top ten in the series currently looks like this.

| | |
|--------------------|------|
| 1. Ben Harding | 392 |
| 2. Karl Spencer | 384 |
| 3. Ian Johnson | 379 |
| 4. Matthew Bennett | 371 |
| 5. Anthony Wyper | 361 |
| 6. Mark Cooper | 324 |
| 7. Darren Grace | 314 |
| 8. Andrew Cox | 295 |
| 9. Jason Reed | 282 |
| 10. Dave Gwilliam | 280. |

Report prepared by Mark Cooper.