

Buttonwillow Race Weekend!



Ok, it's time once again to let you know how the weekend went.

We got to the track on Thursday with work to do on both Monte Carlo's and I also decided to race the Mazda too, which needed some prep work on it since it hadn't been driven since Oct of '07.

Both Monte's were ready early on Friday which gave Keith and myself some good track time. Keith was just trying to get used to the track configuration, not having run that one before and I was fighting getting the right gear selection, but by the end of the day we had it figured out. I did a couple of sessions in the Mazda to make sure everything was running ok. Once I was sure of that I decided to take Kent - my brother-in-law - for a ride around the track. After about fifteen minutes he had a grin from ear to ear!

The weather was kind and held out for us, with rain predicted to hit sometime on Saturday.

On Saturday it was going to be a long day running the Mazda in group 1 at 8.00am and my last race being in the Monte Carlo which was scheduled to start at 5.10pm.

Practice in the Mazda went well but after it ended we decided to re-jet the car as it was running hot. During qualifying the car started to produce a 'miss' and the SCCA had decided to combine the Pro-7's with the Mazda Miata's. Fortunately, I qualified on the

pole. During the race, I got out in front and kept swapping positions with the top Miata until the car developed that dreaded 'miss' again. I couldn't keep pace with the Miata and fell back. I finished 1st in the Pro-7 class and second overall in the race. On Sunday I was on the track at 7.45 am for qualifying and the track was cooler and still damp from the Saturday rainfall. The car was still missing but I qualified third overall and second with the Pro-7's with the hope of solving the 'missing' problem before the race. The Pro-7 race was right after the Group 6 qualifying so I had to jump out of the Monte Carlo and into the Mazda for the 40 minute race. The start went great and I took the lead into turn one but heading down the back straight the car started misfiring again and was actually worse than the day before and just kept getting worse as the race progressed. I was no competition for the top 2 Miata's but slowly pulled away from the rest of the Pro-7 group and finished first in that group and third overall in the race.

The Monte Carlo faired much better. For the morning practice I went out on some really used tires, track time is important so you just need to get out there. Qualifying is a different ball game so I put on the sticker tires knowing I had to go for it. I was held up by a couple of other cars and after 3 laps decided to do one more before coming back in and it was that fourth lap that got me the pole for the race. The schedule was running behind and the race was due to start at around 5.40 pm. At about 5.20 it started to rain and didn't stop until the start of the race. About 5 cars pulled out and 2 others put on rain tires. As an ASC car I had to stay on slicks. Luckily, with being on pole, I didn't get the spray from the other cars before the start. At the start, the Viper, who was on street tires, passed everyone pushing me into second place. The rest of the group tip toed around the track doing their best to stay on it. I held onto

the second spot until about 3 quarters of the way in when the other car on rain tires passed me. At the end of the race I was 1st in the ASC group and 3rd overall.

For Sunday, it was a new day, no clouds and a slight breeze and a great day for racing.

It would be another busy day with the Mazda race right after the Monte Carlo qualifying. I went out and did three laps in qualifying taking the third position for the race, which was 2nd in the ASC class. At the start of the race the pole sitter in an ASU car checked out and I filed into third. During the race I was running fourth in the group and second in my class. With four laps to go I went for the pass for third place at the end of the front straight. I went in a little hot and spun which allowed the ASC of Robert Davis to take back his position and hold a nice lead that I couldn't get back. The outcome was that I finished fourth in the race and second in the ASC class, with Robert taking 1st place.

In all it was a great weekend with lessons learned and now looking forward to doing it all again at Willow Springs in April.

Keith's day on Saturday was a good one. He went out to practice on Hoosier tires which came with the new chassis he bought but were not allowed in the ASC class, they use the Goodyear tires, so they just needed to be used. For qualifying he put on the Goodyear boots and qualified 13th overall in the group. For the race he decided to stay out even though he had a problem seeing through the windshield due to the wet weather conditions. Good thing he did too, after a little slipping and sliding he finished 2nd in the ASC class and 6th overall - his best finish to date.

On Sunday he was starting to get the flu and feeling a little under the weather, so qualifying wasn't too good. Plus we forgot to fill his car with gas and he was having a pick up problem in the fuel

tank. It was only picking up fuel to half the tank so we had to fill him up every time he came in. On his fast lap he ran out just before finishing the lap and ended up in 14th place. By race time he was feeling worse but decided to go out and just have fun, but when the green flag dropped, the adrenalin started pumping and his plans changed. He started moving up but lost control just before Cotton Corners and the next car back ended up hitting him. The car had minimal damage and Keith kept on racing, finishing 12th overall and 6th in the ASC class.

It was a good and exciting weekend for the team and now it's back to business to get ready for Willow Springs on the weekend of April 5th & 6th. And Keith being the man that he is likes to give me extra work to get things ready.....

And I would like to give a shout out to Robert Davis for putting on a great barbecue on Saturday night.

Cheers!



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