

The Lubricant Consultancy Mk2 Golf GTI Championship 2011.

Rounds 7 & 8.

Oulton Park International – 2nd July.

The MK2 Golf GTI Championship title race couldn't be closer after an eventful meeting at MSVR's Blast in the Park on July 2.

Lewis Hopkins proved to be unbeatable around the 2.6-mile Cheshire circuit but a strong performance from Cadwell Park winner James Bark has reduced Guy Stevens' championship lead to a point.

Qualifying

Hopkins' perfect weekend started in qualifying as he secured pole position from Bark by half a second. Mike Thurston was third fastest and he was joined on row two by Jamie Martin. In Class 1, Clive Belton set the pace posting a time almost a second quicker than nearest rival Andy Holley. Stevens was fourth fastest in class and lined up 18th on a bumper grid.

Race 1 (Based on fastest qualifying lap) :

Class 1

Pole : Clive Belton.

2nd Andy Holley.

3rd Alex Harris.

4th Guy Stevens.

5th Antony Theaker.

Class 2

Pole : Lewis Hopkins.

2nd James Bark.

3rd Mike Thurston.

4th Jamie Martin.

5th John Mawdsley.

Race 2 (Based on second fastest qualifying lap) :

Class 1

Pole : Andy Holley.

2nd Alex Harris.

3rd Clive Belton.

4th Guy Stevens.

5th Antony Theaker.

Class 2

Pole : Lewis Hopkins.

2nd James Bark.

3rd Mike Thurston.

4th Jamie Martin.

5th James Colbourne.

Race 1

Lewis Hopkins held off a charge from championship contender James Bark to claim the top step of the podium in race one.

Hopkins, who grabbed the all important pole position in qualifying, failed to make his advantage count and was passed by Bark on the opening lap. The pair were closely followed by Jamie Martin in third.

However, Hopkins continued to pile the pressure on leader and Bark eventually cracked on lap four, when the Winchester man exploited a gap to take the lead. The race turned into a battle of wills between the lead duo with the gap between them remaining at half a second.

In the end, Hopkins held his nerve to claim crucial championship points with a deserved win. Pole sitter Bark was forced to settle for second spot with Jamie Martin in third.

In class 1, Clive Belton claimed the top honours, finishing just a second in front of Alex Harris. Andy Holley competing in his first season in the championship secured the final spot on the podium.

Race 1 Overall results :

- 1st Lewis Hopkins (Class 2 Winner).
- 2nd James Bark.
- 3rd Jamie Martin.
- 4th James Colbourne.
- 5th John Mawdsley.

Class 1 results :

- 1st Clive Belton.
- 2nd Alex Harris.
- 3rd Andy Holley.

Class 2 results :

- 1st Lewis Hopkins.
- 2nd James Bark.
- 3rd Jamie Martin.

Race 2

Lewis Hopkins rounded off MSVR's Blast in the Park by winning his second race of the afternoon in the MK2 Golf GTI Championship.

The opening lap saw Hopkins and James Bark swap places for the lead with the former crossing the line in the lead heading into lap two. Mike Thurston briefly held third but he was forced into the pits with mechanical difficulties and subsequently retired. Overall championship leader Guy Stevens led the charge in class 1, but he was kept honest by Alex Harris and Andy Holley.

With Thurston forced into retirement, Jamie Martin moved into third position with John Mawdsley close on his tail. But the battle for the lead of the race was edging in the favour of Hopkins, as he opened up a three second lead by the end of lap six. Hopkins kept edging away from Bark, crossing the finish line a full 5.8 seconds in front of the Alford racer. Jamie Martin clinched the final place on the podium.

Class 1 honours went to Stevens after holding off Harris, who was just two tenths of a second behind at the flag. Andy Holley's finished his weekend off on a positive note with a third in class.

Qualifying and race results are posted on this site under 'Race Information' then 'Overall Results 2011'. More detailed information is available from the TSL website (www.tsl-timing.com).

Race 2 Overall results :

- 1st Lewis Hopkins (Class 2 Winner).
- 2nd James Bark.
- 3rd Jamie Martin.
- 4th John Mawdsley.
- 5th Pete Milne.

Class 1 results :

1st Guy Stevens.
2nd Alex Harris.
3rd Andy Holley.

Class 2 results :

1st Lewis Hopkins.
2nd James Bark.
3rd Jamie Martin.