

## Mackay's Sunshine Delight

In glorious sunshine, Johnnie Mackay and Gordon Reid (Suzuki Alto) took victory on round 3 of the 2018 Junior 1000 Ecosse Challenge – the Granite City Stages at Leuchars on Saturday 26<sup>th</sup> June. Such is the nature of the 2018 Championship in 2018 that 3 different teams filled the podium compared to the last round at Kames on 22<sup>nd</sup> April. But it was not a straight forward victory for Mackay. He had to battle hard to get to the front on stage 7 and then hold the position. After 4 stages out of 11, he was lying 3<sup>rd</sup> – 2 seconds behind Lewis Haining/George Myatt (Skoda Citigo) and 11 seconds behind the leaders Andrew Blackwood/ Tom Middlemiss (Citroen C1). Blackwood was pleasantly surprised with his pace over the first 4 stages with stand in co-driver Tom Middlemiss but disaster hit on stage 7 when the gearbox gave out during the stage. Unfortunately a common failing on the Citroen C1. After missing stage 8 and getting a 30 minutes penalty, it was a dejected Blackwood who was towed back into service – game over? But no, several other crews gathered round and a spare gearbox was dug out. At that point, it was announced that there would be an extra 30 minutes delay to the start of stage 8 – the word in the huddle of helpers was – “Can we do it – of course we can” – and 4 or 5 people got stuck into the wee C1 to pull out the damaged box and fit the new one. And they did. As the last of the Junior cars cleared the control to go out to stage 8 after the delay, the red C1 was push started in the service – because for some reason the car wouldn't start on the key – and joined the queue for the stage. Final shout from the “repair team” - “Don't switch off or stall it!!” Blackwood was now in last place but he completed the final 3 stages to the delight of everybody. The true spirit of Junior 1000 was really on display.

But back to the story. Mackay was equal with Blackwood going into stage 7 and came out of that stage 7 seconds in front of new second placed crew of Ollie Hunter/Tom Hynd (Peugeot 107) who were 3 seconds up on third placed driver Haining. The top 3 positions remained unchanged over stages 8, 9 and 10 with Mackay going into the last stage with a 10 second lead over Hunter who had a 5 second lead over Haining. And Haining found something over that final 5.3 miles – he had been saying that he could not get into a rhythm in the stages all day but clearly did on the last stage – to pull back the 5 seconds from Hunter to end up on the same time. The tie breaker was the time over the first stage and Haining had been quickest so took the second place. But what a battle.

So, we have had 3 different winners over the first 3 rounds.

And there were other great results further down. First time Junior driver and “guest” (and first rally for the car) from the Southern Championship, Archie Swinscoe/Jim Brindle (Skoda Citigo), took themselves home in 4<sup>th</sup> place overall proving that this is going to be another famous Swinscoe (son of Paula) name to watch in the future.

And taking her biggest haul of points in the Championship ever was Amy McCubbin with Jane Nicol co-driving in their Skoda Citigo. They finished 5<sup>th</sup> overall but 4<sup>th</sup> registered J1000 competitor. But it didn't start well when a “wee off” on the first stage saw the Citigo needing some patchwork repairs to the front and a change of radiator.

Then came the first of the Pre 2003 competitors led by Fraser Anderson/Ian McRae (Micra) in 6<sup>th</sup>, Cameron Davidson/Steven Brown (Micra) in 7<sup>th</sup>, Jack Hall/Robin Nicolson (Micra) in 8<sup>th</sup>, Aaron Webster/Colin Baxter (Micra) in 10<sup>th</sup> and Erica Winning/Mark Runciman (Micra) in 11<sup>th</sup>. The long fast sections did not favour the Micras but there was no doubting the fun involved. Anderson gave the photographers a good pose on one sweeping left hander with Ian McRae suspended much higher than usual in the left hand seat and 2 wheels showing a lot of air. Hall removed most of his exhaust after stage 4 when the excitement of finishing the stage saw him take to the grass and over a large kerb. The ever ingenious service crew did find a way of joining together the bits that were left to make the noise level acceptable.

Alice Paterson/Ian Crosbie (Peugeot 107) came home in 9<sup>th</sup> after dropping about 2 minutes in stage 5.

Peter Beaton (the winner from round 2) broke a brand new drive shaft on the start line of stage 2 and got a 30 minute penalty for missing stage 3. So he was left with a “testing” day.

This event was the first in the series of 4 events for Novices and the winner was third placed Ollie Hunter.

But 13 started and 13 recorded finishes. So an excellent showing once again from the young drivers and their experienced co-drivers.



Ollie Hunter/Tom Hynd; Johnnie Mackay/Gordon Reid; Lewis Haining/George Myatt



First



Second



Third



Many hands make gearbox change in time!!