

Classic FF1600 2018 Preview – Silverstone GP Rounds 3/4 Sunday 13th May 2018

The 2018 Classic FF1600 Season continues at Silverstone next Sunday with a Double Header on the GP Circuit.

Leading the way so far in Class A are Mark Armstrong and Mike Gardner. Mark is a senior Instructor at Silverstone and a winner of the final round of the 2017 Championship at Brands Hatch. Mike is sure to feature strongly having won the second race at Silverstone in March as well as the opening round of the Heritage FF1600 series at Donington where he defeated a field consisting mostly of more modern Post 93 FF1600s in his 1979 Crossle 32F.

Fresh from racing in New Zealand Rick Morris returns in his Royale RP26. He is one of a tiny number of people to have beaten Ayrton Senna in a straight fight in FF1600 and was right at the front of the racing in the opening rounds in March.

Another Legend of FF1600 John Village returns in a Crossle 25F. John was EFDA Townsend Thoresen Euroseries Formula Ford 1600 Champion in 1979 and remains among the fastest Classic FF1600 Drivers.

Historic Race Car Preparation Expert and previous winner in Classic FF1600 Simon Hadfield is making a return to Classic FF1600, this time in a Titan Mk4. He is very well known at the highest levels of Historic Racing with wins at Goodwood and Monaco and many other top events. His son James is also racing in an all black “stealth” Hawke DL2B. Another veteran of Historic F1 John Evans will be driving a Simon Hadfield Motorsport run Royale RP24.

It is great to see Ben Tinkler back on the track in his smart red Van Diemen RF80. He starred at the front of the snappily named “Non Historic Formula Ford Consolation Race” at the Walter Hayes Trophy in November – starting on pole and finishing a close second in a slightly newer Reynard. Ben unfortunately suffered car damage when he was caught up in an incident in the first round at Silverstone but has used his skills as an Engineer to fabricate the parts required to put his car back on the track.

Look out for young Charger Tom Brown in a Van Diemen RF79. At the Donington Heritage FF1600 Races he had to start from the Pitlane but still passed over 10 cars in a hectic opening lap ! As with Ben Tinkler a debut Classic FF1600 win cannot be too far away ?

BOSS and F1 Preparation Expert Kevin Mansell has been very competitive for a number of years in his Crossle 32F. He is joined this time by his son Scott Mansell who holds the outright Lap Record at Brands Hatch (a ballistic 38.032 seconds) driving a Benetton in the 2004 BOSS Series which he eventually won.

Class B is being lead by former HSCC FF1600 Front Runner Benn Tilley. Benn made his race debut with us before becoming one of the leading Drivers in the Historic FF1600 Championship and he started this season with an outright race win on the Silverstone National Circuit in March. In Class B Benn faces Stuart Kestenbaum, a multiple Championship Winner and another tough Competitor now in a Crossle 16F fresh from a very strong showing in the Historic FF1600 race at Donington where he ran in the leading pack posting extremely quick lap times.

We are very pleased to see Dave Lowe back with us racing again in 2018 for his 47th season! Dave has just celebrated his 79th Birthday and has been racing in FF1600 continuously since 1971. He has a beautifully prepared Lotus 69. Dave has been Class B Champion a record 13 times !

Also in Class B look out for Stephen Greenwood in a very rare car indeed – a Beattie which he has also raced in Historic FF1600.

Steve Pearce has been racing for Decades in Classic FF1600 and is a very good Driver who produces great performances. He is also an invaluable source of advice to those of us helping to run the Classic FF1600 Club due to the sheer amount of experience he has. Another Driver who makes a massive contribution to the running of our Club is Ian Jeary who is driving his Elden Mk8. Ian is an expert in creating liveries using his Vinyl wrapping skills and is well known for experimenting with Retro Designs paying tribute to F1 cars of the past. Another car in a distinctive livery is the Marlboro style Crossle 32F of Phil Attwood who also is a Veteran Competitive Swimmer racing all over Europe.

Welcome back to fellow Elden Driver Kevin Howell who makes a return to the Championship today, Robin Haslam in his Alexis, Mark Harrison in his Lola and Terry Durdin in his Crossle 25F. Terry's son Bradley has been very successful in RallyCross recently but Terry will be looking to remain in the black stuff !

Former FF2000 Driver Peter Chippendale brings a wealth of experience and is sure to feature strongly. Paul Crosbie is racing the Van Diemen RF80 with which his son Doug won at Cadwell Park in 2017 – no pressure there then Paul !

Tim Saunders started racing just last year and has made rapid progress already, Tim's Brother Mike Saunders has been a regular runner in Class B in his Hawke DL11 for a number of years now and is back having missed the opening rounds of this season. David Roark is driving the family Van Diemen RF78 also used by his son Tom Roark, and Andrew Bartosiak returns in his Royale RP26 after technical problems unfortunately sidelined him at the first meeting.

We have two Novice Drivers having their second race meeting with us today. Richard Yeomans spends his working life piloting Private Jets but this weekend races his Crossle 25F. Welcome also to Martin Whitlock (PRS RH02). It is great to see new Drivers joining the Championship which is well known as being welcoming to newcomers.

Making a return in 2018 after an absence of around 10 years is Alan Williamson who ran with us back then in the same Van Diemen RF81 that he is in this weekend. Alan has been racing in Europe extensively so he has kept his hand in ! Another Driver we are delighted to see return after a few seasons absence is Alan Fincham from Norfolk in his Van Diemen RF80. Alan is based in Attleborough very close to the site of the original Van Diemen Factory.

All the above have to face the returning reigning Class A Champion Brazilian Adriano Medeiros in his distinctive Jesus Saves liveried Van Diemen. Adriano works as a Professional Race Driving Instructor and has also driven for Top Gear Live in the past. He has won the Class A Championship 3 times since 2013 and is especially good at making a decisive break over the opening lap of the race so the other front runners will have watch out for that.