



## 250GPACU National Championship & NG Cup

### Race report - Rounds 1 & 2 Brands Hatch Indy



### **Solid start to championship campaign for Hodson as Vines bags first podium!**

It was a dark and stormy night. Well – actually, it wasn't but it was definitely a slightly chilly and breezy day on Saturday. Still, you're not here for a weather report, you're here because the weekend of 14/15 March at Brands Hatch was the start of the NG racing season. And whilst the sun wasn't exactly shining and Clarkson wasn't in his idea of heaven, all was right with the world.

The 250 GP ACU national Championship got underway on Saturday. A tight fought qualifying saw the top 8 riders within a second of each other. Several riders commented that the track surface was very cold, resulting in bikes coming back from the track with tyres colder than they were when they came out of the heaters. As a result of this, the fifteen lap race was reduced to fourteen, with a two lap warm-up.

Declans Racing rider Phil Atkinson took pole position for the race, sharing the front row with Darrell Higgins and championship new comer Matthew Truelove. Ant Hodson came from the second row to lead at the end of lap one, but was shortly overtaken by Atkinson, who went on to take the top podium place. Matthew Truelove had a great time, coming home in third place and in the process setting a new NG Cup class track record in 50.67 seconds. Nice one.



A bit further down the field, Darrell Higgins and Dave Hampton squabbled for a couple of laps, swapping places several times before Hampton finally settled the dispute leaving Higgins to confirm fifth place. Rich Grinling rode a steady race, slipping back into sixth place and staying there until the end. Rhys Hardisty made steady progress from tenth on the grid to end up in seventh place.



Simon Hunt, Tom Barrett, Steven Howard and Tony Russell were all unfortunate enough to be lapped, but all came across the line in good order. Which only leaves those who didn't. Dan Jackson threw the plot at the landscape, (and a couple of marshals...) on the first lap, heading down towards Graham Hill bend. Late braking seemed to be the cause. Paul Metcalf came a cropper around McLaren curve, and Gary Vines had the misfortune to change down one gear too many and momentarily locked up the rear wheel. Not a good idea.

Sunday was definitely wet! And the track surface predominately slippery. As a consequence, delays meant that several races were cut in distance, the 250 GP being over 10 laps, not the scheduled 18. FCL Racings Ant Hodson built a good lead over the scrapping Gary Vines, Phil Atkinson and Dave Hampton. Vines and Hampton managed to drop Atkinson a little and carried on a private argument to the flag. Rich Grinling circulated steadily to claim fifth place. As did Rhys Hardisty, arriving at the line in sixth.

Caution was the order of the day though as the track was reported as “an ice rink”, with Simon Hunt, Stephen Howard and Tony Russell taking it commendably to the end.

Gary Vines was well pleased with his first National podium place and for his efforts won the performance of the meeting award earning him a nice new front tyre courtesy of Dennis Trollope Racing. So. Cadwell anyone?



Matthew Truelove enjoying his first ride out in the National championship.

### **Championship standings after rounds 1 & 2: National Championship:**

<b>1</b>	Ant Hodson	45
<b>2</b>	Phil Atkinson	38
<b>3</b>	Dave Hampton	29
<b>4</b>	Rich Grinling	21
<b>5</b>	Gary Vines	20

### **NG Cup Championship:**

<b>1</b>	Rhys Hardisty	45
<b>2</b>	Steven Howard	36
<b>3</b>	Matthew Truelove	25

Next meeting:

**Rounds 3 & 4: Cadwell Park  
11 & 12 April 2015**

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