

TELEGRAPH

SPORT

SALOON CAR RACING

SALOON CHAMP!

Haverfordwest's Martin Davies has clinched the 1994 Welsh Racing Drivers Association Welsh Sports and Saloon Championship after another exciting race at Pembrey on Saturday.

Davies showed considerable nous to settle for a championship winning second place behind race winner Dave Jarman after pushing the Gloucester man into a very close contest.

Davies also had to fend off a challenge from Treorchy's Alvin Powell, which led to some panel bending contact, much to Davies' disgust.

"He ought to know better — he tried to push me off the track! I wasn't going to take that so I had to fight back!" said Davies.

The frantic action was briefly interrupted on lap 3 when visiting driver Julian Belcher launched himself into a car-wrecking barrel roll after clipping the kerb on the exit to Brooklands.

At the restart Jarman again forced his Datsun into the lead with the Cosworths of

Davies and Powell again giving him some very close attention.

After locking rear brakes pitched Powell into the Hatchetts tyre wall, Davies continued to harrass Jarman on his own and they traded fastest laps, with Davies eventually setting the fastest time, but as his main championship rivals began to fall by the wayside, Davies knew he only had to maintain his place to take the title, and although some risky overtaking opportunities arose as the race came to an end, good sense prevailed to reward the Haverfordwest man with another prestigious title.

"I could see there were some risky opportunities to overtake and I wanted to try because I haven't had an outright victory this year, but the championship was too important to lose at this stage."

Now Davies only has to score well in the final race this weekend to take a hat-trick of class wins to go with the championship.

Asked to review this win against his other success,

Martin said: "I feel great! This ranks right at the top of the tree along with the Welsh Tarmac title.

"Racing is very different to rallying because no two races are the same — sometimes nothing much happens — and then you get a cracking race like today. Racing requires different skills, it's more intense than rallying with particular strains on the engine which is working hard all the time. You need to balance pace and endurance, where I have always maintained rallying is more psychological.

"If you set a fast time early on it can set a pattern for the rest of the day. You can lose a second and claw it back but you only see the results at the end of the stage. In racing you get two bites with practice and the race but you can't afford to drop a second and you only need to look around to see how you are doing."

Plans for 1995 include more development for the new car. "There is a lot more to come," said Davies confidently.



MARTIN DAVIES: Streets ahead of the competition in his Sierra Cosworth.

(Picture: Steve Jones.)

ATHLETICS

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MOTOR SPORT

Fourteen young athletes from Preseli Harrier and their coach spent a busy weekend in Wrexham recently when they competed in the Welsh Combined Events Championship.

The penultimate round of the Welsh Sports and Saloon Car Championship will take place tomorrow at Pembrey and Martin Davies of Haverfordwest has a slender lead in his Turbo Cosworth Sapphire over the Escort RS2000 of Nigel James, Lampeter. The final meeting is also at Pembrey over the weekend of September 24/25.