

Reece's mini days are over

SATURDAY'S race at Oulton Park in Cheshire will mark the end of an era for Caerphilly driver Barry Reece when he has his last race in the Mini he bought for £500 in 1968.

Twelve years hard work and many pounds later all that remains of that car are the original ball-race rear wheel bearings.

Reece said of the car he drove to the 1980 Special Saloon Championship, "Those wheel bearings have been fantastic, other people change theirs after every race."

After the sale of the Mini, Reece will take delivery of a new Talbot Imp chassis and after a lot of hard work he and his brother, Phil, hope to have the car ready in September.

Currently, the Imps are two or three seconds a lap slower than Reece's Mini at most tracks but he explained, "The Mini has reached the end of its development. I like a challenge and I'm convinced the Imp can be developed into a winner."

End of an era?

SATURDAYS race at Oulton Park could have been the end of an era for Caerphilly's Barry Reece when he ran his last race in the Mini he bought for £500 in 1968. All that remains of the car are the original ball-race wheel bearings. Barry says of the car he drove to the 1980 BARC 850 cc Special Saloon Championship, "those wheel bearings have been fantastic, most people change theirs after every race."

Following the sale of the Mini Barry will take delivery of a new Maguire spaceframe Talbot Imp chassis and hopes he and his brother Phil will be able to finish it by September. Currently the 850 cc Imps are 2 or 3 seconds slower than Barry's Mini at most tracks, but he explains "The Mini has reached the end of its development and I'm convinced the Imp can be developed into a winner".

Barry is branch manager for the Chepstow forklift hire firm, Greenham Plant, and will carry their colours on the new car.

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Gwent drivers out of luck

Disappointment continued to plague Gwent racing drivers when Nigel Rees, Barry Reece, and Robert Allender competed at Mallory Park.

Last week it was John Morgan who suffered. This week Rees, who must have been pleased with his recent sprint success, was the first to suffer. After only half a lap of practice he was forced to retire when a cambelt failure caused serious damage to his engine.

Reece had his problems too, and for most of the practice session he found his car jumping out of gear. With that problem solved things began to look better as he began to carve his way up the field in the race. He had just disposed of his main class rival and was drawing away relentlessly when the engine let out a big bang signifying exhaust valve failure.

Allender qualified for the hotly competitive production saloon race only to be prevented from taking his rightful position after it was found that there were too many cars lined up on the grid.

Reece record race

CASTLE COMBE'S two-year planning extension was celebrated by a mini invasion of racing drivers from the Gwent area.

Best practice performance came from Barry Reece, of Caerphilly, who shrugged off his recent run of engine problems to lap consistently under the lap record.

Also well up were Formula Ford drivers David Llewellyn of Bargoed and Mike Davis of Croespenmaen, although Mike North of Chepstow did not make the grid and was posted as reserve.

Racing began with a creditable performance from newcomer David Marsh of Caldicot, who drove his road registered Morris Minor to the finish from a low grid position in the classic saloon race.

David Llewellyn lost his fifth position in the Earl of Chippenham Formula Ford championship despite a sterling effort.

Both he and Mike Davis were unable to capitalise on their grid positions, Llewellyn becoming embroiled in a four car dice from which he was unable to escape.

As a result he was demoted by his closest rival and is now two points behind. Similarly, Davis could not get on terms with the drivers in front and finished in 16th place.

It was the Caerphilly pair of Bob Hemmings and Reece who provided the fireworks in the Special Saloon race. Hemmings, in his one litre Mini and Reece in his familiar 850cc example.

Both drivers held nothing back as they dived for fourth and fifth places in

the early stages. As the race progressed Reece dropped back as one of the larger capacity cars became involved in their private dice.

Hemmings refused to be put off and harried the Ford Escort of the interloper without mercy and even managed to pull in front in a daring piece of driving on the run in to the flag.

However, this was not enough and the superior horsepower of the larger car demoted Hemmings to fifth overall, although he was third in his class.

Reece finished in sixth overall and first in his class and, after showing record-breaking form in practice, he pulverised the lap record in the race and left it at a staggering 73.3sec which is 1½ seconds under the record.

Walkover win for Reece

BARRY REECE, of Caerphilly, scored a walkover victory in the 850cc class of the Wendy Wools Special Saloon race at Oulton Park at the weekend to give his Mini a fine send off.

Whether it was the Saturday date or his formidable reputation that caused the shortage of entries is not known, but by the end of the race many of the larger capacity cars in the twenty strong field were wishing Reece had stayed home too.

For, despite being conscious of the need to avoid damage to the car, he mastered the difficult track and treacherous conditions in practice to claim a place on the fourth row of the grid.

The weather improved for the race but the trees that are a feature of the track served to make things even more difficult by leaving large wet patches on the surface.

Reece, finished the race in a fine sixth place overall after disposing of a few more of his larger rivals, who must all be worried in case his new car