

Guards Trophy Championship

Round 5 – Oulton Park Gold Cup – 25/26th July 2025

Qualifying:

The Guards Trophy made a welcome return to the picturesque circuit of Oulton Park for the Gold Cup, celebrating sixty years of local manufacturer Chevron, after a brief hiatus from the event in recent years.

Continuing with their qualifying dominance, Ben and Robert Tusting took their fourth pole of the season in the Lenham P69 Spider despite the use of only three fully functioning gears! Lining up beside them and looking to defend his Gold Cup win from 2022, came the first of the Chevrons with Steve Nuttall's road-turned-race car B8.

Despite a loose oil union, Westie Mitchell and Sam Mitchell (Chevron B8) posted a 1:50.259 on their third and final lap of qualifying to start in third. Ted Pearson and Callum Grant (Chevron B8) took fourth spot on the grid, with Dan Pickett and Dan Eagling (Chevron B16) qualifying in fifth after suffering with a misfire costing them three seconds a lap on average.

In sixth was Dan Balfour (Chevron B8), followed by Scottish father and son duo Russell and Elliott Paterson in their Ginetta G16. After his dominant and recent win at Brands Hatch, Andrew Hibberd placed his Lotus 23B eighth on the grid, followed by Hugh and Mark Colman in their black Chevron B8. The McLaren M1A returned to the grid in the hands of Andrew Wareing and Adam Sykes to round out the top ten.

The highest qualifying GT car was driven by Alistair Dyson (Jaguar E-type) in fifteenth overall; however, after sustaining damage from a touch with the barriers, Dyson unfortunately had to withdraw from the race. This promoted Katsu Kubota and Andrew Middlehurst (Lotus 26R Elan) as the highest-placed GT car, qualifying in nineteenth but starting eighteenth.



Race:

As the cars rolled off the start, Steve Nuttall powered down the straight to Old Hall to take the lead from Robert Tusting on the outside to lead by almost three seconds by the end of the first lap. Sam Mitchell then set his eyes on the Lenham, overtaking Tusting on lap two; once past the Lenham, Mitchell immediately began his hunt for Nuttall, putting in three fastest laps in a row. In response, Nuttall upped his pace to stay clear of the 2024 Goodwood Surtees Trophy-winning Chevron B8.

Further back, '70s and Historic Road Sports race winner, Elliott Paterson, pressured Dan Pickett for seventh before Pickett spun at Knickerbrook, falling down seven places to fourteenth, and allowing Paterson through, who then overtook Andrew Hibberd for sixth on the same lap.



By lap seven, Nuttall's response to Mitchell's charge kept him 4.5 seconds clear; however, an electrical plug to coil failure on lap eight meant that Nuttall's race sadly ended prematurely near Cascades. As Mitchell inherited the lead, a battle for third ensued between Tusting and Dan Balfour, with Ted Pearson and Elliott Paterson close on the sidelines waiting to capitalise on any errors made. The leader of the pack, Robert Tusting, however, left the other three to battle amongst themselves, timing his entry into the pits to perfection, entering just as the pit window opened to complete the precise 71.9-second, line-to-line minimum pit time and to hand over to son Ben. Whilst Tusting pitted, Paterson overtook Pearson for third, creating over a one-second gap between the two by the end of the lap, and then began chasing down Balfour and succeeding with his quest on lap thirteen.

A lap later, racing was neutralised as the safety car came out due to Nick Thompson (Chevron B6) going into the gravel at Druids Corner whilst overtaking his son Chris (MGB). Once out of the gravel, Nick Thompson made his way back to the pits under his own steam, whilst twelve drivers took the opportunity to conduct their pit stops during the safety car period to minimise lost time.

Racing resumed at the end of lap seventeen as the safety car pulled back into the pits. With a bunched-up grid, Westie Mitchell, who replaced his son Sam in the leading Chevron B8, tried to pull clear of the pack to keep his lead. However, Ben Tusting and Dan Balfour had other ideas!



As the drivers began their eighteenth lap, Tusting tried to make a move on Mitchell, coming up the inside of the B8 at The Avenue and Dentons whilst, unbeknownst to Tusting, Balfour came up the inside of him at Cascades. Ultimately, Tusting came out in the lead, with Balfour in second and Mitchell in third. Callum Grant, meanwhile, had made his way through the back markers, catching Mitchell later in the lap to claim third.

Just outside the podium positions, Dan Eagling, having taken over from Pickett, made up an impressive six places on lap nineteen to find himself in sixth. Not satisfied with sixth position though, Eagling went on an almighty charge, cutting the gap from 6 seconds at the start of lap twenty-one to 1.3 seconds by the end of it! By the first sector of lap twenty-two, Eagling joined Andrew Hibberd and Mitchell in the battle for fourth, coming up the side of Hibberd at Lakeside to take fifth and Mitchell in the latter part of the circuit for fourth.



Out in front, all seemed comfortable for the front three until Callum Grant's late charge, closing in on Dan Balfour by a second a lap on average, and then snatched second under braking at Old Hall as the final lap commenced.

As the twenty-fourth and final lap came to an end, Ben Tusting crossed the line to win the Gold Cup Guards Trophy (alongside his father Robert), making the Lenham P69 Spider the first non-Chevron car to win at the Gold Cup since 2012. Callum Grant crossed the line in second, adding to his double win in Formula Junior, alongside Ted Pearson, with Dan Balfour in third.



Dan Eagling came home in fourth to give him and Dan Pickett the SRC class win, whilst Andrew Hibberd finished in fifth to win the SRA class. Westie and Sam Mitchell finished in sixth as Hugh Colman just managed to hold off Joel Hopwood as the two almost crossed the line in parallel for seventh. Ashley Hudson came home in ninth and, rounding out the top ten, Andrew Wareing and Adam Sykes maintained their qualifying position to give the McLaren M1A an SRD class win.

In the GT classes, the pairing of Katsu Kubota and Andrew Middlehurst won the GTA class, coming home in fourteenth. Chris Thompson and Ben Tilley took the GTB class win, finishing twentieth overall.

Next up, HSCC Finals at Silverstone, where the Guards championship will conclude on 11th - 12th October for the 2025 season.



Full race result:

POS	NO	CL	PIC	NAME	ENTRY	LAPS	TIME	GAP	DIFF	MPH	BEST	ON	GRD	↓
1	31	SRB	1	TUSTING R / TUSTING B	Lenham P69 Spider	24	51:51.985			74.74	1:48.270	12	1	0
2	27	SRB	2	PEARSON / GRANT	Chevron B8	24	51:54.837	2.852	2.852	74.67	1:49.754	22	4	2
3	86	SRB	3	Dan BALFOUR	Chevron B8	24	51:56.311	4.326	1.474	74.63	1:51.168	21	6	3
4	72	SRC	1	PICKETT / EAGLING	Chevron B16	24	52:08.336	16.351	12.025	74.34	1:49.454	21	5	1
5	25	SRA	1	Andrew HIBBERD	Lotus 23B	24	52:16.658	24.673	8.322	74.15	1:52.868	11	8	3
6	95	SRB	4	MITCHELL S / MITCHELL W	Chevron B8	24	52:16.803	24.818	0.145	74.14	1:50.494	4	3	-3
7	42	SRB	5	COLMAN M / COLMAN H	Chevron B8	24	52:59.744	1:07.759	42.941	73.14	1:53.680	7	9	2
8	19	SRB	6	Joel HOPWOOD	Chevron B8	24	52:59.962	1:07.977	0.218	73.14	1:55.662	11	12	4
9	35	SRA	2	Ashley HUDSON	Lotus 23B	24	53:08.704	1:16.719	8.742	72.94	1:57.414	3	13	4
10	97	SRD	1	WAREING / SYKES	McLaren M1A	24	53:13.943	1:21.958	5.239	72.82	1:52.853	12	10	0
11	75	SRB	7	PATERSON E / PATERSON R	Ginetta G16	24	53:14.275	1:22.290	0.332	72.81	1:50.804	11	7	-4
12	61	SRB	8	HAMILTON P / HAMILTON S	Lenham P70	24	53:33.826	1:41.841	19.551	72.37	1:56.066	10	16	4
13	64	SRA	3	Charles COOK	Merlyn Mk4A	23	52:50.622	1 Lap	1 Lap	70.30	1:59.752	20	20	7
14	70	GTA	1	KUBOTA / MIDDLEHURST	Lotus 26R Elan	23	53:15.532	1 Lap	24.910	69.75	2:01.001	9	19	5
15	66	SRB	9	DEROSI / WIDMER	Elva Mk7S	23	53:33.416	1 Lap	17.884	69.36	2:00.724	2	17	2
16	79	SRB	10	ELSTROP / BEATTY	Chevron B8	23	53:46.478	1 Lap	13.062	69.08	2:00.057	7	22	6
17	40*	GTA	2	Stephen REECE	Lotus Elan	22	51:58.228	2 Laps	1 Lap	68.37	2:04.947	22	21	4
18	104	SRA	4	RICHINGS / COX	Merlyn Mk4A	22	52:41.414	2 Laps	43.186	67.44	1:57.510	20	18	0
19	57	SRB	11	GOMM / BARTLETT	Chevron B8	22	53:17.588	2 Laps	36.174	66.67	1:58.323	8	14	-5
20	60	GTB	1	TILLEY / THOMPSON	MGB	21	52:10.494	3 Laps	1 Lap	65.01	2:09.296	3	23	3
21	29	GTA	3	STEVENS / McDONALD	Lotus Costin	21	53:52.225	3 Laps	1:41.731	62.96	2:08.116	19	24	3
NOT CLASSIFIED														
DNF	6	SRB		THOMPSON / MCCLURG	Chevron B6	18	47:06.422	6 Laps	3 Laps	61.71	1:56.308	12	11	
DNF	46	SRB		Steve NUTTALL	Chevron B8	7	13:00.519	17 Laps	11 Laps	86.91	1:50.066	5	2	
NOT STARTED														
NS	155	GTD		Alistair DYSON	Jaguar E-type								15	



Words by Ellie-May Taylor, photos by Motorsport Classic Media.