

20th May 2018

Thruxton

Power Maxed TAG Racing extends Championship lead

- Josh Cook wins again in dominant fashion
- Senna Proctor scores his second podium of the season

Senna Proctor – Car #18

Race 1. Grid 5. Result P7

Race 2. Grid 7. Result P6

Race 3. Grid 2. Result P3

Championship position. P8

Josh Cook – Car #66

Race 1. Grid 15. Result P9

Race 2. Grid 9. Result P1

Race 3. Grid 6. Result P6

Championship position. P2

Rounds 7, 8 and 9 of the Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship took place at the super-fast Thruxton circuit in Hampshire.

Confirming his pace from both free practice sessions, Senna qualified an excellent 5th for Race 1 – his best qualifying performance in his short BTCC career to date. Despite showing great pace in free practice, Josh qualified in a frustrated 15th, giving him a bit of work to do come Race 1.

In front of a near record and sun-drenched crowd, Senna's launch in race 1 was immediately compromised by the stalling Honda ahead. Being forced into avoiding action, the Power Maxed TAG Racing Vauxhall Astra had to swerve sharply, only to lose momentum and places on the run to the Complex. Undeterred, the young Yorkshireman fought manfully with the BMW of Jordan over P6, ultimately finishing in P7.

In the other Power Maxed TAG Racing Astra, team-mate Josh Cook made a flying start; exiting the ultra-high-speed Church corner to move ahead of the Collard driven BMW for P10 was a highlight, which was then trumped by sliding past the Honda of Smiley on the very last lap for a P9 finish.

That last place gained by Josh in Race 1 paid dividends in Race 2, as the Bath ace made another strong start to slot in behind his team-mate in P6 and P7 at the end of lap 1.

After moving ahead of Senna exiting the Complex, Josh latched straight onto the tail of the Fords of Chilton and Tordoff ahead. By lap 4, the two Power Maxed TAG Racing Astras were flying, lapping quicker than all other drivers in the 31-car field.

Once free of Chilton, Josh set his sights on Jordan, moving past at the chicane, only to be punted from the rear as the Astra turned in. Taking to the escape road, Josh stayed ahead and set off in pursuit of Tordoff, clearly the quickest car on the track, and by some margin.

Proctor had also found his way past his former team-mate into P6, a position he held to the end, setting 2nd fastest race lap, despite the late attention of Morgan's Mercedes.

At the front, and at his local circuit, Josh was burning up the gap to the BMW of leader Turkington. The only driver lapping in the 1minute 17 bracket as the race entered the closing stages, it was just a matter of time before Cook took the lead, although it still took a very well executed manoeuvre to take the lead between Church and the chicane.

With in-car temperatures approaching 50 degrees, Josh ultimately crossed the line 1.6 seconds ahead, setting fastest lap to take the lead of the Drivers' Championship.

The reverse grid of Race 3 saw Senna starting in P2 with Josh slightly behind P6, with 75kgs of success ballast.

The start saw Senna consolidate 2nd, using his speed to ensure he wasn't at risk from the baying pack behind, whilst Josh also had an assertive opening few laps moving into 5th. As the race entered its closing stages it became clear that Senna's comfortable 2nd place was coming under threat from the lighter Honda of Goff, who had earlier demoted Josh a place before the Championship leader also succumbed to Turkington, ultimately finishing in his starting position of 6th.

The closing few laps saw Senna consolidate his excellent showing with a strong podium finish; his second of the season, as the youngster matures rapidly into a consistent front runner.

Quotes:

Josh Cook, Power Maxed TAG Racing Vauxhall Astra #66 said: "That was really good fun. To win my first race at Donington Park was obviously enjoyable, but to do it from the middle of the pack like that was even better. It's the first time I've been round here this weekend without any weight in the car. The Astra was on rails at the front and we were really strong through Church, which allowed us to carry good momentum onto the back straight.

"That said, the rear was moving around quite a lot which caused plenty of big sideways moments! All credit to the Power Maxed TAG Racing guys – qualifying didn't quite go our way, but we knew we had the pace and when the points are available, we'll certainly take them."

Senna Proctor, Power Maxed TAG Racing Vauxhall Astra #18 said: "Saturday brought me my best qualifying position yet, and I can't help but be happy with my consistency throughout the weekend. Martin and the Power Maxed TAG Racing boys have put together a fantastic package for this year, and our results so far show that. Josh was absolutely on fire today, and between the two of us I think we've demonstrated the outright pace the car has. It's always nice to go home with some extra silverware, and it's the first time both of us have been on the podium at the same round. All in all, another good weekend."

Power Maxed TAG Racing Team Principal, Adam Weaver - "I can't be anything but delighted with the performance both the drivers and the team have put in over the weekend. We've proved beyond a doubt that our previous results were far from a fluke, and seeing the lead we're pulling out in both the Teams' and Manufacturers' standings is a real boost for all of us. It's a shame we couldn't go away leading the Drivers' standings and take the hat-trick, but with Josh only being one point off the top, I'm confident we can make that up at Oulton Park in a few weeks' time."

Power Maxed TAG Racing Technical Director, Martin Broadhurst - "Josh's second win in as many rounds just goes to show that the hard work the team have consistently put into the car has paid off. Despite the 75kg ballast he was carrying in Race 3, he drove his absolute socks off, and he fought well to hold his position consistently against the drivers carrying considerably less weight. From the

start of FP1, Senna was fast and put together a solid race weekend, culminating in a well-deserved podium in Race 3. Having both drivers on the podium within two races is something that shows both our intent and strength, and puts us in a great position moving forward through the season.”