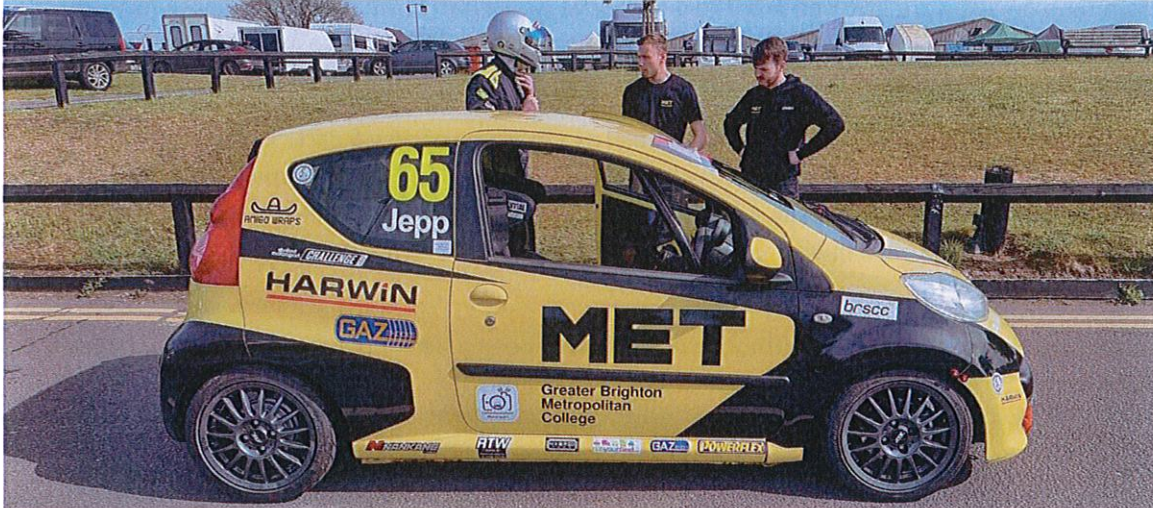


CityCar Cup - Rounds 3 & 4 – Snetterton

Race Weekend Review



After a frustrating start to the season at Oulton Park, it was great to be back for rounds 3 & 4, albeit with a newly built car.

The team (MET Motorsport) pulled everything out of the bag to source, strip and build a completely new car in just 4 weeks, all whilst the students within the team were taking end of year exams and finalising coursework. I really can't thank them enough for the hard work that went in to getting us on the grid at Snetterton.

Arriving to the buzz of a live racetrack must be one of the greatest feelings. With the sound of screaming engines and squealing tyres, to the smell of hot brakes and engine oil, it really does make the hairs on the back of my neck stand up.

There was a huge amount of Caterham's at the circuit as this was one of their largest events of the year. This brought with it a large crowd which is always a great thing. The atmosphere around the paddock was electric, and as all areas were open to the public, it was good to have conversations with interested visitors.

The CityCar Cup sessions started at 9:30am with 15 minutes of qualifying. These 15 minutes were probably the most important minutes of the weekend for us. The car hadn't turned a lap in anger since the build, and on top of this I had never turned a lap of the track!

The session went very well, and most importantly, the car didn't miss a beat. It felt solid throughout the session, and I felt confident enough to push the limits in the final few minutes.

We managed to get away from the traffic and got a clean lap in which put us 2nd on the grid in our class and 15th overall.

With a few hours before race 1 started, we made some adjustments to the car to cater for the rising track temperatures. The tyres used in this series are very sensitive to overheating, and to use a term often heard in Formula 1, they 'fall off a cliff' in terms of performance if the temperatures aren't under control.

As the lights went out to start the race, we made up a couple of places instantly. I had managed to get a great launch and really hooked it up off the line. With over 30 cars going into the flat-out 1st corner, it's a nervous time, hoping that everyone around you leaves enough space. We made it through and settled into 11th place after the first lap.

From then on, we were involved in a 3 to 4 car battle which lasted the entire 20-minute race. Places were changing every corner with hard but fair racing which is always a pleasure to be part of. These cars are so evenly matched that driver skill is the only real thing to make the difference.

Starting the last lap, I was in 10th and at the head of this group of now 5 cars. Going into the 2nd corner, the car behind me went for a very bold move, diving up the inside of me with far too much speed to make the corner. Luckily, I saw this coming in my mirror and managed to avoid any contact, but this cost me a huge amount of time, and with that, 4 cars came streaming past me. I was back down to 14th.

This is how the race ended, and although it could have been a better result, we were very happy to come home 2nd in class and 14th overall.



With the grid for race 2 being set by the results from race 1, I lined up the car in 14th but now on the outside of the track and the entry to turn 1.

I managed to get a great start again and found room to squeeze over to the inside of the track before getting to turn 1. There were a few bumps and scrapes going on around me which I managed to avoid and again made my way forward a few places.

I again found myself in a group of cars very similar to race 1, but this time I was at the back of it and trying to work my way through. For me, this is one of my favourite parts of racing, working out where I'm quicker than the car in front and planning where I'm going to make my move.

After a few laps I had worked my way past a couple of cars, but in doing so I had pushed the tyres a little too much. I could feel them losing grip from overheating and knew that I had a mammoth task on my hands to keep the position I was now in. Unfortunately, it was too much of a task and I eventually dropped back a few places towards the end of the race.

We brought the car home 2nd in class and 12th overall, which was another great result for the team. However, being a racing driver, I knew it could have been more. We had some work to do on our set ups and knowledge of how the car reacts in certain situations.

The weekend was a great success, and I was extremely pleased to be able to reward the team with some silverware for all the hard work they had put in. There were a huge number of positives to take away with us and some areas we knew we had to work on to get us that step higher on the podium.

We are looking forward to the next rounds from Anglesey on June 18th and 19th and hope for another great weekend of racing.

Finally, I would like to say a thank you to all our sponsors, that without we wouldn't be able to do what we love to do. So, a huge thank you to Harwin, Amigo Wraps and Milkwood for their support.

