

Season Review

2011



The season got off to a sunny start in America with testing at Sebring, in a Mazda MX5 and the somewhat contrasting Trans-Am Corvette. With a combined total of 800 horsepower between the two cars, 650 of which were in the Corvette!

It was from one extreme to another, when Nigel travelled to a frozen lake in Italy for a weekend of *Funcup on Ice* racing!



Back to America in March for a weekend of successful racing in a beautiful Chevron B36, resulting in Nigel's first victory at the famous Sebring circuit.



Team owner Lee Chapman had invited Nigel to provide driver coaching for the team, resulting in car owner, Rick Carlino, asking Nigel to co-drive with him in the race.

They took a dominant victory in the *SVRA Enduro* after leading every lap of the 90 minute endurance race, beating Leo Voyazides in the Ford Mustang GT350.

April was the busiest and most exotic month to date, including trips to the South of France, Spain...and Darlington!



The amazing month started off in Paul Ricard racing a Ligier JS51 in the *SPEED Euro series* race with Jono Coleman. They finished third in the first race after a great battle with the fabulous WFR prototypes. Nigel and Jono led the second race until a puncture and cross-threaded wheel nut ended their race early.

Nigel commented: "I was delighted with our podium and the opportunity to race with Jono again. In the second race we peaked too soon, after grabbing the lead from fourth on the grid. My belts came undone during the first few laps so was relieved to have the long straight to re-attach them! Unfortunately a puncture brought our race to an end. Thanks to Ligier and Gilles Alegeoet for their support and for giving us a competitive car."



A week later, at the fabulous Barcelona Grand Prix circuit, Nigel raced an Elva Mk 7 in the *Masters World Sportscar Series* with American racer, Rick Carlino. Fastest lap in class was the highlight of the weekend.



From Spain, it was a return to the UK for the first round of the *Radical European Masters Series*. Nigel partnered Ray Woolhead in his Radical SR3 with fifth and sixth place finishes in the two races, in what turned out to be Ray's final Radical race weekend.

The 2011 travels then ventured up north for the first round of the *Funcup UK Championship* at Croft. Teamed with car owner Julian Thomas and Ginetta Supercup racer Joachim Ritter (Nigel's co-World champion of 2010).



On their debut in the diesel class, they held second place until a late retirement in race one. In race two, Nigel charged through from 11th on the grid to lead, before eventually finishing a close second in the 4 hour race, to the delight of the drivers and JPR team who were running the car.



The UK adventure continued a week later at the Donington Park Historic Festival. Nigel was hired by Alec Hammond to co-drive his fabulous Chevron B8 in the first round of the *Carol Spragg 1000kms Series*.

With Alec achieving his best ever laps of Donington, they eventually finished fourth in class and ninth overall. They were on course for a third place in class when the race was curtailed early after Frank Sytner crashed his Lola T70 and the race was stopped.



In the build-up to the Donington historic race, Nigel spent a day of testing and driver coaching with Chris Beighton and his ex-Ronnie Peterson Lola T70. This was to get Chris and his co-driver John Finnemore ready for the start of their Masters historic season.



It was then for the first visit of 2011 to Spa, starting with two days in a brand new Saker Sportscar and Funcup, for testing and driver coaching with the Solutions Racing team. Followed by success on the golf course with a great victory over Nikki at the Spa mini golf venue!

The week continued with rounds 3 and 4 of the *SPEED Euro Series* with Jono Coleman in the Ligier. In the first race of the weekend, having started from the pitlane, Nigel and Jono charged up to the seventh place. There was another seventh place in the second race, following car set-up and engine misfire issues.



One of the highlights in May was the first opportunity to test a Ferrari 458 Challenge Car, after being hired by multiple-Radical Champion, Derek Johnston.

Later in the month, a very busy weekend at Snetterton started with driver coaching and car set-up for the Nicholas Mee Aston Martin, followed by qualifying in Steve Harris' new Saker. Then another wonderfully exciting Funcup race and the grid draw put Team Racelogic 29th on the grid. Nigel started the race and got into the lead in 3 laps.



A frantic race unfolded, with an eventual third place and new lap record.

Next on the agenda was a visit to Oulton Park for driver coaching in a RUF CTR 3 Porsche with 700bhp - an exciting ride! Followed by a visit to one of Nigel's favourite circuits, Cadwell Park, for some race coaching in Brookspeed's Porsche Boxsters.

Onto Donington Park and an opportunity to step back into a Formula 1 car - this time, Steve Hartley's 1982 Arrows A4. A successful day with lap times under the lap record.



The next round of the *SPEED Euro Series* was Donington Park. With rain arriving midway through the race, it gave Nigel the chance to grab the lead from ex-F1 driver Alex Caffi, before the sunshine came back out and co-driver Jono brought the Ligier back in fourth.

Next was Nigel's first ever race at Anglesey. After a breath taking battle, he came from third place to take the lead on the penultimate lap, giving Team Racelogic their first outright victory. The second race saw Julian and Nigel finish a close third.



June ended at a slightly sunnier location - Spa - and the annual two day track event with the Americans and their Trans-Am Corvette. This was a perfect warm-up for the *Spa 25 hour* race in the Funcup.

Having won the 25 hour petrol class with Team Tiger in 2010, the team were back to defend their crown. Unfortunately, engine problems brought their race to an early end with a retirement around 4am.

Driver coaching in the super-charged Ariel Atom followed at Spa and Le Mans with Michael Weston. It was then back to the UK, for the famous Silverstone Classic weekend.

With over 800 E-type Jaguar's celebrating their 50th anniversary and over 7,000 other historic cars on display, this set the scene perfectly for Nigel and Alec Hammond to share Alec's Chevron B8 in the *World Sportscar Masters Series*. Third in class was a fine result.

Next up was an eclectic mix of test days, including Aston Martin at Oulton Park, Mighty Mini at Rockingham, Corvette at Mallory Park, Ferrari 458 at Donington and Radical SR3 at Dijon.



Round 6 of *Funcup UK* saw a trip to Brands Hatch where Nigel, Julian and Joachim achieved a second place finish and new lap record. The following day Nigel was invited to attend the annual Supercar Day at Wilton House organised by the Earl of Pembroke. The event attracted nearly 10,000 visitors and an amazing collection of supercars.

It was a busy month in September, starting off at Paul Ricard with the VdeV weekend. The highlight of this was a second consecutive victory in the Historic 4 hour race, with Benton Bryan in his Chevron B36.



From driving an English car in France it was then driving a French car in England with the next round of the *SPEED Euro Series*, racing with Jono Coleman in his Liger and another podium finish.

The low point of the season came at Snetterton in *Funcup UK*, where Nigel got caught up in a start line accident, the result of which was a broken wrist. The JPR team did a brilliant job repairing the car and getting Julian and Joachim back into the race.



Five days later Nigel returned to Spa to race in the *Six Hour Classic* with Karsten and Christiaan in their glorious Austin Healey 3000. The following day

at Spa was the next round of the *Masters Series* with Alec Hammond in his Chevron B8.

From Belgium, it was a trip to Daytona and an opportunity to test the Group C Spice Acura on the high banks of one of Nigel's favourite circuits in the sunshine. Heading south to Homestead for a day of driver coaching which ended up being cut short due to a tornado!



Back to the UK for the final round of *Funcup UK*. Team Racelogic went into the race with a chance of winning the championship, but after a series of technical problems they eventually finished third in the championship, although managed another lap record.

A quick visit to Magny Cours next to test the BRS Nissan with Angelos Metaxa and AB Sport.



The month rounded out with a busy three days. First to Silverstone for driver coaching in a Caterham 7. The following day at Goodwood giving passenger rides to Nicholas Mee's guests in their championship-winning Aston Martin GT4. Then an overnight drive to Zandvoort for the *Saker World Finals*.



A mix of events in November included charity passenger rides at Silverstone in a Radical SR3, driver coaching at Donington in a Ferrari 430 Challenge car, and working with Pete Halford and Tony Crudginton in their Corvette Stingray and Chevrolet Camaro.



Two more trips to Daytona followed, with the HSR race weekend in November and Grand-AM testing in December in a Porsche GT3 RS.

While in Florida, Nigel and Nikki organised a private track event at Palm Beach raceway. Guests arrived in a wonderful array of cars, including Ferrari 275GTB, Porsche GT2, Ferrari 458 and a Nurburgring 24 hour race-winning Porsche GT3 RSR.



The final race of Nigel's year was the *Britcar night race* at Brands Hatch, co-driving with Richard Chamberlain in his Lotus Elise. This gave Nigel an opportunity to work with Tony Frost again – the last time they worked together was in 1997 and 1998, winning the Euro Boss F1 Championships with the Tyrrell 022.



The following day was a visit to Rockingham for testing the new Funcup petrol sequential, in preparation for Team Racelogic's 2012 season.

And the season couldn't end without some endurance karting. This was a family event, with Nigel and Nikki joined by Graham and Tom (brother and nephew) to win the two hour race.

