

# Season Review

## 2012



For the second year in a row, the season got off to a sunny start in America with the *PBOC Winterfest* at Sebring. Nigel was hired by Rob Nimkoff to co-drive his Aston Martin GT4 in the 6hr endurance race.

With 47 cars starting the race, including LMP2 Courage, Daytona Prototype Riley and many Porsches and Ferrari's, Nigel and Rob were in the only Aston Martin. Starting tenth, and with good strategy and flat-out driving, the boys finished a superb third place overall.



While in Florida, Nigel and Nikki took the opportunity to visit the new Sean Creech Motorsport race shop.

Nigel has worked with Sean for many years, including victory at Homestead in the Group C Spice Chevrolet. Pictured in his workshop (*left*) alongside two of Nigel's favourite cars, the Ferrari 333SP and Riley & Scott.

Continuing the American theme, but now at an icy cold Brands Hatch, Nigel was invited to test the Euro NASCAR by Jerome Galpin and Team FJ. Nigel said: "It was an ambition achieved to drive a NASCAR and I very much look forward to further opportunities later this season."



Onto the *Claire House Charity* karting event at Thruxton, Nigel and Julian (of Team Racelogic) took their first victory of the year ahead of 28 other teams in the 3 hour endurance race.

Testing and driver coaching followed in March, with the Masters test days at Goodwood circuit working with the Historic Automobiles team in their Lotus Cortina and Mini Cooper.



It was then up to Donington Park for the start of an intensive test program over a number of days, with the Graypaul-prepared Ferrari 458 of Derek Johnston. The testing included development of a new aero pack and a selection of springs and dampers, to find the ideal set-up in preparation for Derek's GT Cup season.

First European race of the year was the Monza 4 hours – the first round of the *Italian Endurance Champions Cup*. Racing with Benton Bryan in his mighty Martini Corvette, the result was a class win and some fabulous racing amongst Ferrari's, Mercedes' and Porsche's.



After some pre-season testing in March, the Funcup season appropriately started on 1st April with Team Racelogic keeping the same awesome driver line-up of Nigel, Julian and Joachim. After leading their class for over two hours, a faulty alternator lost the team 8 laps in the pits, although all 3 drivers were thrilled with the new sequential gearbox.



Next was the Floridian sunshine and testing at Daytona in a brand new Ferrari 458. The Central Florida team hired Nigel to coach their drivers in preparation for the *Ferrari 458 North American Challenge*. From there, a late night flight to Toronto and an early morning arrival at Sportscar Boutique, ready for the annual Tech Session. Owners, Ilker and Isabel Starck, invited Nigel to be guest speaker, presenting to their customers on track driving techniques and the use of video and data.

April concluded with a visit to Californian track, Infineon, for the second round of the *Ferrari 458 Challenge*, with Nigel providing car set-up advice and coaching for Team Central Florida's Ferrari drivers, Onofrio and Allan. The team celebrated a very successful weekend with Onofrio taking a victory and a second place.





A busy month in May started with Tyrrell F1 testing in the rain at Silverstone and progressed to the sunshine of Brands Hatch, testing a selection of historic and modern Ferrari's.



The racing highlight was the Masters historic weekend at Brands Hatch that included a podium finish and a new lap record in Alec Hammond's Chevron B8. There were also some spectacular laps in his '67 Trans Am Camaro, including a pit lane burn out!



Onto Croft now for Round 2 of the *Funcup UK Championship*. Following the grid draw that placed Team Racelogic 18th on the grid, Nigel took the start and with an excellent opening stint, climbed through the field to lead overall before the first pit stop. With great racing stints by Julian and Joachim through the middle section of the race, Nigel began the last stint in second place, but with 15 lapped cars between him and the leader. A great battle ensued over the final minutes of the race, with Nigel finishing second overall, winning the petrol class and setting a new Funcup lap record.



It was then a quick trip to Spa, for two days of driver coaching with Leon and his fabulous Porsche Supercup.

Later in June, it was back to Spa for another two days on track testing with The Bryans and their fabulous Chevron B36 and Corvette GT cars, this time equipped to take passengers for a thrilling high speed ride around Spa!

A hot sunny day at Brands Hatch with John and Dave Bearman saw Nigel teaching their corporate guests the basics of driving on circuit in their Porsche Boxster race cars.

Round 3 of the *Funcup UK Championship* was held at Snetterton on the 200 circuit. As it was the second anniversary of Julian's first ever Funcup race, Team Racelogic decided that Julian should have the honour of starting the race. Soon after, he drew a front row grid position out of the hat! After the usual 5 hours of frantic Funcup racing, Team Racelogic finished second in class and once more achieved fastest petrol lap.



To round out a busy month in June, it was over to Dijon for the VdeV weekend, with Nigel providing driver coaching for Richard True and John Harrison in their Ligier JS49. An excellent weekend ensued, with Richard and John finishing on the podium in their class.

The highlight of July was the annual trip to Spa for the *Funcup 25 hour race*. With Team Racelogic entering for the first time, Nigel was delighted to have Julian, Karsten and Christiaan as co-drivers for the intense but fun weekend.



Nigel started the race and built up a huge lead in the petrol class. With a fast pit stop, Julian re-joined the race fifth overall and with a one-minute lead over the next petrol car. After safety cars, heavy rain, some fog and a co-driver suffering with food poisoning, Team Racelogic were delighted to finish second in class and 14th overall, with Nigel getting a new lap record for the team along the way.

A quick hop over to the Le Luc circuit in the south of France and a blisteringly hot day of driver coaching with Andrea in a Formula Ford.

It was then a return to the UK for the *SPEED Series* at Donington Park with Jono Coleman and his Ligier JS51 having their only outing of the year. While Nigel and Jono had the speed to run in the top 3 all weekend, continual electrical problems brought both of their races to a halt.



Nigel's travels then took him back to Spa to teach Sam Smeeth the circuit ahead of his race there in his Ferrari 430 Challenge.



A frantic first weekend in August included the next Funcup round on Saturday at Brands Hatch and an overnight dash to Anglesey for the 750 Motor Club Bikesports races. Team Racelogic achieved an historic outright victory for their petrol sequential Funcup over the turbo diesels in the one hour sprint race. This was followed by second overall and a class win in the 4 hour endurance race, which greatly helped with their challenge for the Funcup Championship.



Sunday saw more success with a pole position, a new Bikesports lap record and two podiums, including the first UK win for the Speds chassis.

Nigel's season of coaching Wayne MARRS with his collection of Ferrari's included time at the Nurburgring and days at Spa and Donington Park with his Ferrari 360GTC ex-Le Mans car.



Continuing the Le Mans theme, Nigel then travelled to the historic circuit of Le Mans for a hot weekend coaching Richard Bryan in the Chevron B36 and Corvette GT cars, in preparation for the VdeV weekend at Paul Ricard in the first weekend of September.



The annual trip to Paul Ricard featured the two hour historic race, Nigel having won this race in 2010 and 2011 with Benton Bryan. In 2012, Richard Bryan was Nigel's co-driver, and after technical issues they had to start from the pit lane.



Richard moved steadily through the field before handing over to Nigel, who finished the job with a new lap record and managed to grab third place on the last lap!



For the GT race, Nigel qualified the Corvette fifth in the 42-car field, and then charged up to second place on the first lap of the race. After a strong stint in the middle of the race by Benton, the car retired with electrical problems.

From the sunshine and glamour of Paul Ricard to the wild winds of Anglesey, for Round 6 of the *Funcup UK Championship*. A hard fought race into the night saw Team Racelogic climb back from being a lap down to clinch their second consecutive outright victory, and establish themselves at the top of the championship table.



Now to glorious Goodwood and two opportunities for Nigel to race in the Revival meeting.

The first invitation came from Karsten with his newly acquired Cobra in the *Carroll Shelby Celebration* race. After Nigel qualified sixth on the first outing in the car, Karsten took the start and ran in the top seven. However, he retired before the driver change with a failed alternator.



The second invitation came from Lawrence Tomlinson to drive the Ginetta G10 in the *Fordwater Trophy*. Unfortunately delays building the engine stopped any possibility of the car running prior to qualifying. The car

failed on the first lap of both qualifying and the race, despite the best efforts of an excellent crew. Off track, the Goodwood Revival was, as always, an amazing event.



The historic theme continued the following weekend, for the annual *Spa Six Hours* classic event with Nigel set to perform in 3 cars. In the main event, the *Six Hour* itself, Nigel had the pleasure of racing with car owners, Karsten and Christiaen, in their famous ex-Le Mans Austin Healey 3000. Nigel caused some excitement when he established the quickest ever lap of Spa in a Healey by some considerable margin (nearly 5 seconds!) and out-qualifying a number of the bigger class E-types and Cobras.



With strong performances from all 3 drivers, the boys finished a remarkable 14th overall, to the delight of the whole team.

The Spa weekend continued with the Chevron B8 of Alec Hammond, competing in the *World Sportscar Masters*. A podium finish was the reward after an exciting, hard fought race. The finale came in the *Masters Gentleman Drivers* race, with Nigel and Karsten making their debut in the series in Karsten's Cobra. To the surprise of all the regulars, Nigel scored a decisive pole position and after Karsten chased Leo's similar Cobra early in the race, Nigel caught and passed Simon Hadfield after the pit stop to take the win, and collected fastest lap along the way.



Funcup was the feature of October, with the UK Championship finale at Oulton Park with Team Racelogic needing a top 3 finish to clinch the overall and petrol titles. Nigel was delighted when they drew last place of the grid, giving him another opportunity to charge through the field and take the lead before the first series of driver changes. With fantastic performances from co-drivers Julian and Joachim (with Julian achieving his first ever lap record), Team Racelogic were crowned outright Funcup Champions of 2012.

More Funcup action, this time at Zandvoort, for a non-championship 7 hour endurance race. The 2010 World Champion team of Nigel, Joachim and Derek Johnston re-formed and won their class in the *Dutch Winter Enduro* series.



The final historic race of the year then followed, with Nigel co-driving Alec Hammond in his Chevron B8 at Donington Park. In the glorious autumn sunshine, Nigel created a new lap record for the class, on the way to a great class win for the team.



The sunshine continued, but the slightly warmer variety in Florida this time, with two days of driver coaching at Sebring in Porsche GT3 RS cars at the *Chin Motorsports* event.

The very final race of the year took place at a chilly, wet Snetterton for the *European Funcup Trophy* race. The regular team of Nigel, Julian and Joachim were joined by Force India F1 Engineer, David Denyer. Having run in the top 3 in the early stages of the race, the team lost a number of laps changing the alternator. But the boys still drove flat out to the finish, getting fastest petrol lap and finishing fifth overall after 12 hours of racing.

Following an invitation from Ginetta to test their GT3 at Donington Park, Nigel invited GT co-driver Derek Johnston along for the experience. Both drivers were very impressed with the performance of the car and the lap times they achieved on the day.



The year was rounded out with huge celebrations at the end of season Funcup prize giving, where Nigel, Julian and Joachim received their trophies. And Team Racelogic astounded onlookers with their version of LMFAO's 'Party Rocks' anthem!

