



Mayo & District Motorsport Club – First Autocross of 2020 (9th August)

Lorraine Munnelly Club PRO

Mayo & District Motorsport Club had a very successful event when they returned to competitive action on Sunday 9th August with the first Loose Surface Autocross for 2020. This was the first motorsport event to take place in Mayo since the country went into lockdown in March. The autocross was originally scheduled to take place on the 10th of May but was postponed, two subsequent events which were scheduled for 7th June and 19th July were also postponed.

Sammy Carroll on his maiden voyage as Clerk of the Course had a difficult task heading up one of the first Motorsport Ireland events since lockdown. Running any motorsport event requires a lot of preparation but on this occasion due to the covid-19 pandemic there were many new processes that had to be put in place to ensure that all Government and Motorsport Ireland guidelines were adhered to. Trevor O'Connell was appointed as Mayo & District Motorsport Club Covid-19 officer and oversaw the introduction of the new covid-19 measures. The pre-event setup on the Saturday involved identifying locations where social distancing would have to be enforced and the installation of a number of sanitizing stations. Processes which involved paperwork and signing forms went online and all drivers had to complete an electronic registration form. Only competitors and officials who were pre-registered were admitted to the event, and on entry every person had their temperature checked and were given a wrist band to wear.

The Mayo & District Motor Club Autocross events are very popular and attract competitors from all over the country so there was no problem filling the entry list. Due to Covid-19 restrictions there was a maximum of 200 people permitted at the outdoor event; however as it was not possible to admit spectators on this occasion, increased social media coverage was put in place to keep everyone up to date with how the day progressed. The good weather over the weekend brought mixed results and with competing cars parked up since the end of March there were several them who experienced issues with car engines overheating during the first run.

It was a good day for the junior drivers, in class 6, Mayo Club members Niall Murphy and Brian Foy were head to head all day; Niall was in the lead on the first run with Brian just three seconds behind, after the second run Brian edged ahead by just over one second. The third run was down to the wire, both drivers putting in

their best time of the day with Niall finishing less than one second ahead of Brian. Ella Conway had gearbox trouble on the second run but regained her pace on the third run to finish third in class.

In class 7 juniors, it was a super first day out for young Mayo & District Club member David Kundziarz who was car sharing with his Dad Piotr who competed in class 1. David finished in third place just behind Eoin Kelly and Tommy O'Connell. Another father and son duo who were not so lucky were Chris Mitchell and Ryan Mitchell who had encountered gearbox trouble in the first run and had to retire early.

Cavan's Russell Woods had a great first visit to the Valley in his class five Evo. He was third in class after the first run, with Gareth Mimmagh and David Condell ahead in first and second place. By the end of the second run he had jumped up to second place and by his third time around the track he had put in the fastest time of the day to take the overall honours and winning the first Mayo Autocross of 2020. Belcarra's Barry Cuffe who was double driving with Russell also had a good day, he was ninth overall and took the Mayo Club award.

Patricia Denning in her Peugeot 106 was also visiting the Valley for the first time, she took home the Lady's award.

Results:

Overall Winner – Russell Woods

Top 2 Wheel Drive – Jason Black

Mayo & District Award – Barry Cuffe **Lady's Award** – Patricia Denning

Class 1. 1st Dean Humphrey; 2nd Ronan Greene; 3rd Dermot Reynolds

Class 2. 1st George Shinnors

Class 3. 1st David Kerr; 2nd Steven Cafferty; 3rd David Dennison

Class 4. 1st Michael Conlon; 2nd Shane McGirr; 3rd Tony Langdon

Class 5. 1st David Condell; 2nd Gareth Mimmagh; 3rd Kevin O'Connor

Class 6. 1st Niall Murphy; 2nd Brian Foy; 3rd Ella Conway

Class 7. 1st Eoin Kelly; 2nd Tommy O'Connell; 3rd David Kundziarz

Mayo Motorsport Club would like to thank all competitors and officials for their cooperation and support over the weekend in particular to those who were there for set up on Saturday and tidy up after the event; also to Frank Harrington and Victor Tenor for their ongoing support and their cooperation in facilitating these events. The next event on the revised 2020 Autocross schedule takes place on Sunday 30th August.