

John George wins two at Mid-Ohio and sets FFR “Club Course” record and Thompson sets the NASA “CC” record.

Nine FFR Challenge series cars arrived at MO for some great competition, camaraderie, food, and all around fun. The interesting part was that the Saturday events were held on the “Club Course” – the bus stop before the keyhole and Sunday on the “Pro Course”. Qualifying had John as the fastest and gave a clue to the racing times with a 1:42.775, Jim Schenck and Brian Sanders in the 1:43s, Gregg Wellinghoff Sr. and Wayne Patterson in the 1:45s, Tom Lavell, Gregg Jr., and Thompson in the 1:46s, and Mike Dziurgalski in the 1:49s. Once again Brian arranged for the gaggle of FFR Challenge series cars to start as a group – rolling start – and there was the usual dash for the 1st corner at the end of the back straight. John got through there first with Jim and Brian about neck & neck, Jr. jumped in front of Sr., Wayne, Mike, and Carl brought up the rear. John and Jim disappeared off the front, followed by Brian. Jim retired after 3 laps with the dreaded “fuel problem”. Carl managed to get past Tom and Mike and on lap 3 the rain started as most came flying into Thunder Valley leading into the carousel. Tom, Mike, and John had rains on. Jr. had a multiple grass mowing session and Tom unleashed the rains and moved up. The track was dry by the back straight and the double yellow came out. Unfortunately the “red haze” seemed to fog some of the FFR drivers’ eyes and brain and there were multiple “passing under the yellow” violations. So, it was follow the leader for a number of laps until cars were removed from the course and the green was shown. That happened on lap 8 and the race was on. Of course the group behind us had closed up the gap, so Corvettes, Porsches, and Vipers were threading their way through the gang. Jr. took another “mower” session and Carl passed Wayne closed up on Brian and Gregg Sr. (who had passed under the yellow). Carl set the NASA lap record on the 13th lap closing up on Brian. He said “if I would have had one more lap”. So, after the “red haze” effect, it was John 1st, Brian 2nd, Carl 3rd, Jr. 4th, and Jim 5th. The rest of the gang was DQed. You can see the action by going to: <http://www.viemo.com/14196348>

Shortly after the Thunder race the bottom fell out of the sky and it was torrential rain, lightening that struck the timing tower, and the Lightening race was postponed for the day – to take place early on Sunday.

Sunday dawned with some nice weather and the qualifying run had John blistering the track – this time the Pro Course – with a 1:39.450 , Jim turned a 1:42.606, and then it was Wayne and Brian in the 1:44s, Sr. and Carl in the 1:45s, Tom in the 1:47s, and Jr and Mike didn't go out. So, it was the usual “mad dash” for turn 1 on the back straight, John missed a shift and Jim got through 1st with Brian on his tail and John getting it together. John got by Brian coming onto the front straight but Brian took it back by turn 1. Carl was playing with a BMW and trying to get around him to get to Brian. John & Brian swapped positions and Carl got by the BMW and on lap 4 the double yellow came out again. So, follow the leader and everyone closed up the gaps. John saw the “green” before Brian and passed him on the restart. John caught up to Jim and they diced back and forth until John prevailed. Carl continued the chase after Brian while managing to hold off Sr. who was in hot pursuit. Faster lapping traffic slowed down Brian and Carl – but he was back in sight. But, it wasn't to be. John finished 1st with a best time of 1:39.084, Jim 2nd at 1:39.217, Brian 3rd at 1:41.403, Carl 4th at 1:41.208, Sr. 5th at 1:42.259, Jr. 6th at 1:43.946, Wayne 7th at 1:43.393, Tom 8th at 1:46.558 and Mike 9th at 1:45.561. You can see the action at: <http://www.viemo.com/14195653>

By Carl Thompson