

TOUGH MONKEYS

Buckmore Park Ironman Round 4: 25/06/06

I went into this race with high hopes. This would only be my second visit to Buckmore, and after the considerable success of my first outing I was looking to improve my result. I'd made the decision that having been conservative with my overtaking in the last round, I was going to be more aggressive.

Things didn't quite go to plan unfortunately. I'd opted to have a seat insert this time, in an effort to reduce fatigue and lessen the aches and pains during the following days. I felt though it unsettled my ride, lifting me higher in the kart and making the kart a little twitchy. The weather was also glorious and the track temperature was very high. This resulted in the karts skipping going through Conways and making the race rather uncomfortable.

Qualifying had felt respectable, but I was horrified to find I'd qualified down in 16th. For the second time I found myself on the outside of the grid on the approach to turn one, and despite getting through that corner safely the same can't be said about Hairpin 1. I was punted out wide under braking, and lost countless places. From then on, it was a recovery drive. Although never on the lead race pace, I did pick things up and enjoyed many battles though the field as I worked my way up.

Darren Pullen was the eventual race winner, and by a clear distance. There's a man up there in the top five drivers at Buckmore, and therefore one of the top amateur drivers in the country at this level. I managed to salvage 12th from the evening, which was disappointing having gone in with such high hopes, but I have to accept that I'm racing against some top drivers here.