

Superpro V.A.G. Trophy Championship 2011.

Rounds 1 & 2.

Donington Park – 2nd April.

Last weekend saw the third season of the VAG Trophy blast off at Donington Park, this highly competitive race series for pre-2006 Volkswagen Audi Group cars enjoying continued support from SuperPro, with the manufacturer of high-performance polyurethane suspension bushes remaining as title sponsor for the second year running.

Organisers are delighted to announce that, just before the start of the first round, the series was awarded Championship status by the MSA – a move that raises the profile and the standing of the SuperPro VAG Trophy within British motorsport.

The 2011 Championship features eight rounds held over five race weekends as follows:

2 April - Donington Park (2 rounds)

30 April - Brands Hatch – Indy circuit (2 rounds)

18 June - Castle Combe (1 round).

20 August - Brands Hatch – GP circuit (1 round)

15 October - Snetterton (2 rounds)

During the winter break, the Championship organisers closely reviewed the rules and regulations to ensure that, because of the wide range of makes and models that take part, competition within the classes would remain as close as ever.

Eligible vehicles:

VW: Golf, Vento, Polo, Scirocco, Corrado, Passat, Beetle

Seat: Leon, Ibiza

Skoda: Octavia, Fabia

Audi: 80, A3, A4

Round one

Qualifying for the double-header weekends sees the grid for race one and race two both decided from the one session. The positions for race one are established in the usual way with the fastest first, whereas the starting grid for race two is calculated using the second-fastest times.

Even so, the first three places of the 27-car strong grid was the same in both cases, with Dan Rose in his Seat Leon Cupra R and Aaron Mason in his Mk5 Golf GT1 occupying the first two positions and Chris Hayes in his Seat Leon Cupra third.

When the lights went green it was Mason that had the best start and turned into Redgate ahead of the pack, with Rose in hot pursuit. Behind them, Hayes had held onto his starting position, with Tony Absolom in fourth, having made a blistering start from P8 in his R32-engined VW Golf Van.

For the next three laps the battle between the leading pair could not have been closer, with no more than 0.6 second separating them anywhere on the circuit. But, as Mason started to find his car's transmission was hampering

braking performance, Rose seized the opportunity and took the lead on lap four and proceeded to pull away.

The pace of the leading four cars meant they began to catch the back-markers by the time they started their seventh lap and progress through the traffic saw the gaps between them increase. However, with Mason still not comfortable with his car's stopping power, he was caught and passed by Hayes on lap 11.

Positions were maintained for the 12th and final lap, resulting in Rose taking his first victory of the season by exactly four seconds ahead of Hayes, who was almost the same distance ahead of Mason. Class B was won by Craig Roberts in his Mk2 Golf, with Class C2 and C1 going to Lewis Hopkins and Guy Stevens respectively in their similar, but differently modified, VWs.

Other notable performances came from Lloyd Allard (grandson of the legendary car maker Sidney Allard) who finished sixth overall in his Golf TDi and last year's SuperPro VAG Trophy top-driver Mark Jenkins, who has swapped his Mk5 Golf to a Mk2 version. Most unfortunate man of the race was undoubtedly Martyn Culley. Having qualified in an impressive fourth place, his Vento VR6 suffered a blown engine and he retired on lap eight.

Round two

Mason was quickest off the line again as cars embarked on the first of 12, 1.97-mile laps of a revised Donington Park track. But this time he could only hold on until lap two when again, Rose went past and into the lead.

However, Mason did not let go and a bumper-to-bumper dice ensued, with Andy Thompson in his Seat Leon Cupra – who had started from P4 – joining in the chase on lap four. But then, a lap later, Rose was caught out and his two pursuers grasped the advantage and he slipped back to third.

Rose snatched second place back from Thompson on lap six as Mason continued to hold station at the front. However, Rose's advances became more and consistent and, on lap 10 he regained the lead.

Once there, the race-one winner was determined not to be passed again and, two laps later, he crossed the line to take his second SuperPro VAG Trophy victory of the day. Mason followed just over a second behind, with Thompson third by a similar margin.

Class B was won by on this occasion by the Mk2 Golf of Andrew Barton, with the C2 and C1 Classes again dominated by Hopkins and Stevens.