



A.J Racing makes a good start to the 2015 Time Attack Championship season.

With the 2014 season now at an end, a year dogged with mechanical issues that affected the previous set up it seemed the perfect opportunity for team, car and driver to get realigned and come back for the 2015 Time Attack Championship ready to start the season with a bang.

Despite some of the results in 2014 it was a development rich year for a few sponsors involved with ourselves including **Titan Motorsports, Burton Power, Helix Autosport** and **GD Transmissions Finland**. An ultimate engine and transmission package for the Ford Focus Mk1 ST170 was drawn up; mainly focusing around the new engine from **Burton Power**. A Ford Duratec engine was going to be built by top formula one engine builder **Terry Dolphin** on behalf of **Burton Power**. We also communicated with Ford directly, asking them for guidance with our quest to mate engine and gearbox. We would like to offer our sincere thanks to Geoff and Paul from Ford HQ in Brentwood.

2014 also took its toll with joint team owner and driver - Jonathan Morris; he had been very unwell at the beginning of 2014 suffering a PTSD relapse which had caused him a significant personal setback.

Peron Automotive stepped up with an absolutely lovely piece of engineering and fabrication, a race exhaust manifold designed to the same specification as those in the British Touring Car Championship. This is coupled to a side exit exhaust system and the results, heard for the first time at Cadwell Park were spectacular. A comment from well-known events photographer **John Stewart** was "You could hear the car prior to seeing it and it was a very distinctive sound, somewhat reminiscent of a BTCC car". We are happy really happy with that result. The previous wiring of the car was deemed inadequate for the purpose of racing therefore **PENWA Electrics** stepped in and rewired the whole car for us.

We contacted **AK Sheet Metal Fabrications Ltd** of Hull, bringing them the problem of mounting the dry sump tank within the engine bay and an aluminium centre console system. Needless to say, these guys are used to this type of easy fix problem and they issued the solution without delay with the finest results. **Aerocatch/Speciality Fasteners** have not only done a wonderful job in providing such high quality catches for the car they have also started a blog about the team on their website. **Ideal Engineering UK** not only designed but fabricated a floating bell brake system for the car and what a job they produced. We now have a 28 x 330 millimetre rota with floating bells mated with Porsche 4 pot calliper's which our very good friends at **Motorhog** have been invaluable in sourcing many of the parts to produce this car.

We are looking further into the aerodynamics of the car, we are however taking this one step at a time. The car is looking fantastic as a result of **Admiral Signs Hull** producing and laying up the car's graphics, the car does look stunning and we are very lucky to have gained valuable sponsors this year for which we are very grateful. We are also very grateful indeed to those sponsors who have stayed with us and have been with us since the beginning of 2012. We will be mentioning more about the sponsors on our website as it continues to develop. www.ajracingteam.co.uk.

Round 1: Cadwell Park

Friday 24th

On Friday afternoon we were still working on the car - installing the radiator from **Radtec** and the purple silicon hoses supplied by **SFS Hoses**. As this installation had never taken place before, a lot of head scratching and figuring out where to put everything had to take place first, but the result was a magnificent and very purposeful looking engine bay.

As it was getting late on the Friday, the team decided to relocate to the circuit before continuing with the car. Once at the track, work continued on the car until 23:30 when the engine ran for the first time with a dry sump system and after all the hoses for the cooling system had their final check. There were a few small things that still needed to be undertaken in the morning, but we were exceptionally happy and went to bed with very big smiles on our faces; the sound of the engine and exhaust system gently rocking us to sleep.

Saturday 25th

Darren, from **Bell Truck Services** – a new addition to the 2015 sponsors, had undertaken quite a bit of the work over the days leading up to race day along with some of our forces personnel. Everyone did an amazing job and set too finishing off the car. We used Cadwell as shakedown day for our season opener of **Time Attack UK**.

How did the team do? First time out in the car to ensure everything is working and Jonathan quickly beats his personal best time by 2 seconds. Qualifying: An additional 6 seconds fall away from Jonathan's new personal best, that's a full 8 seconds improvement from 2014. Considering this happened after both the power steering and clutch slave cylinder failed in operation. There was also no real set up on the car and firm instructions not to push the engine just yet from **Burton Power**. The team were more than happy with this positive start.

We qualified 9th out of 11 participants: finally managing to get some points in the front wheel drive class in our first ever completed first round of **Time Attack UK** at the start of our third official season.

What preparation did it need? Ready for the car's first outing we wanted to see how the car performed without touching anything on it other than tyre pressure checks for the practice session. The most important thing was to get the car out on the circuit to drive around and get the driver accustomed to the car and to be seen on the circuit.

Lots of photos were taken by the circuit photographers, just in case the team had the misfortune of not continuing to compete in the rest of the day's events. This contingency plan was not needed however, reports back from the driver over the new intercom system (kindly donated by **Think Automotive**) were positive. The only negative issue being the lack of power steering which meant the driver was finding it very difficult to push the car towards any of its new found potential. Without pushing the car, the driver achieved 1 min 58 sec. Back into the paddock, a quick check over the oil and water systems - everything was ok.

The team then took a little time out to check over the whole car, re-set tyre pressures and adjust the suspension settings to last year's specifications prior to qualifying. The suspension geometry still needs to be set up properly on the car in the near future

We've hit qualifying! Time to push a little, but not too hard, we still have that new engine to look after (we were listening **Burton Power**). The wheel time meant the gremlins started to appear in the form of lost the clutch pedal; the slave cylinder failed after 20 minutes of running. Undeterred, the driver made the decision to drive the car anyway, even if only to complete a few laps and get a little bit more seat time. We so wanted to complete a full first round of **Time Attack UK**. Our first full opening round in 3years was just around the corner.

What a lap to follow! A lap time of 1 min 54 sec radioed to the driver. Quick stop in the pits just to make sure things were ok and then proceeded to go back out again. Loving the new **GD Transmissions Finland** dog box, new engine and the whole package, the driver told the team he was just going to try and put in a little bit quicker lap without pushing the car too much. It just gets better with a 1 min 52 sec lap.

So the final...We patiently sat in the paddock ready for the off, but we sat and we sat some more. A member of the team was down at the pits waiting for the powers that be to make a decision about the final as it was raining uphill on the track. The driver was eager to get out there, the team was eager to get out of the rain. "5 more mins" "another 10 mins" "a decision very soon" finally "it's all off". So that was it, albeit the final being cancelled, we had done it. Our first – yes, first full first round of **Time Attack UK 2015**. Third year of trying to achieve a starting round and we did, teething troubles and all.

So what more is there to say! The traction and positive feel of the **Titan Motorsport** carbon differential is sublime; so much more than previous seasons. Feedback from the car is very positive; we got an amazing preview of the pace this car should be capable of. We as a team are very excited as is the driver about this car, using the words of our sponsors "this has been a long time coming". As the final was cancelled due to reports of torrential rainfall (the team boss could confirm this – she was more than drenched) - the track conditions were far too dangerous to go out. The decision was made by the Time Attack management to finalize the day on the qualifying times.

We thank everybody who has supported us, without your help and support we would not be where we are. We feel very proud and very privileged to be supported by our sponsors and we thank them all as we would not be able to undertake and provide such services, help and assistance to our colleagues from the forces both current and ex-servicemen and women.

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