



All about Andy

Andy Stapley, Mark Marchant, Brian Robinson and champion Andy Charsley in typically close proximity at Druids the hairpin.

Photo by: Colin Burke/Fotosport

THE 1992 H.E.A.T. CHAMPION of Brands series has been all about Andy Charsley and the Astratech Ray team. Although Charsley won seven of the 14 rounds, it was by no means an easy year in a championship uniquely dominated by local manufacturers. *Matthew James* looks at the drivers who could use their local knowledge to spring a surprise on the big money teams and big name drivers.

Charsley rattled off three consecutive victories in the first four races - the rest of the field have been playing catch up all year - but the Orpington driver kept the momentum going with back to back victories in rounds six and seven.

In any other championship, this would have virtually wrapped up a title, but this was not the case in the H.E.A.T. Champion of Brands series. Hot on Charsley's heels was another Andy, his team-mate Andy Stapley, who had been shadowing Charsley in the first half of the year. Stapley snatched two victories as the series went into July, ensuring that the leader was kept on his toes.

Anniversary

Charsley's luck ran out at the Formula Ford 25th Anniversary meeting in July when he spun off, leaving the door wide open for Stapley to take his first win of the year. He quickly followed this up with another win in round nine, putting himself right back in the frame for championship honours.

Stapley and Charsley shared the spoils

over the next four rounds with two victories each, which left Charsley with a 13-point advantage as they went into the final round on October 11th. Charsley did enough in the last race by taking third, whereas Farnborough's Stapley could only manage fourth place, giving Bert Ray the manufacturer's glory and sealing the championship title for long time protagonist Charsley.

So, what of last year's champion constructor Jamun? By its own high standards, Tony Mundy's team has had a poor showing this year with only two victories. Last year's champion Chris Hall moved on to tackle the national series, leaving the regional attack of Jamun in the hands of Brian Robinson. The year started off well for the Kenninghall man with placings in the top three in the first five races of the year, and taking his first and only win at round five.

Brian's championship chase seemed to lose its momentum there and the H.E.A.T.-backed driver could only manage three third positions throughout the rest of the year, leaving him over 60 points behind the Ray twins

at the end of the year.

The other victory for Jamun came in the last round when championship returnee Chris Hall mastered the wet weather conditions to take the flag. The team also ran Mark Marchant in the Overland Freight Forwarders M90 for the second half of the year, and although he hadn't scored until round eight (of 14) he took sixth place in the final table, thanks to a trio of second places in the closing three rounds.

Self-built

Johnny Oxborrow again tackled the regional series in his self-built OX-6 and eight points finishes, including a second place in round two, saw him fourth overall at the end of the year - the top privateer. Despite inconsistent appearances, Weybridge's John Hayden used his two year old Van Diemen to good effect this season, and he gave some of the well-financed teams a fright taking three podium finishes. The Trevor Stiles Racing-run driver's best performance was a second place in round nine, helping him to his fifth position in the final championship table.

Other regular top six finishers this year have included young Moss Thorpe, who appeared on the second step of the podium after round six. ●