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FULBROOK & GRIFFIN CLAIM KNOCKHILL VICTORY SPOILS

Reigning Volkswagen Racing Cup champion Joe Fulbrook made a triumphant return to Knockhill, the scene of his maiden race victory, at the weekend (13/14 June), winning once again and increasing his points lead in the Hankook-backed series.

Fulbrook and his Warranty Direct-backed Bora Turbo won Saturday's fifth round, and finished second today in round six. The victor today was Liam Griffin, who gave the Addison Lee Scirocco GT its first race win.

Saturday's race enthralled a large and appreciative Scottish crowd and provided a three-way battle for the lead which was not settled in favour of championship leader Fulbrook until the final corner of the last lap, with both Griffin and Didge Dziurzynski vying for victory.

Fulbrook made the better start to overhaul Griffin into Duffus Dip, Liam having set the qualifying pace to claim his second pole position of the season. Dziurzynski started from third on the grid, behind Fulbrook, and repulsed an opening-lap attack from fast-starting Rockingham double winner Steve Chaplin to slot into third.

Try as he might, Fulbrook couldn't break clear of Griffin. But while Liam concentrated on attacking the leader, he left himself open to assault from Dziurzynski, who dived down the inside of the Scirocco at the hairpin to liberate second place for his Golf GTI on the fifth lap.

Three laps later and it was Fulbrook on the receiving end of a Dziurzynski manoeuvre, Didge shooting past for the lead through Duffus after getting a good run on the Bora man up the start/finish straight.

But just as Fulbrook couldn't break free when he led, so Dziurzynski struggled to make a break. Joe kept tabs on the Golf for 10 laps, just waiting for the opportunity to regain top spot - and all the while keeping a close eye on the shadowing third-place man Griffin.

Fulbrook seized his chance on lap 18 as they exited the hairpin. Dziurzynski ran a little wide, Fulbrook snuck up his inside, their cars kissed broadside and Joe was through and away. "It was my fault," said Didge. "I had no idea he was there until I turned in and we made very light contact." Alas for Dziurzynski the coming-together was enough to break his steering rack. He continued on to 12th, a poor reward for his efforts. "That would have been it for the weekend," Didge added, "but Steve Chaplin gave me a steering rack so that I could make race two, which was a great sporting gesture."

For the final three laps Fulbrook had to keep the ever-present Griffin behind him, which he managed to do to cross the line for his first victory of the season, half a second to the good. "This wasn't really my win," said Joe. "It was all down to RP Motorsport and the boys. They found the edge for me in testing, and without that time gained I wouldn't have been able to compete."

Chaplin's Beetle claimed third and the final podium place, ahead of James Walker's Golf and Mike Kurton's Scirocco, which was suffering from electrical gremlins.

Racing newcomer Aaron Mason continued his impressive run of form, this weekend in a Golf R32, to take

sixth ahead of the Golf GTIs of Anna Walewska and Tim Snaylam, the latter racing only thanks to a Herculean effort by the RacingLine squad to replace an engine blown in Friday testing.

The Polo of Doug Ross claimed its best-ever result with ninth, ahead of Peter Wyhinny's power-sapped Caddy Sportline, championship newcomer Rob Daniels in the Addison Lee Golf, Dziurzynski and Robin Riley's TDI Golf. Andrew Smith's Beetle TDI was a non-finisher with turbo problems, while Peter Felix's race was ended after a nudge into the Duffus Dip gravel trap on lap four.

Today's race was every bit as dramatic, with Wyhinny's Caddy rolling out of the action at Duffus at the start of the second lap, helped on its way, thought Peter, by a nudge from behind. The Caddy came to rest in a gravel trap, Wyhinny unharmed, but the accident necessitated a four-lap safety car period, during which the field bottled itself up behind pole-sitter and early leader Aaron Mason.

Mason gamely held on in front for three laps in his R32 until his more experienced challengers bounced him down the order. First to go through was Chaplin, then, after a big lock-up from Mason into the hairpin, Griffin snuck past too. Next time around Liam made a dive down the leader's inside into the hairpin; Chaplin was having none of it, however, and repulsed the assault.

The very next lap Griffin tried again and this time succeeded in nosing ahead of the Beetle. Fulbrook, who had started sixth by dint of his first-race win and who had clawed his way through to third, followed Griffin past Chaplin to set the scene for a fight to the flag.

For four laps relative novice Liam led old hand Joe, but the Scirocco driver was more than a match for the champion in his Bora and held on in front, even though Fulbrook made a better fist of the final corner, to win by less than two-tenths of a second.

Liam, who had failed to record so much as a finish prior to the Knockhill weekend, was delighted: "I saw Joe behind me and I thought 'Don't panic, stay nice and calm'. The tyres were great, the car was going really well and I thought if I just drove my line then he wasn't getting past me. Our bad start to the season is all forgotten now, that's for sure."

Fulbrook had reason to be pleased also: with five second-place finishes and one win under his belt from six starts, Joe's championship lead is now up to 92 points and is beginning to take on a look of unassailability.

Chaplin took third place once more, a second ahead of Felix's Golf, the Derby man charging through from the back after his first-race off. Dziurzynski started from near the back too and, after an early clash of wheels with Walewska, took advantage of the safety car period to pit for safety checks. Given the OK, he rejoined the race and battled up to fifth, ahead of the Golfs of Mason, Snaylam and Daniels.

Doug Ross made the top 10 again in his Polo, with Smith, Riley and Walewska completing the finishers list. James Walker joined Wyhinny in retirement, his Golf battered during an encounter with Griffin at the hairpin after the restart.

The Volkswagen Racing Cup in association with Hankook is additionally supported by Augustus Martin, Ceva Logistics, ECM Vehicle Delivery, Milltek Sport, Mondial Assistance, KW Automotive, Superchips, Volkswagen Commercial Vehicles and Volkswagen Financial Services UK.