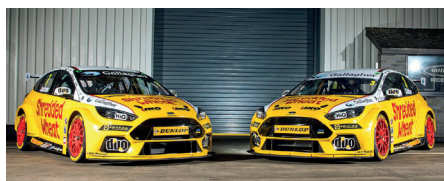


TRIO OF TOP 4S

Photos MATT SAYLE

Sam Tordoff takes a trio of top-four finishes as things look up for the Motorbase team at Thruxton...



The recent rounds of the BTCC at Thruxton finally rewarded us for the pace we always knew the Focus RS had. It was a great weekend all round, but Sam Tordoff secured the team's best results with a hat-trick of 4th place finishes in his Gard-X Racing machine. The results were well deserved, and given Sam's incredible run of bad luck at previous rounds, it was about time things went right for the Yorkshirer.

Sam says: "It's been a really good weekend, which is exactly what we needed

to kick-start our championship and overcome the disaster that we've had at the start. We've had three 4th place finishes and that's a great points haul, and one that I've not had in a long time. It's propelled us right up there in the championship but still outside the top ten which means we'll go to Oulton Park again with no ballast, and that's where we really need to make it count to get back into the fight for the championship."

It was a similar story for Tom Chilton and James Cole in the Team Shredded Wheat Racing with Gallagher Focuses too. Tom had a great first race, following stable-mate Sam through the first corner to move straight up into 6th place. A crowd-pleasing battle ensued as he chased down Jordan's BMW whilst holding off the pair of fast-charging Astra's, before finally passing Jordan on lap

9 to take 5th at the chequered flag. Race 2 proved trickier with 39kg of ballast on-board, but a trouble-free race was rewarded with a P9 finish, while the final race of the day was definitely action packed; a tussle with Austin's Alfa Romeo dropped Tom from 7th to P14, but a stunning move through the complex saw him charge through to take 11th as the final flag dropped.

James Cole's weekend proved to be the most challenging, and after the impressive races at Donington James had to settle for a P19 finish in race one. The second race saw James retire with suspension damage, and the final race saw him finish P24.

Team boss, David Bartrum, said: "Tom had a great weekend. He's little disappointed with 11th in Race 3, but he's been on top form and running in the points all weekend. James didn't have a good time, but he was quite open about Thruxton being his least favourite circuit and I know that he's looking forward to going to Oulton Park next month.

"It feels like a slow burner this season so it's great to have moved forward in the championship this weekend. We're still only on our third round with the drivers and the RS so we're still learning things each round. If we can continue to build on this form going forward, then the podiums and results will quickly follow."

Next up, we head to Oulton Park. See how we get on in the next issue... **FF**



Sam Tordoff secured a good points haul at Thruxton



All three cars are starting to show their pace, and the team hopes podium finishes and race wins will follow shortly