

# Steve braves the wet for podium spot

## Motorsport

MINI racer Steve Miles survived awful weather conditions to record his best finish of the season in the Mighty Minis championship at Pembrey in Wales.

Despite torrential rain on the practice day, Saturday's qualifying was in dry conditions, and Miles, from Horsham, was able to post a competitive time, third fastest which put him on the second row of the grid in his 1992 Mini Cooper.

Series leader Neil Slark was only able to qualify in 18th after an accident during qualifying and James Lyford sat on pole position in front of Miles.

On a dry track for the first race of the weekend, all the leading cars avoided the potential pile up at the first hairpin corner.

Miles held on to third place until half way through the race – he was well tucked in behind the leaders, but an ill fated overtaking move in the seventh lap set him back two sec-



**Excellent race.** Steve Miles during a rare dry session at Pembrey.

onds and into the clutches of the chasing pack.

After clawing his way back into fourth, Miles struggled for grip towards the end of the race and slipped to sixth. Slark picked up the driver of the day honours after roaring through the field, claiming 17 places to finish second.

"I had an excellent race," Miles commented.

"I started well and was pleased to get it around the first bend safely. For ages I

kept the car tucked behind the top two but after an aborted dive up the inside of the Honda bend I lost time. From here I had a good race with Dave Berney and was happy to bring the car in sixth."

Tyre choices were to be critical for the next day's race, heavy rain had left the circuit awash. Miles opted for a fully treaded wet tyre while others took to the road with scrubbed tyres which have around 4mm of tread.

Seconds before the start, the heavens opened again and some drivers rushed back for the full wet tyres.

Starting positions for the second race are dictated by the finish positions from race one. Miles therefore started in sixth and made a good start, gaining two places on the first lap. In a good race he held off several challenges and on lap three moved into third place. Miles made a move on Ian Slark on the exit of the hairpin securing second place. Not long after the race was red flagged due to a car stopped in a dangerous position and the race positions at this time stood.

From his sixth and second places, Miles gained 32 points from the weekend's racing, which places him sixth in the drivers' championship. Adrian Hollis obtained the maximum 40 points and now leads the championship by six points from James Lyford.

The next Mighty Minis race takes place at Snetterton on Saturday, June 17. For further information visit [www.smi-leyracing.co.uk](http://www.smi-leyracing.co.uk).