

# BTCC BACK ON THE GRID

The UK's most popular national motor sport series is underway in its biggest and most competitive seasons in its history

There will be 13 models from 11 different marques taking to the track for this year's Dunlop MSA British Touring Car Championship, including both Honda and MG as official manufacturer teams. It's the biggest BTCC season entry list in its 2-litre history. No fewer than 26 of the now 32-car grid will be entering with the BTCC's NGTC-spec machinery, while a further six competitors will run S2000 cars.

The BTCC also boasts four champions on its 2013 grid plus a new multi-year television contract – securing the current vast ITV coverage until 2017. A new 'soft compound' Dunlop tyre has also been introduced to add a new strategic element to each team's race weekend. This year's BTCC will again comprise 30 races across ten events at nine venues around the UK.

## Making up the grid

The BTCC has one of the largest and most varied touring car grids in the world. Official manufacturer entries from Honda Yuasa Racing and MG KX Momentum Racing are joined by a host of independent teams entering cars from Audi (WIX Racing), BMW (eBay Motors), Chevrolet (BTC Racing, M247 Racing, Team Club 44), Ford (Addison Lee Motorbase, Airwaves Racing, Welch Motorsport with Sopp + Sopp), Honda (Pirtek Racing), Proton (Welch Motorsport with Sopp + Sopp), SEAT (Team BMR Restart), Toyota (Ciceley, Dynojet, Speedworks), Vauxhall



(RCIB Insurance Racing, Wheel Heaven/Houseman Racing) and Volkswagen (PPCGB.com/Kraftwerk Racing) – the latter two will be represented by their respective Insignia and Vectra and Golf and Passat models.

The Goodyear Dunlop group – celebrating its own 125-year anniversary in 2013 – enters a tenth year of title sponsorship and tyre supply to the BTCC.

Series director Alan Gow said that the record entry

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list was a validation of the NGTC technical regulations first introduced in 2011. The aim of the spec was to allow more manufacturers and privateers to participate by bringing down the cost of a competitive car and to address the reliance on the increasingly expensive Super 2000 equipment. But a special cup will go to the highest S2000 finisher in each race, with the driver who claims the most victories over the course of the season winning the inaugural 'Jack Sears Trophy', named in honour of the winner of the inaugural BTCC title in 1958.

Gow said the current health of the BTCC is “absolutely fantastic and even more staggering, perhaps, with the challenging economic climate.”

Trackside attendance has increased year-on-year over the last decade and the TV audience figures have led to a renewed contract with ITV, meaning coverage will be free-to-air until at least 2017.

“We have a huge grid – including four champions in the line-up – culminating in fresh colours, cars and stars in the BTCC. The strength in depth continues to rise along with the undoubted professionalism and turnout of our loyal and committed teams. That is why the BTCC is so firmly cemented as the UK's premier and most popular motor sport series.”

Visit [www.btcc.net](http://www.btcc.net) for news and results. ■



inside Aron Smith's Airwaves Racing Ford Focus ST



Honda Yuasa Racing's Matt Neal and reigning champion Gordon Shedden



Nick Foster takes to the track in his eBay Motors BMW 125i M Sport