

Torque Driver

Gavin Johnson

They say success doesn't come easy. That's certainly been true of my gruelling, title-winning season competing in the 2018 BRSCC Toyo Tires Porsche Championship...

As previously documented in the pages of *Ultimate Porsche*, my first experience racing a 924 came three years ago. I bought shared ownership of a car with my friend, Pip Hammond. We campaigned the seasoned racing machine in the BRSCC Toyo Tires Porsche Championship. Having already won the 750 Motor Club's Classic Stock Hatch series, Pip had more experience behind the wheel than I. Needless to say, when we secured support from team sponsor, PDC Racing, and subsequently hit the track in a 924 each, it came as little surprise to see Pip dominate the field and win the competition. I gave a good fight, finishing 2017's driver standings in second place.

Prior to this year's championship, I'd only ever won a single race, but with a strong finish behind me from 2017, plus a huge amount of self-belief, I was confident I could take the top spot. Lady Luck seemed to have other ideas...

The first race of the season at Oulton Park was going well until my car's inlet pipe decided to disconnect itself. I finished last. Despite having to begin from the back of the grid, I put in a strong performance for race two. Climbing all the way to third place, a podium finish awaited. Unfortunately, my car ran out of fuel on the last lap. Bah!

Knockhill was the next round on the calendar. I went into the weekend with a massive points deficit. I needed to pull out all the stops to keep my title dreams alive. Demonstrating determination, I qualified in pole position, finished one of the races in first place and ended the other two in second. I was back in contention, momentum which continued when I started the first race at Cadwell Park in P2 and finished in first place. The second race in Lincolnshire saw my 924's throttle cable snap just as I'd secured a ten-second lead! It was another frustrating DNF, but I managed to claw back a haul of points by winning the third race of the weekend. Phew!

I'd hoped for a smoother run when the



championship arrived at Rockingham. After all, how much bad luck can one driver have?! All was going well when I set a new lap record and won the first two races at the soon-to-be-closed circuit, but a snapped fan belt during the third and final outing at "Europe's fastest racing venue" put paid to my celebrations. I was frustrated by continually inconsistent results, not least of all because I knew there was no further room for error if I was to clinch the title. Not even winning all three races at Castle Combe, doing the same at Anglesey, setting new lap records and winning at Brands Hatch was enough to see me through to victory!

The final weekend of the championship took place at Donington Park. I was twelve points clear of my nearest rival, but there was seventy-five points up for grabs. I won the first two races at the famous Leicestershire site. To win the title, all I had to do was complete the third race without incident. A whining gearbox and a separating inlet manifold gave me serious cause for concern, but my trusty 924 held on long enough for me to finish third. Victory had come down to the final race of the season, but I was finally champion!

Above We've enjoyed shadowing Gavin's progress in the Toyo Tires Porsche Championship

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