

FIA EUROPEAN DRAG RACING CHAMPIONSHIP: 2012

Round Number: **FIA 5**
Event: **Sweden Internationals**
Class: **Pro - Stock**
Location: **Tierp Arena, Sweden**
Date: **24th - 26th, 2012**

Entry List

Jimmy Ålund	SWE
Micke Callin	SWE
Thomas Lindström	SWE
Harald Sturhan	GER
Michael Malmgren	SWE
Bo Pettersson	SWE
Sampsa Palos	FIN
Mats Jacobsson	SWE
Christian Sagelv	SWE
Ulf Wagnhester	SWE
Magnus Petersson	SWE
Richard Sundblom	FIN

Once again I was delighted to attend the wonderful Tierp Arena and report on the Pro Stock championship. Sweden and my Pro Stock friends were, as always, welcoming and friendly. I look forward to this trip every year.

Before this event, the championship leader was Thomas Lindström with 263 points leading from Jimmy Ålund on 224 and Micke Callin on 176.

It is not unreasonable to suggest that this season has not gone entirely to everyone's ideal plans. After the rained off final at Alastaro, the strange happenings at Hockenheim, track issues and rain at Santa Pod as well as a rain affected Tierp 1, this season has thrown everything there is at the Pro Stock teams, and yet there are 12 cars here at Tierp, all looking to perform for this knowledgeable and enthusiastic crowd.

Conrad Stanley has not made the trip to Sweden. Budgetary restraints and a lack of parts make it impossible for Conrad to make the trip. Jonas Dantanus is also an absentee; Jonas has other commitments which take priority.

Jan Palmqvist is present, but in a support role to his old friend and sparring partner Richard Sundblom.

A new team to me is Magnus Petersson in a Pontiac GTO, meeting Magnus for the first time is a pleasure. Magnus' PB Racing team is a family concern, and they tell me that their aim for the weekend is to have fun and run representative times. "Everything else is a plus" says Magnus. A new and extremely likeable team has come into the pitlane.

I have said before in these reports that "Bo Pettersson and Mats Jacobsson are not seen outside Sweden", Mats tells me that this may have been true before, but he will contest the rest of the rounds this year and hopes to contest all rounds in 2013

Bo is competing in his second full FIA round this year, a first for the extremely friendly and entertaining driver.

Christian Sagelv is entered with his beautifully presented Gulf Oil sponsored Ford Focus, the only Ford in European Pro-Stock. The first time I have seen this car in the flesh, and it is not at all disappointing. Ford have not been in European Pro Stock for a very long time, so this car brings an interesting and attractive dimension to the field.

Micke Callin has never qualified better than eighth at Tierp in three competitive visits. Micke wants to get rid of this record this weekend.

Michael Malmgren has had an uncharacteristically poor season, without the opportunity to compete properly through a combination of rain affected rounds and track conditions. Michael is frustrated with the 2012 season.

Friday Q1

Just before the 1st qualifier call, Bo Pettersson has a clutch leak and tells me he will not make the call. Everyone else seems ready to go and make their way down to the pairing lanes.

First car out is Magnus Petersson, who has enlisted some high class help. Jimmy Ålund is at the back of the car guiding Magnus back in, and passing on some hints to Magnus' son. Magnus puts in a decent smokey burn out and follows it up with a 7.547 pass at 302.69 kmh. This pass did not seem to go entirely according to plan with some late gear changes and some shake at the eighth, but Magnus has now put in his first pass in competition, and is for now the number one qualifier. That will not last, but the car is at the other end of the track, with chutes out and no visible sign of damage, the team look pleased.

Next pair is Richard Sundblom and Christian Sagelv. "Nixon hits instant shake and comes off the throttle before the tree to roll through for a 22.122 at 54.66 pass.

Christian also hits shake early and drives through it before clicking off at 300 ft to take a 10.941 at 134.6 rolling pass.

Three cars down the track and Magnus Petersson's number one place remains. Next pair is Harald Sturhan's Mercedes and Ulf Wagnhester's Dodge. Harald is shut down after the burn out for a fluid leak which turns out to be rainwater from last night's showers. Ulf is shut down momentarily while Harald is pushed back and then takes a wild ride to the right guardrail before clicking off to run through in 13.112 at 103.41, and Magnus Petersson is still sitting in that number one spot.

Sampsa Palos and Michael Malmgren make up the next pair. Sampsa hits hard shake at the hit and the revs climb alarmingly high before he clicks it off and runs through for 35.579 at 27.89kmh. Michael fares better and drives through some rough shake at mid track for the first 6 second pass of Pro Stock Q1. Michael goes to number one with a 6.815 at 312.14. That run looks as though it shook hard, Michael might well have a head ache after that!

Mats Jacobsson and Micke Callin are next to try. Mats burnout is more like a drifting contest with the tail of the car moving several feet left and right. Mats in the left lane launches well, but the run looks wayward and he seems to throttle back at mid track for a 7.618 pass at 226.32. In the right lane, Micke's Pontiac hooks up beautifully, lifting both front wheels together before squatting down and driving hard. He takes a little bit of a longer path than optimum with perhaps a bit of torque steer coming into play, but from the hit, this run looked excellent. The timing clocks tell us how good when it flashes up a 6.704 at 334.78. This is the first half of a European speed record and Kenta and the rest of the MGC crew look suitably pleased. Micke into number one position.

Next up are Jimmy Ålund in the left lane and Thomas Lindström in the right. These two are fighting over first place in the championship. Thomas seems to have caught the Freddie bug with an enormous burn out, after which he seems to struggle to find reverse. When the car does eventually come back, Jimmy is ready to stage, but the Thomas' Stratus sounds rough and cuts out. Thomas restarts, but between the crew and the starter, the decision is made to shut it off. I don't know whether it was Roffe who shut it down or the starter who told them to, but Thomas will not take the car into stage. In the left lane Jimmy leaves hard and smoothly but takes a slightly long route to the stripe, moving out towards the rail. It does not seem to make any difference though, as Jimmy goes into number one position with a 6.686 333.33kmh pass.

	Q1 Positions	reaction	time	speed KMH	Speed MPH
1	Jimmy Ålund	0.0586	6.6869	333.33	207.12
2	Micke Callin	0.2573	6.7047	334.78	208.02
3	Michael Malmgren	0.2257	6.8152	312.14	193.96
4	Magnus Petersson	0.3992	7.5176	302.69	188.08
5	Mats Jacobsson	0.1789	7.6186	226.32	140.63
6	Christian Sagelv	0.1994	10.9416	134.6	83.64
7	Ulf Wagnhester	0.8558	13.1125	103.41	64.26
8	Richard Sundblom	0.1345	22.122	54.66	33.96
9	Sampsa Palos	0.081	35.5793	27.89	17.33
10	Harald Sturhan	No time			0.00
11	Thomas Lindström	No time			0.00
12	Bo Pettersson	No time			0.00

Friday Q2

The bump spot from this morning is 22.122 seconds (Richard Sundblom)

First pair to come out in the afternoon session are Bo Pettersson who has fixed his clutch problems and is ready to try and get on the board, and Harald Sturhan, having discovered the fluid leak from the morning session was nothing more sinister than some residual rainwater from when the car was being pitted on Thursday.

Bo has invented a new form of Pro Stock racing which we are called Pro Stock Drifting. Bo really had to drive as he had tyre spin all the way up the track and was fighting power over steer every inch of the way. Bo gets a number on the board though with a hard earned 7.910 at 276.92. Harald also gets under the bump with a 7.906 at 224.25, although the car did not sound entirely on song through 1000ft.

Bump spot 10.941 (Christian Sagelv)

Next pair are Thomas Lindström and Sampsa Palos. Thomas needs a time whilst Sampsa needs to improve considerably. Both achieve their aims with Thomas putting in a respectable 6.758 at 332.52 against Sampsa's 6.779 at 324.91. The red light in Sampsa's lane does not matter in qualifying, however the -0.0008 margin for the cherry shows Sampsa was trying hard.

Bump Spot 7.906 (Harald Sturhan)

Ulf Wagnhester and Richard Sundblom are next round. Ulf had some shake but drove through it for a mid table 7.027 at 322.58. In the right lane Richard moved out to the centre but held the car well for a solid qualification run of 6.725 at 331.09.

Bump Spot 7.5176 (Magnus Petersson)

Christian Sagelv and Mats Jacobsson are the next pair gunning for Magnus' bump spot, and it is a great drag race. Christian achieving a personal best of 6.935 at 318.58 to Mats 6.952 at 322. Mats Jacobsson taking the bump spot there with only Magnus Petersson left able to take it away.

Bump Spot 6.952 (Mats Jacobsson)

Michael Malmgren and Magnus Petersson are the penultimate pair. Michael is "safely" qualified but at number six position he will be looking to improve. Magnus is on the outside at the moment and needs to improve to get into the field. Michael has bad tyre shake again and is off the power before half track and does not improve with a 8.042 at 200.74. Magnus manages to improve on his time from this morning with a 7.113 driven through shake, but it is not enough and he stays outside the qualification time.

Bump Spot 6.953 (Mats Jacobsson)

Mats Jacobsson is safe now as all cars that could eliminate him from the qualifying table have already gone. The last pair are Micke Callin and Jimmy Ålund. Micke is looking for a back up to his speed record from this morning and needs to hit

331.48kmh to secure the record. Unfortunately Micke hits instant shake and will not back up his record this round. Jimmy launches well but shuts off before 1000ft, the engine note changing subtly just before he clicks it off. Perhaps there is damage there.

	Q2 Positions	reaction	time	speed KMH	Speed MPH
1	Jimmy Ålund	0.0586	6.6869	333.33	207.12
2	Micke Callin	0.2573	6.7047	334.78	208.02
3	Richard Sundblom	0.3486	6.7251	331.09	205.73
4	Thomas Lindström	0.0807	6.758	332.51	206.61
5	Sampsa Palos	-0.0008	6.7791	324.91	201.89
6	Michael Malmgren	0.2257	6.8152	312.14	193.96
7	Christian Sagelv	0.0961	6.9354	318.58	197.96
8	Mats Jacobsson	0.088	6.9528	322	200.08
9	Ulf Wagnhester	0.042	7.027	322.58	200.44
10	Magnus Petersson	0.2496	7.1139	303.71	188.72
11	Harald Sturhan	0.172	7.9065	224.25	139.34
12	Bo Pettersson	0.1003	7.9104	276.92	172.07

Friday Evening

Jimmy Ålund has an engine change to complete tonight, the last run did some rod damage.

Ulf Wagnhester is also changing engines, but his change is a routine swap due to number of runs on the block.

Magnus has no problems, saying his run was slower than he hoped mostly due to driver error. Magnus is learning Pro Stock as he goes, and can see from his data that his gear changes are not optimum.

Sampsa Palos is scratching his head. The run was not good, and the data shows that they are down on horsepower, but they cannot find a reason. Everything checks out it just does not make the power it should.

The rest of the teams are just conducting routine maintenance and preparation for tomorrow's two qualifiers.

Saturday Qualification 3

Lots of teams have sponsors here for today's racing Micke Callin, Jimmy Ålund, Thomas Lindström and Christian Sagelv all have large parties watching. All of these will be keen to impress.

Bump Spot 6.9528 (Mats Jacobsson)

First pair on Saturday are Harald Sturhan and Micke Callin. Harald needs to get in the show, and Micke needs to top 331.48 to back up his speed record.

Harald improves on yesterday's times but does not make it into the field moving up to 10th with a 7.028 at 316.9. In the right lane however, Micke manages 6.725 but more importantly runs through in 333.13 which backs up his European speed record.

Excellent work, especially in front of the sponsors.

Bump Spot 6.9528 (Mats Jacobsson)

Next pair are Magnus and Michael. Magnus improves again moving from 11th to 9th. Not enough to get in the game but consistent improvement from the debutante racer. Michael moves up a place with a 6.789.

Bump Spot 6.9528 (Mats Jacobsson)

Jimmy and Bo approach the line. In another of those Pro Stock “family” moments, Michaels team are lending support to Bo. The Ålund Camaro improves to solidify first position with Jimmy running 6.696, but Bo does not improve running 8.343

Bump Spot 6.9528 (Mats Jacobsson)

Mats and Ulf are next up. Mats cannot improve but does take a circuitous route to the stripe, staying in the throttle all the way but to no avail. Ulf has a huge red light, but in qualification it doesn't matter and he moves up to 7th with his first 6 of the weekend. 6.908 at 324.13.

Bump Spot 6.9354 (Christian Sagelv)

Sampsa and Christian make their attempts to improve. Sampsa cannot go any better than yesterday, but Christian does improve, however it only serves to lower his own bump spot, Christian taking 8th place away from himself with 6.918 at 319.34 however the remaining two cars are already in the field so Christian has cemented his place in the show.

Bump Spot 6.9186 (Christian Sagelv)

The final pair are Richard and Thomas. Neither can improve, Thomas in particular has some problems and was off the power before two thirds track.

	Q3 Positions	reaction	time	speed KMH	Speed MPH
1	Jimmy Ålund	0.0586	6.696	334.57	207.89
2	Micke Callin	0.2573	6.7047	334.78	208.02
3	Richard Sundblom	0.3486	6.7251	331.09	205.73
4	Thomas Lindström	0.0807	6.758	332.51	206.61
5	Sampsa Palos	-0.0008	6.7791	324.91	201.89
6	Michael Malmgren	0.0938	6.7984	327.27	203.36
7	Ulf Wagnhester	-0.1843	6.9085	324.13	201.41
8	Christian Sagelv	0.0961	6.9186	319.34	198.43
9	Mats Jacobsson	0.088	6.9528	322	200.08
10	Magnus Petersson	0.1585	6.9881	318.77	198.07
11	Harald Sturhan	0.1644	7.0285	316.9	196.91
12	Bo Pettersson	0.1003	7.9104	276.92	172.07

Saturday Q4

The last chance for anyone to improve and the air is good. Temperatures through the day have been quite high, but it is cooling down a little now and the Pro Stock cars should like it.

Bump Spot 6.9186 (Christian Sagelv)

The first pair are Bo Petersson and Harald Sturhan. I don't know what happened in Bo's lane, but he left before the tree activated and therefore cannot improve. Harald had a wild ride seeing the guard rail at least twice. Later I asked him how many walls he saw and Harald tells me it was four. Harry had obviously taken a brave pill with his lunch though because he stayed with it until the very last moment clicking off to run through with no improvement and staying outside the show for Sunday.

Bump Spot 6.9186 (Christian Sagelv)

Christian and Magnus made up the next pair. Christian improved again, but only enough to lower his own bump spot. Magnus also improved and solidified his ninth position. Only Mats now can take Christian's 8th place.

Bump Spot 6.9186 (Christian Sagelv)

And here is Mats in the next pair with 7th place man Ulf Wagnhester, 6.91 or lower gets Mats into the show. Mats cannot do it, he does not improve but in the other lane Ulf makes a small improvement but not enough for a position change

Bump Spot 6.9186 (Christian Sagelv)

Michael and Sampsa are next. Michael's car hooked hard right at the hit, and Michael wisely chose to get off the power. Sampsa in the right lane could not improve on his 5th place

Thomas and Richard come up next, Thomas Dodge Stratus squats down hard at the hit and runs arrow straight. It sounds on song all the way up and Thomas is rewarded with a 6.6660 at 334.16 to take number one qualifier. Richard runs 6.745 at 329.27 which does not improve his position, he will have to settle for fourth.

Micke and Jimmy round out the session and neither can better their times from yesterday. They do treat the crowd to a good old fashioned drag race though, much to the delight of the Swedish race fans.

Ulf Wagnhester's run in this session was DQ'd for a weight violation, so his time from the previous session is carried forward.

Final qualification therefore looks like this

	Q4 Positions	reaction	time	speed KMH	Speed MPH
1	Thomas Lindström	0.0807	6.666	334.16	207.64
2	Jimmy Ålund	0.0586	6.6869	333.33	207.12
3	Micke Callin	0.2573	6.7047	334.78	208.02
4	Richard Sundblom	0.3486	6.7251	331.09	205.73
5	Sampsa Palos	-0.0008	6.7791	324.91	201.89
6	Michael Malmgren	0.0938	6.7984	327.27	203.36
7	Ulf Wagnhester	-0.1843	6.9085	324.13	201.41
8	Christian Sagelv	0.0961	6.91	319.72	198.67
9	Magnus Petersson	0.1585	6.925	321.05	199.49
10	Mats Jacobsson	0.088	6.9528	322	200.08
11	Harald Sturhan	0.1644	7.0285	316.9	196.91
12	Bo Pettersson	0.1003	7.9104	276.92	172.07

Sunday – Eliminations

Sampsa Palos has a broken lifter but the crew cannot extract the carrier and they fear they may not make the call. Rain in the morning has delayed proceedings, and the Pro-Stock teams do not get called to the line until after lunch, Sampsa's crew are looking forlorn, but no one has stopped trying to fix the car. As I gather the teams for eliminations, I have to tell Magnus Petersson that he may well be racing after all. This is both a happy and sad job. Magnus is delighted that he might get to race again, Sampsa is distraught that he might not. But it is the right way to go about this. Magnus must be given time to prepare and Sampsa must be allowed time to make the call.

The first pair are pulling through the tunnel. Magnus Petersson is in the car, ready to race when a commotion from the tunnel announces that Sampsa Palos has made it. Crew chief Marko Someroja exchanges a look with Magnus which says everything, "Man, I am sorry to do this to you, but we are here to race". Magnus deals with the highs and lows of the past minutes admirably.

The first pair are Sampsa Palos and Richard Sundblom, who treat us to a long burn down and staging duel. Finland versus Finland. Sampsa goes into stage first and leaves first with Richard chasing him hard. Some change in engine note from Sampsa's car at half-track and it is all Richard's to the line. Back in the pits Mikko Österburg tells me they broke a valve spring on that run, but it was not related to the lifter problem. Richard Sundblom progresses.

Second pairing is Michael Malmgren and Micke Callin. Micke goes into pre stage quickly, and Michael makes him wait an age before joining him. Same happens into stage. Micke in promptly, Michael taking his time. Micke makes him pay for that with a 0.09 light and seems to be driving away from Michael at sixty feet, but the tyres begin to shake on the second shift and it develops to be so bad the chutes deploy before 300 ft which take out the timing cone. Michael has a trouble free 6.806 pass to progress to the next round. The man in third place in the championship is out of this competition, but his closest rival did not qualify for the elimination phase, so Micke is probably safe.

Jimmy Ålund and Ulf Wagnhester come through the tunnel next. Another great drag race with Ulf leaving first and Jimmy chasing him down before overhauling and outrunning him to the line. Ulf heads for the trailer and Jimmy progresses.

Final pair is the Ernyrd Cars Dodge Stratus of Thomas Lindstrom against the Gulf oil Ford Focus of Christian Sagelv. Christian hits Thomas with a massive holeshoot of 0.1924 seconds, which Thomas has to recover and take back. Thomas manages it, but only just and only by the very thickness of his front spoiler. Thomas runs 6.7519 against Christian's 6.9455 which gives a margin of victory of 0.0012 or 9cm. Margins of victory are just an interesting diversion though, a victory is a victory no matter how close it was, and Thomas moves forward whilst Christian takes his car home to try and fight another day.

Sunday Eliminations Round 2

Winners and pairings from round one are

Thomas Lindström against Richard Sundblom
Jimmy Ålund against Michael Malmgren

Richard gives the race to Thomas with a huge red light, which is a shame because the times are very close and it should have been a good drag race.

Jimmy leaves on Michael and then out runs him too. I doubt Jimmy even saw Michael during that race.

We have our finalists, and they are the two men fighting for the championship win

Sunday – Final

Unfortunately we were rained off late in the afternoon on Sunday, so the final did not take place. Jimmy and Thomas will share runner up points, which makes the championship table look like this

Driver	Number	Country	GB	SWE	FIN	GER	SWE	GB	Total
Thomas Lindström	3	SWE	82	102	43	36	83	0	346
Jimmy Ålund	1	SWE	35	78	77	34	77	0	301
Micke Callin	6	SWE	58	12	75	33	36	0	214
Mats Jacobsson	919	SWE	0	54	53	37	12	0	156
Michael Malmgren	4	SWE	0	12	54	34	54	0	154
Sampsä Palos	5	SWE	0	56	34	0	34	0	124
Ulf Wagnhester	10	SWE	0	34	12	43	33	0	122
Richard Sundblom	5	FIN	0	0	36	0	55	0	91
Christian Sagelv	4047	SWE	0	33	12	0	33	0	78
Jan Palmqvist	8	SWE	0	35	33	0	0	0	68
Harald Sturhan	5418	GER	0	12	0	35	12	0	59
Bo Pettersson	1283	SWE	0	12	12	0	12	0	36
Conrad Stanley	1059	GBR	0	36	0	0	0	0	36
Jonas Dantanus	7	SWE	0	33	0	0	0	0	33
Magnus Petersson	4919	SWE	0	0	0	0	12	0	12

So now we move on to Santa Pod where Jimmy Ålund must qualify number one, with low ET and win the event to be sure of beating Thomas Lindström. Other scenarios are possible, but from Jimmy's point of view, only a win and low et will secure the title.

Unlike last year when Jimmy only needed to pass scrutineering to take the championship, Thomas still has work to do to be sure of the win.

I look forward to the outcome with great interest, so should you. There is a big rivalry brewing here, and it could go on for a long time.

Ian Hart