

The Motor Cycling Club Ltd
MONTHLY NEWS LETTER: DECEMBER 2009

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Special Note: Much of this monthly newsletter consists of extracts from NOTW which those of you who are receiving it by Email will have already seen. I hope you will not find it too boring but please take it as a compliment and a thank you for your efforts which make NOTW such a success. I can see no better way to give a "Members' eye view" of our activities.

THE YEAR THAT HAS PASSED:

As it's the end of another year I thought we'd be less serious and look back on the season's trials through the eyes of members who contributed their first impressions of each event by brief Emails which have become a regular feature in News of the Week.

Let's start with January's EXETER TRIAL.

The Clerk of the Course's summing up: Despite the ice and freezing weather conditions it seems everyone enjoyed themselves. Some marshalling teams have already booked their places for next year they enjoyed themselves so much so thank you to all the competitors for making the marshals so happy.. There were some delays at Fingle and Tipley. Any thoughts? Simms was in a generous mood this year. Other hills were not so forgiving however. And it seems some of the route marking went missing. The organising team enjoy reading all your comments. Please keep them coming.

Former MCC Secretary, Mike Furse lives by the route soon after Meerhay: Sheila heard the first bikes and promptly went back to sleep. I didn't hear any of the bikes, only the occasional car. Apart from one or two crackly ones towards the end of the trial (bit of misfiring on the overrun) we didn't think any of them were noisy and none came past at excessive speed, which is different from the norm around here! Thought I'd just pass that on.

Graham Whiting's 15 years old daughter's view: Brrrrr! It was cold! And we had a roof and a heater. We had a great time, despite failing to climb Windout, wheelspinning on the ice on the bend after the restart and Fingle because we had stopped trying. The thing I love about MCC trials is the way that so many people from so many different places and backgrounds all come together to enjoy the same thing. We might never speak to them if we passed them in the street, but here we are all so friendly. So a big thank you to all the Marshals, organisers and competitors for giving us a great time.

Stuart Harrold was thankful for modern technology: As I drove my Troll, which has no heater, roof or doors through the very dense freezing fog from Cirencester to Haynes it made me think. In my 12 years of trialling the Troll this was my first experience of freezing fog. But think back to the early days of the Exeter when winters were really cold and freezing fog the norm. How did those early competitors manage, poor roads, no white lines or cats eyes, carbide or oil lamps, wool or leather clothes that eventually absorb the wet and London to Exeter and return. Friday night may have had bad weather but at least I was warm and dry in my Goretex clothing, there were white lines and cats eyes in places, the car had good halogen headlights. Compared to the early trials I guess we have it pretty easy!

Roger Ugalde's eventful night in a (very) open Allard with a first time passenger:

Temperatures averaged about 3 degrees below all night

Sourton scrutineering - Lighting relay stuck - fixed

Night run - salt spray terrible on screen and lights - kept stopping to clean off

Haynes - puncture in car park - wheel changed

Haynes - Caroline lost her specs - borrowed a pair from Terry Flay

Meerhay - wrong bridleway route marked - ended up in a field with quite a few others.

Streetes - a car slid in ditch due to ice, delayed about 20 minutes, had to keep the engine running as the dynamo doesn't keep up with lights - carburettor icing spluttered to a halt.

Exeter services - had a dodgy prawn sandwich and felt sick for hours

Tillerton - restart covered in ice (that's my excuse)

Fingle - A good hour and a half delay

Wooston Steep - timing slipped just after restart box, spluttered to another halt

Slippery Sam - one place in restart box not to stop - I did

Most of the event - Caroline kept asking if it was always this much fun and did I think the wedding was still such a good idea.

Hotel ran out of hot water - had cold showers.

Did we enjoy it? The club dinner was pretty good.

This is the abridged version but thanks for asking how we got on.

A FEW MONTHS LATER WE ENJOYED A FINE EASTER FOR THE LANDS END.

My Comment: Most of us are quietly recovering from the sunshine and enjoyment of what only the Lands End Trial can give. For most it seems to have been a very happy event with splendid weather and sections which proved surprisingly difficult in spite of the good weather in preceding weeks. For two people though the event was not so happy. Celia Walton misjudged Bluehills with the result the outfit overturned in such a way most of the weight was taken by her lady passenger, Rowena Hoseason, who up to that point had been enjoying her first ever Lands End Trial. Thanks to the prompt actions of the St John's Ambulance and everyone else concerned both girls were removed to hospital where Rowena was detained for a couple of days with several broken ribs and some worrying internal bruising. **(Fortunately both recovered to trial another day)**

Ian Collins enjoyed his little Gilera on the big hills: I would like to express my thanks to the organisers for arranging the Lands End to coincide with my 60th birthday last Friday. I had a cracking time on my little Gilera on some challenging hills, and it was great to meet so many cheerful and encouraging folks, both competing and marshalling. I can't wait for the Edinburgh!

Jon Laver was impressed by a newcomer: I had the pleasure of meeting up with Julian Gurney and Jock Jackson driving their MGB GT in Class 0. Both devoted MGB enthusiasts, their car looked like it was on the way to a Concours show rather than a trial. For the past ten years the boys have been woken by the event passing their homes near Beggars Roost. They had entered the trial solely to find out what we did and where we were going. When we spoke, they were having a great time – does anything else matter? Yes – *come back next year*

Alan Grassam and his MG mates enjoy their marshalling: Just a little comment about the value Class O. Two chaps arrived at the start line on Ruses Mill. After the usual chit-chat I said, "Of course, you know that you have a re-start." "What's that when it's out?" they chorused. Hopefully I was able to enlighten them before the event. I have to say that class 0 is great, so relaxed and just fun. Our team enjoys running Slippery Sam just as much but it's oh so much more serious. Long live Class O!

THEN IN OCTOBER CAME THE EDINBURGH:

Members of the **Edinburgh Trial** organising team are breathing a heartfelt sigh of relief. After problems with the route, a shortage of marshals, potential problems and finally the printers' machinery breaking down, everything has been printed and sent by post to competitors and non competing members alike. Despite the threats of postal strikes in parts of the country this should ensure all is delivered in time for the night.

Keith Johnston I thought the loss of some much loved sections in the form of Litton and Great Hucklow would detract from this years' Edinburgh. I was wrong. The lack of rain was apparent with some sections much rougher and more challenging than usual - a true test of skill on two, three and four wheels. The replacement sections towards the end were different and yet still sufficiently interesting and demanding - one even had some mud! Finally, who ever mapped the route from Bull i'th Thorn to Bamford and back deserves a medal of their own - traffic free winding roads and fantastic views. Thank you to all the organisers and officials for a great event.

Graham and Lauren Whiting What a fantastic day. The sun shone, the rain fell and the wind blew. The hills were dry and grippy and wet and slippery all within half an hour. Black Harry tried to get in through the floor and Dudwood 2 tried to sap all our strength. But we think we cleared them all and managed to stay on time.

Rick Howell The trial route was excellent, with plenty of trails to ride beyond the sections - thoroughly enjoyed that. We stayed mostly away from the main roads - I personally enjoyed that too. The sections varied from mild (Wigber) to pretty rough (Putwell both) and Elmore had the added hazard of a vicious side wind (especially on a light bike) and that headwind made very hard work of it in places. But the rain stayed away (mostly), the bike kept going (mostly), I kept awake made very hard work of it in places. But the rain stayed away (mostly), the bike kept going (mostly), I kept awake (mostly) and it was nice to see familiar faces at Tamworth and Bull i'th Thorn and at lots of the sections (absolutely). *A cracking trial all told.*

John Kenny - Hero or Villain? Is it possible to complete one of the MCCs "big three" on a modern, Beta Rev-3 trials bike? Well, no seat and a three litre fuel tank would suggest not. Whilst the terrain posed less of a problem, the 40 mile fuel range and excruciating riding position added a new dimension to the challenge. However, after 200 miles (the ride to the start and a few wrong turns), 15 litres of fuel and about 10 hours I'm pleased to say it *can* be done. Where are those Exeter regs!

Just before I received this Email I had been having a chat with another member who felt this rider should have been hung, drawn and probably quartered for producing such a bike in an MCC event while I thought he should have a special award in the form of a saddle – made from Bluehills Tin of course.

NOTE: This letter led to lots of controversy but since then the committee has ruled that to maintain the true MCC spirit members may compete in or on any vehicle which is road legal and complies with our SSRs

Although these are only a few of the many comments we have received it's interesting to note how they mostly centre on the little things that make MCC trialling so enjoyable. It's also notable that members enjoy events whether competing, marshalling, watching or just tucked up in bed listening to it happening! May it long continue to be so.

Seasonal greetings And so my friends, as they used to say in those old time travelogues, the time has come to bid farewell to 2009 and look forward to what 2010 brings.

Before then though we have that great midwinter festival which has been celebrated by different varieties of *homo sapiens* since Mr Darwin's friends first waddled from the seas. So to you all, whether you worship that fellow from Bethlehem or the bloke from Mecca - or even that muddy lump of machinery in the garage - on behalf of the officers, the committee and all who work to organise our events may I wish you a happy holiday with more "Cleans" in 2010.

COMING EVENTS IN 2010

Exeter Trial - 8/9 January; Lands End Trial - 2/3 April; Exeter Centenary Event - 29 May; Testing Trial - 11 July; Edinburgh Trial - 2 October.