

MCC MEMBERSHIP SURVEY 2004

Presented to

The Motor Cycling Club Ltd

By

Enterprise Planning & Research

Background

- the MCC is known for its 3 main long distance classic reliability trials: Exeter, Land's End, Edinburgh
- the club has recently celebrated its 100th anniversary
- in recent years, several changes to the running of these events have been made by the Committee in response to:
 - falling numbers of entries
 - the perception that the 3 main trials have become too challenging & too rough for the average club member
- the reaction to these changes has been mixed and the need for them questioned by some members
- this survey was proposed to allow all members to voice their opinions on these matters and on the future direction of the club's events

Objectives (1)

- the main objective of the research was to foster better understanding between the Executive Committee and the Membership as a whole
- specific objectives included:
 - to determine attitudes to the core values of the club
 - to profile the membership in terms of both socio-demographic information & involvement in motorsport
 - to assess frequency of participation in club events and determine reasons for not competing/doing so less often
 - to investigate members' needs in relation to events

Objectives (2)

- in other words the objective was to answer this:
“How many more of these lunatics are there to arrive, and why do they do it?”
- asked by someone once watching the finish of an MCC trial
- but perhaps also the concern of Committee members, among others, in recent years

Method of Work

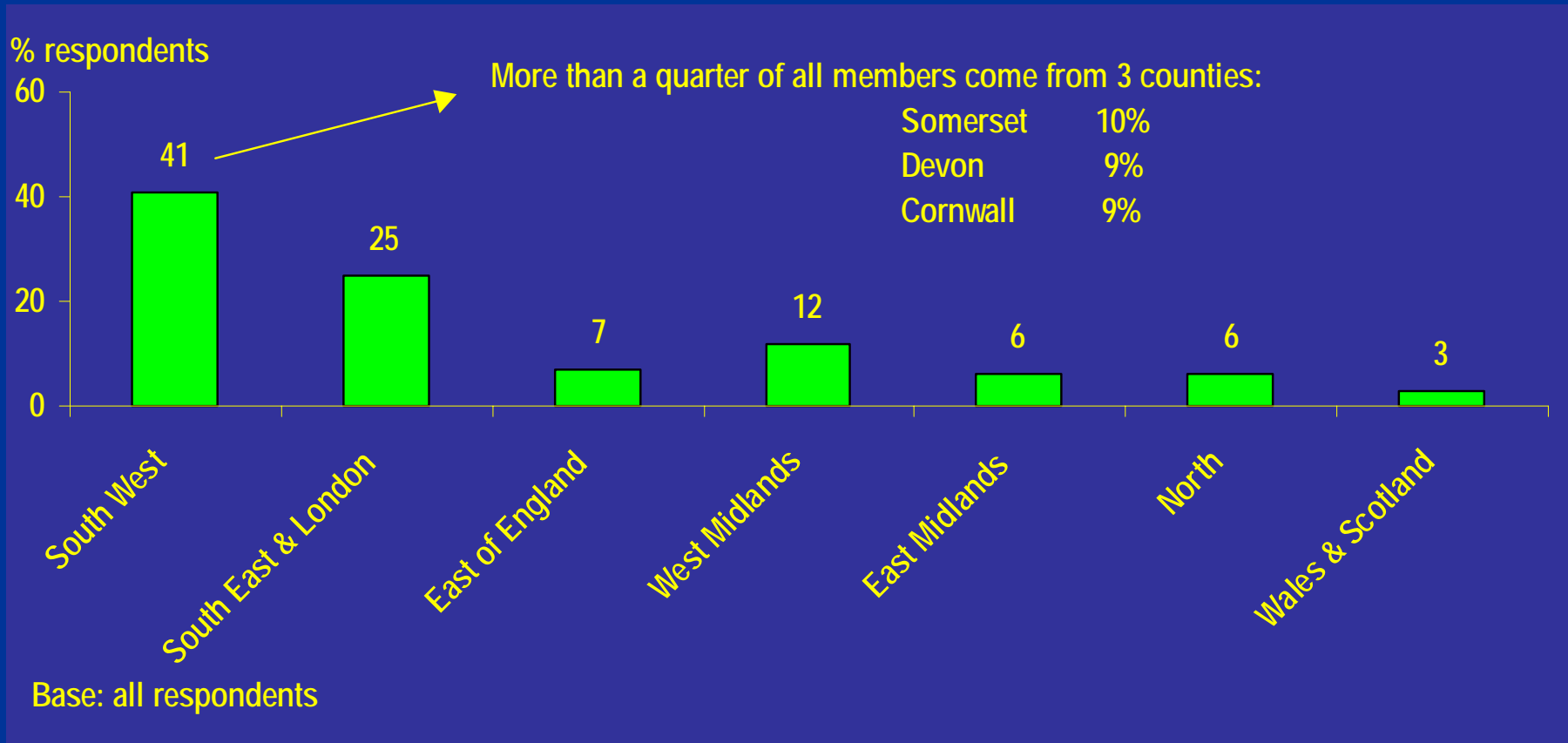
- questionnaire development undertaken July-September '04 in consultation with members
- mailing to 979 members at start of October, comprising questionnaire, covering letter, return envelope
- 573 replies received and processed, giving a response rate of 58%
- all replies checked and all additional comments coded by hand prior to data entry & processing

Interpretation of Results

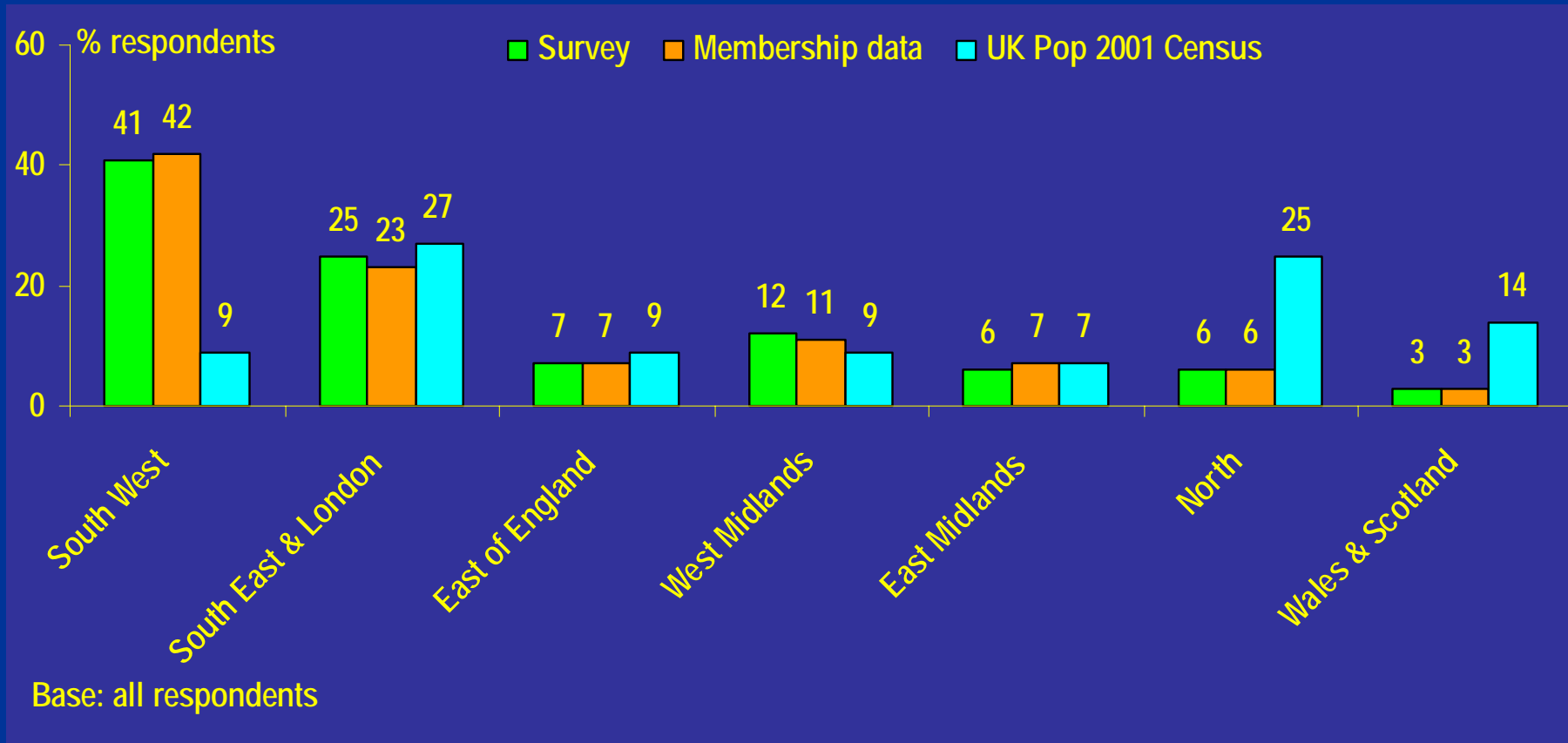
- each chart shows a base in the bottom left corner & this identifies the group of respondents represented in that chart
- where differences exist in the results between sub-groups of respondents eg bike riders & car drivers these are shown in the charts or commentary
- where no such differences are shown it can be assumed that no major differences exist
- some differences are due to chance, others are of statistical significance
- those identified as being statistically significant in this report have been tested at a confidence level of 95%: ie 95 times out of 100 this is a genuine difference

Sample Structure/ Membership Profile

Place of Residence (1)

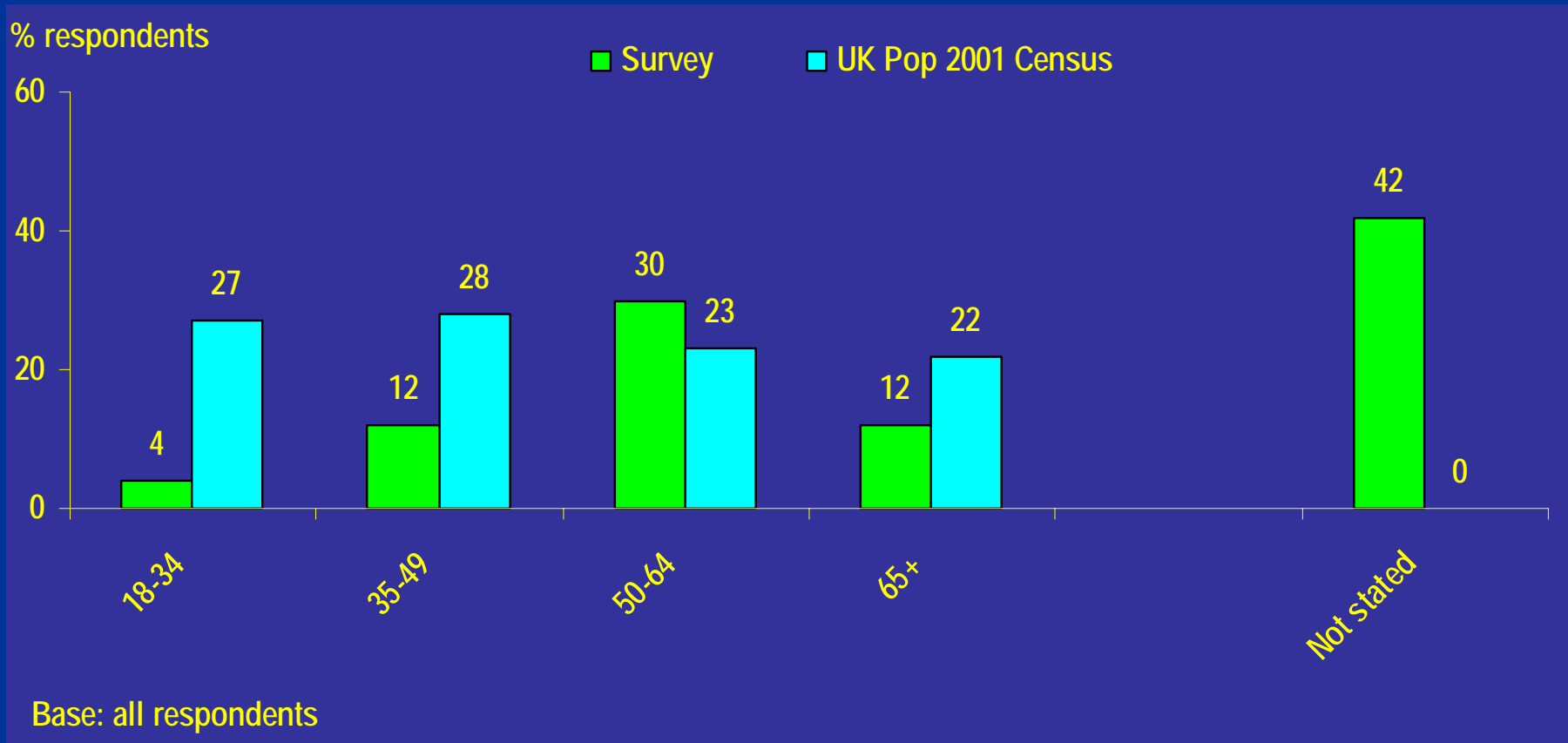


Place of Residence (2)



- 1) The similarity between Survey results & the MCC database shows that the Survey is representative of the views of the membership as a whole
- 2) The third set of data is from the 2001 Census: the MCC has disproportionately more members in the South West & fewer in the North, Wales & Scotland

Age



Date of Joining MCC (1) (Most Recent Joining Date)



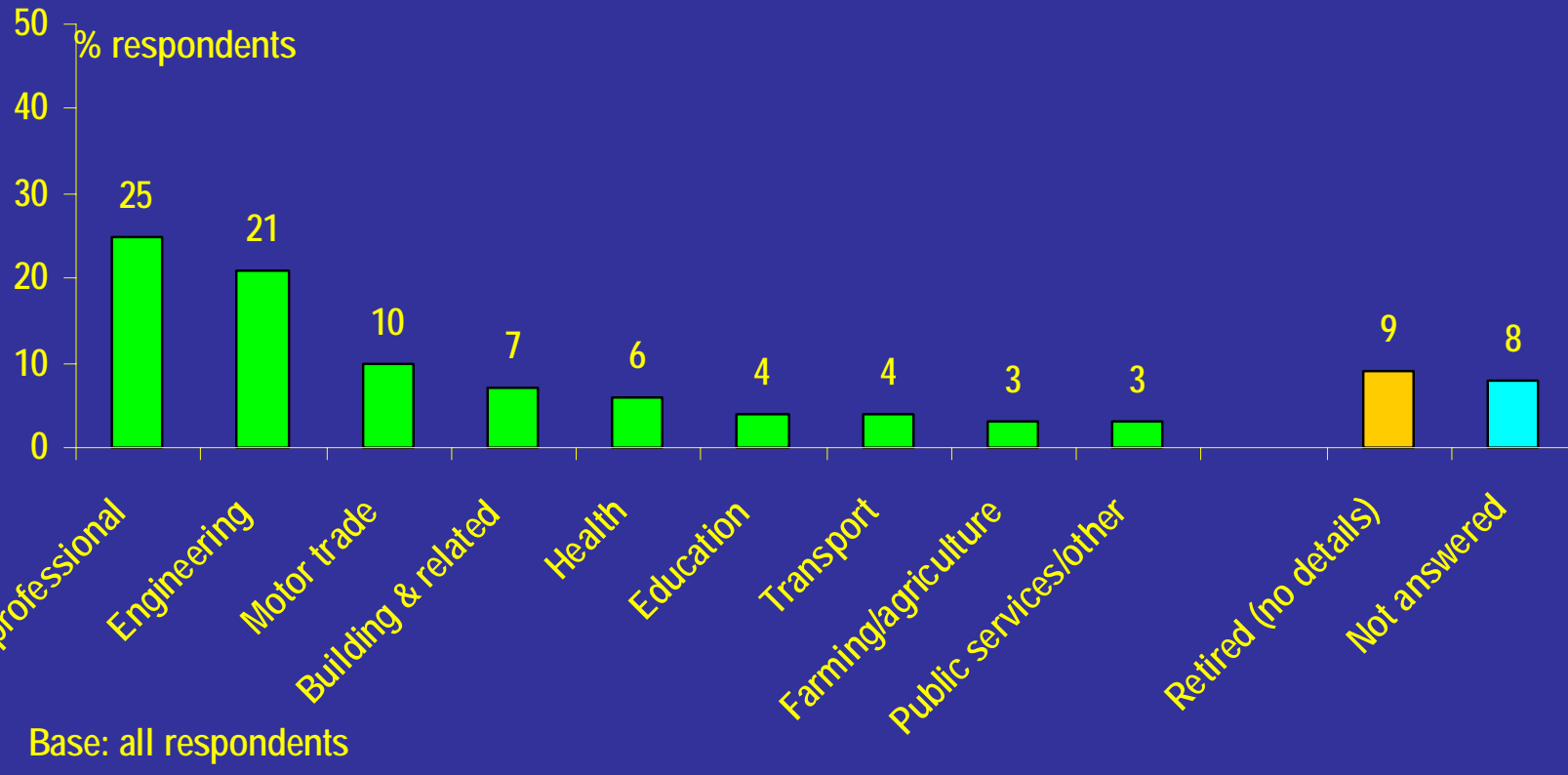
- 1) The results show the most recent, not the original, date of joining; if membership has lapsed the date of re-joining is shown
- 2) Again a high degree of correlation between survey results & MCC database but slight bias towards longer-term rather than new members

Date of Joining MCC (2)

(Most Recent Joining Date)

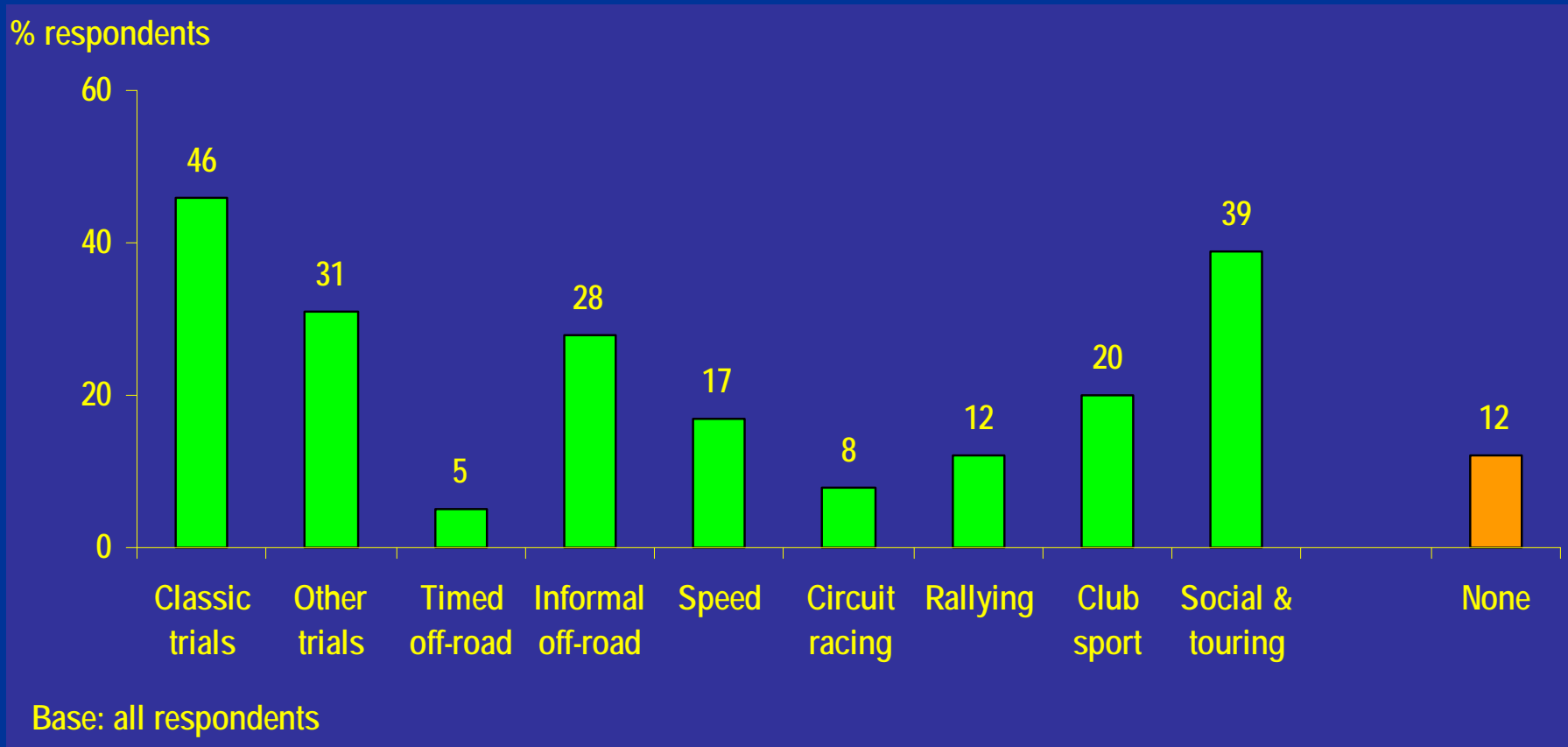
- a higher proportion of motorcyclists (28%) has joined since 2001 than car drivers (19%)
- this may reflect greater presence at motorbike shows and events
- recent joiners (2001-2004) are more likely in:
 - bike classes B (33%) & E (32%)
 - car classes 0 (34%), 1 (37%) & 7 (24%)
- long-term members (pre 81) are more likely in:
 - bike classes D (31%) & E (23%)
 - car classes 0 (20%), 2 (25%), 5 (19%), 6 (28%), 8 (18%)

Occupation/Previous Occupation

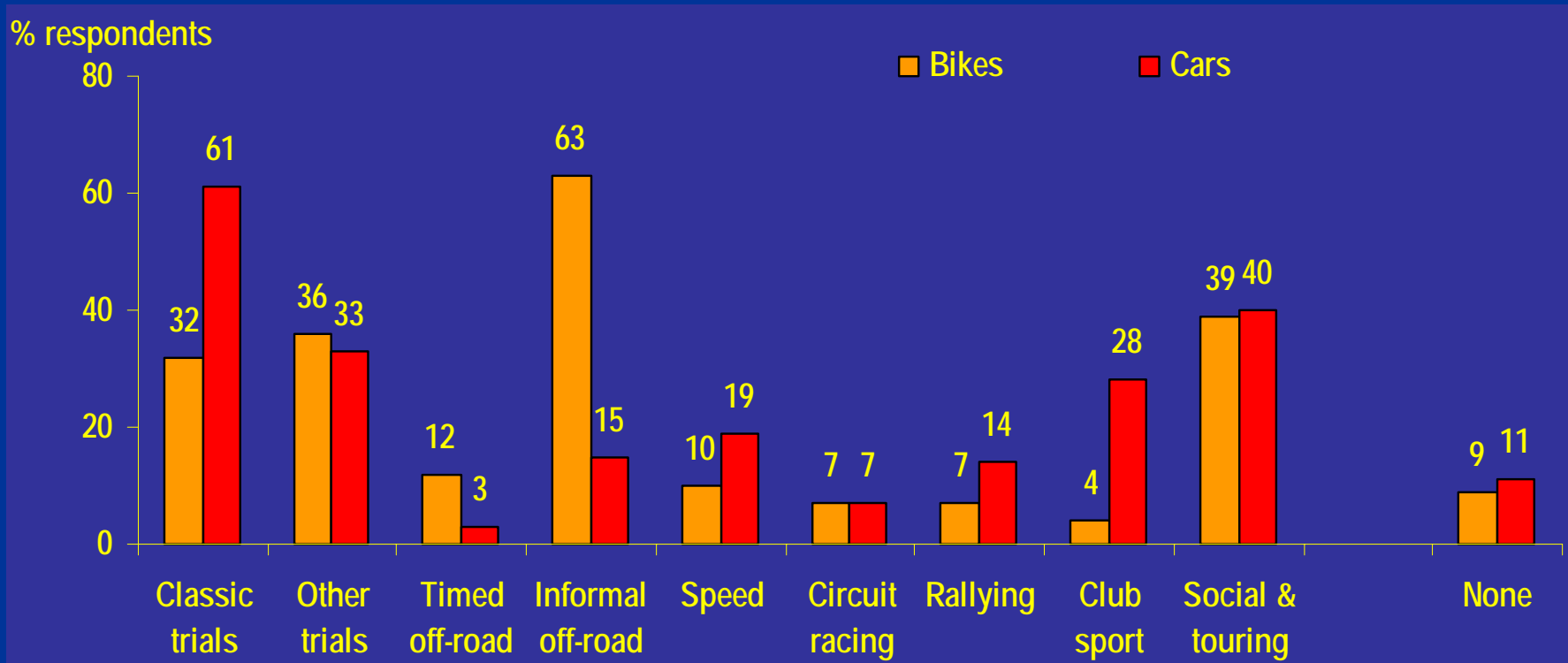


Section 1: Motorsport Involvement

Involvement in Other Motorsport Activities (1)



Involvement in Other Motorsport Activities (2)



Base: all current competitors - bikes (136), cars (319)

Involvement in Other Motorsport Activities (3)

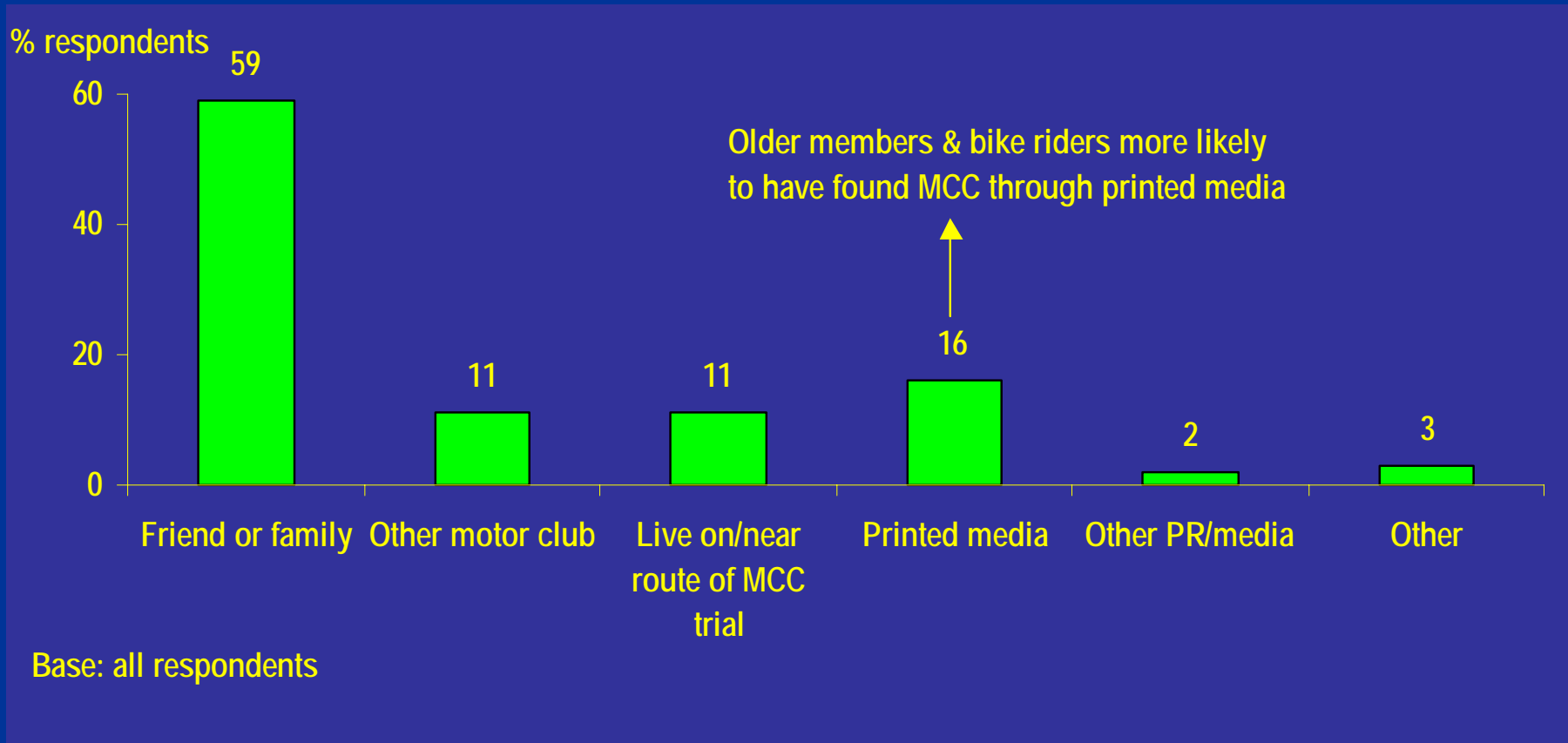
- 86% of members participate in other motorsport
- participation is lowest among the 66+ age group (72%) & those only belonging to MCC (56%)
- overall a similar proportion of bike riders & car drivers are involved in other motorsport activities
- there is, however, a marked difference in terms of what members do outside the MCC:
 - car drivers are twice as likely to compete in other classic trials & most other organised competitive events
 - bike riders are more focused on ‘off-road’ activities, particularly informal trail riding

Membership of Other Motor Clubs

- almost two fifths of members belong to another club affiliated to ACTC
- again, there is a marked difference between bike riders (only 16%) & car drivers (53%)
- half or more of those in Car Classes 2-8 belong to ACTC-affiliated clubs
- over half belong to other motor clubs, including a higher proportion of bike riders
- 20% of members only belong to the MCC, a further 20% did not answer the question

Section 2: MCC Involvement

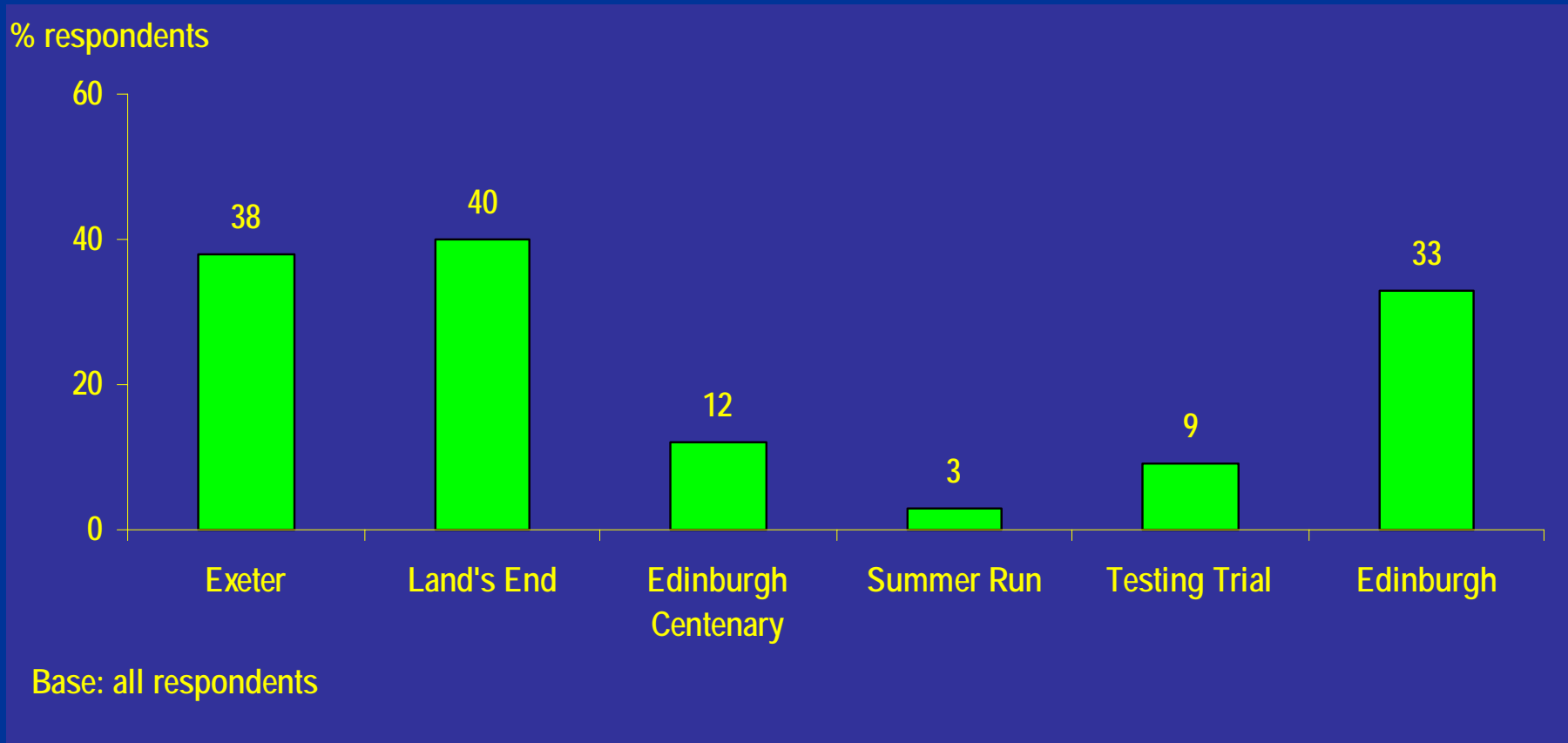
Finding the MCC



Any Involvement in MCC Events in 2004



Participation in 2004 MCC Events (1) As an Entrant

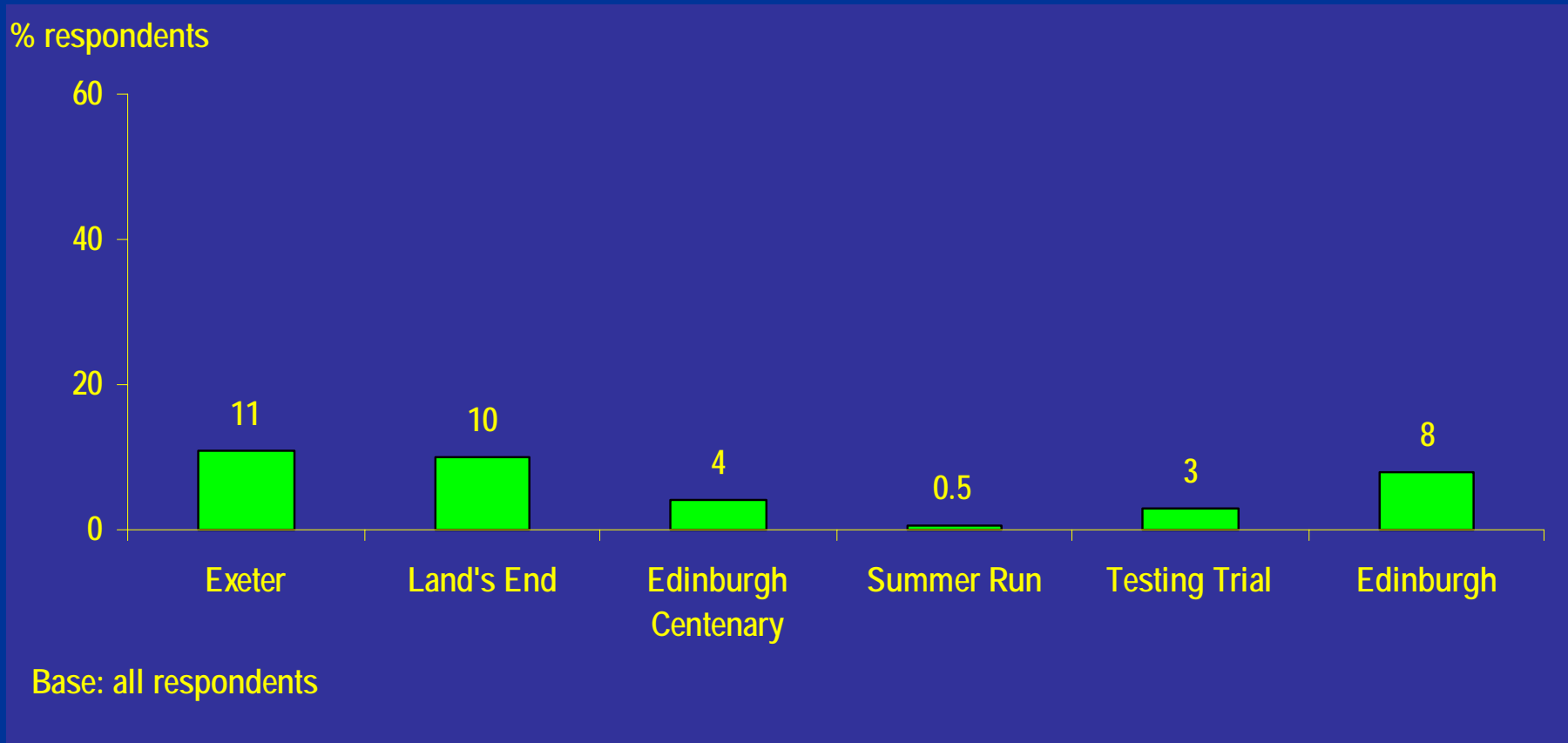


Participation in 2004 MCC Events (2)

As an Entrant

- 55% of all members entered at least one of the 3 main trials in 2004; 18% did all 3 events, 18% did 2 , 19% only 1
- participation was higher from bike riders (80% competed in at least 1) than car drivers (64% competed in at least 1)
 - entry into all 3 classics is more likely among:
 - those in bike classes B & E
 - those in car classes 1 & 7
 - those belonging to other ACTC clubs

Participation in 2004 MCC Events (3) As a Marshal/Organiser

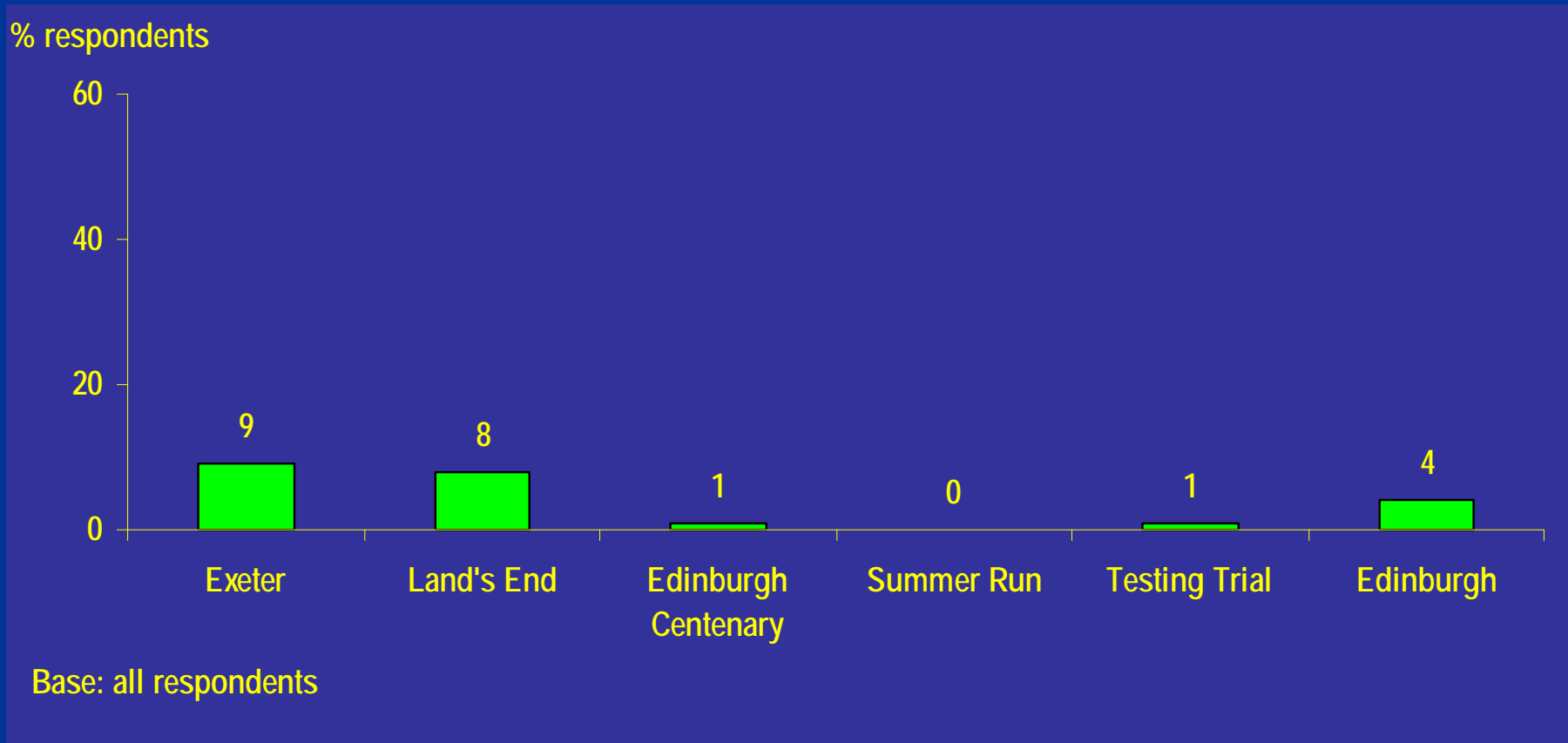


Participation in '04 MCC Events (4)

As a Marshal/Organiser

- only 21% of members were involved in marshalling or organising on 1 of the 3 main classics
- older members are more likely to be involved
- there is no difference between bike riders & car drivers
- the majority of those involved marshal or organise on one event only

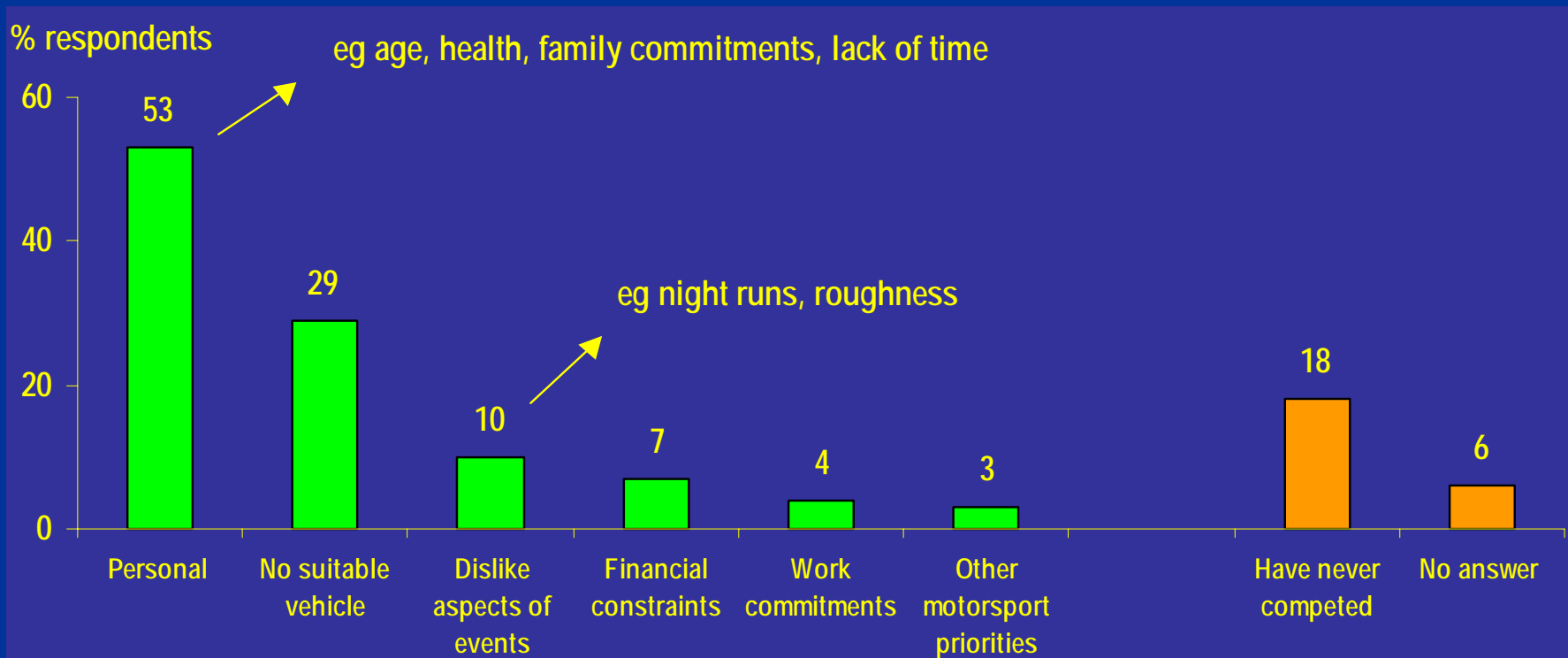
Participation in 2004 MCC Events (5) As a Spectator



Why Belong to the MCC?

- the over-whelming answer given is 'to compete in MCC Trials' (81%)
- small numbers said 'to marshal/organise' (8%) or 'to keep in touch' (10%)
- reasons for membership change with time:
 - 18-49 is the most likely age group to say they belong to the club to compete (90%)
 - those aged over 65 are more likely to remain members so they can marshal/organise (21%) or stay in touch (22%)

Main Reasons for Not Competing at Present (1)



Base: all belonging to the MCC for non-competitive reasons (107)

Main Reasons for Not Competing at Present (2)

“I do not currently own any competition vehicles/motorcycles due to personal circumstances but am able to keep involved by membership”

“I would like to compete more often but other commitments prevent this at the moment”

“This year’s LE was a one-off! I’m too bloody old to compete often!”

“Trials have become so rough & damaging. I believe these events should be production car events”

Main Reasons for Not Competing at Present (3)

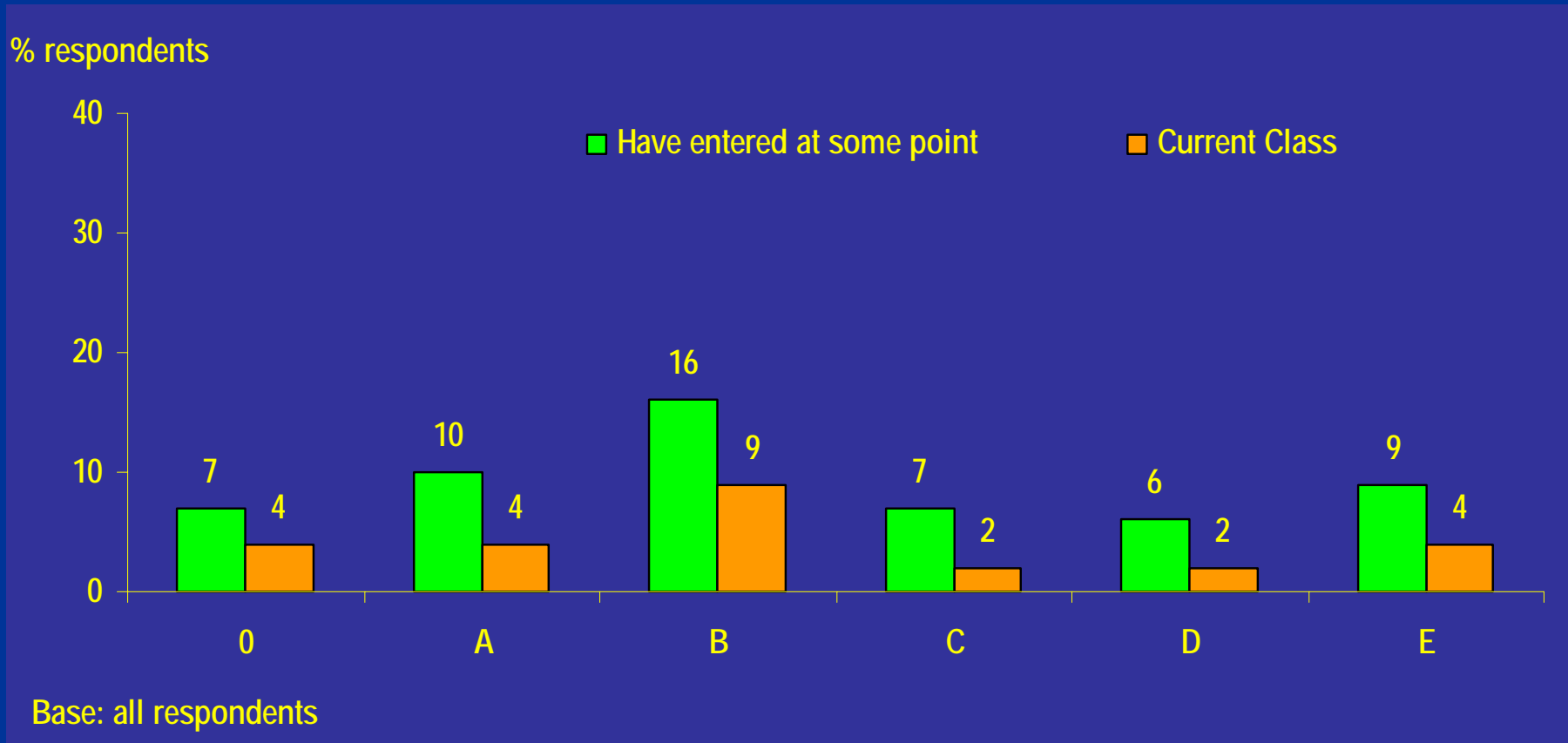
“Vintage engine rebuild put me out for 4 years. I would have been put off by the roughness of some hills but hope to enter class 0 in the near future”

“Age and lack of ability to stay awake long enough!”

“I find it very difficult to plan as far ahead as is needed to enter and find I enter but can't compete due to work pressures”

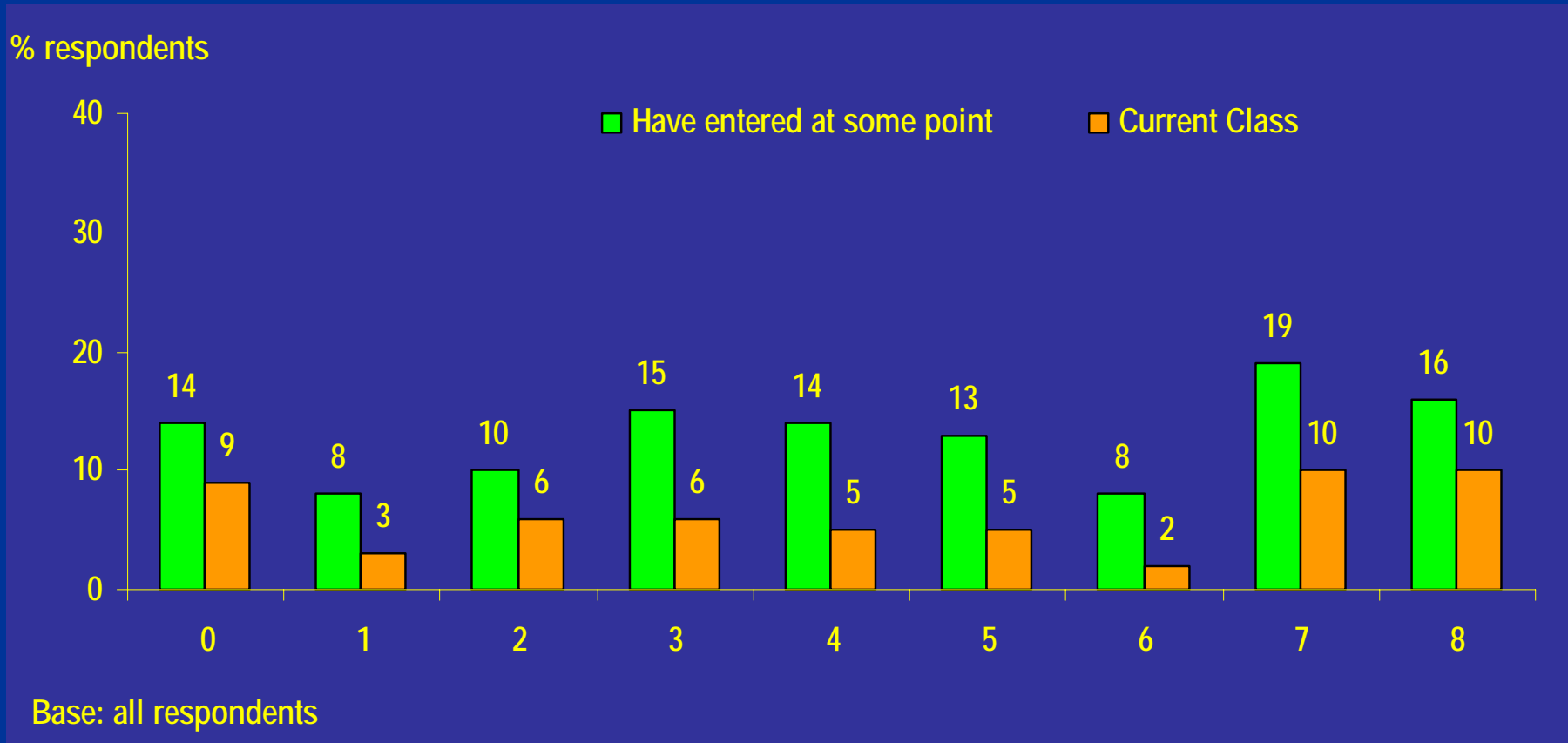
Classes Entered in MCC Trials (1)

2004 Bike Classes



Classes Entered in MCC Trials (2)

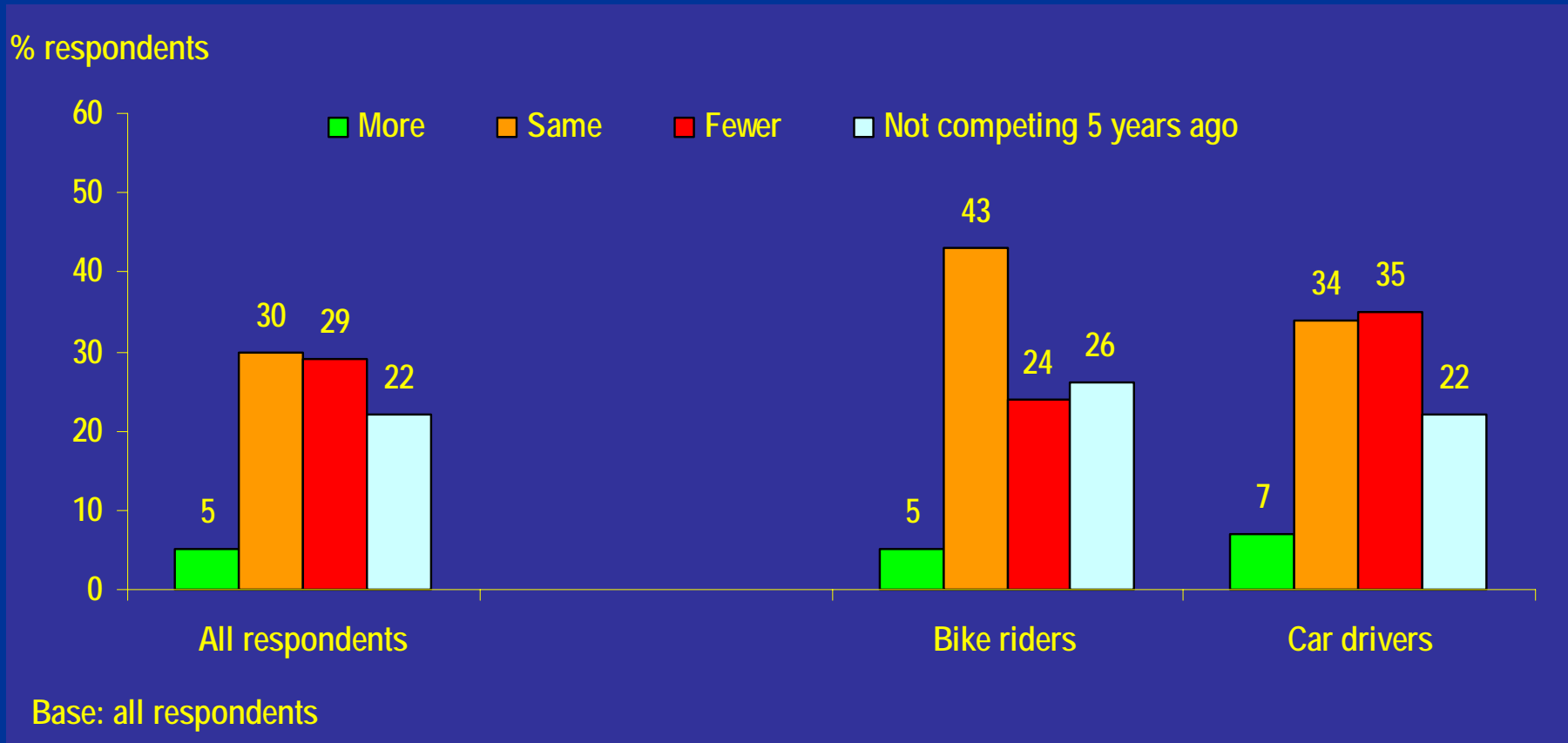
2004 Car Classes



Classes Entered in MCC Trials (3)

- over half of those who have entered MCC trials have tried different classes
- car drivers are slightly more likely to have entered different classes than bike riders
- despite this apparent willingness to change classes, there is little cross-over between bikes & cars:
 - 24% have entered on a bike **only**
 - 57% have entered in a car **only**
 - only 10% have tried **both** codes
 - 10% did not answer

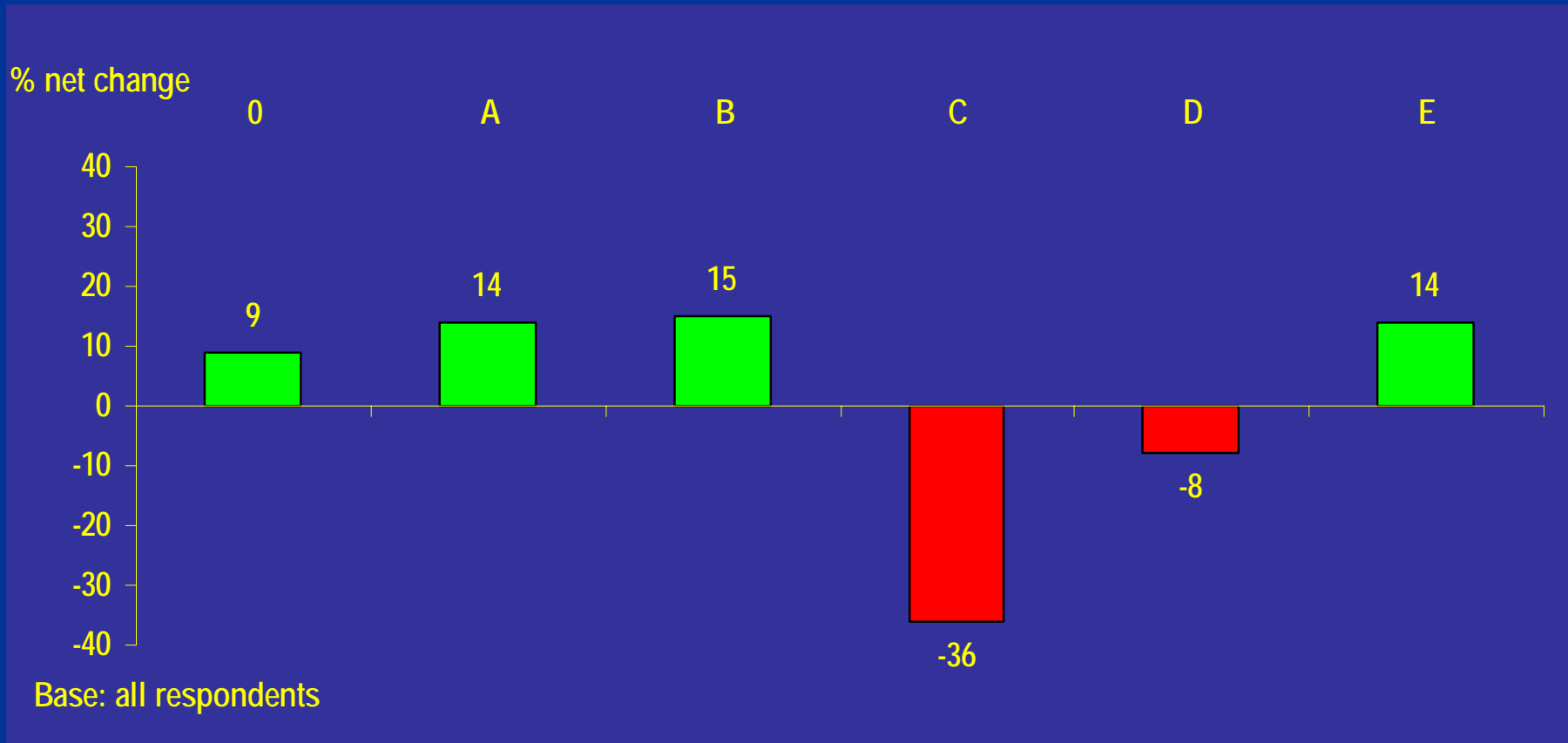
Number of MCC Trials Currently Entered Compared to 5 Years Ago (1)



Number of MCC Trials Currently Entered Compared to 5 Years Ago (2)

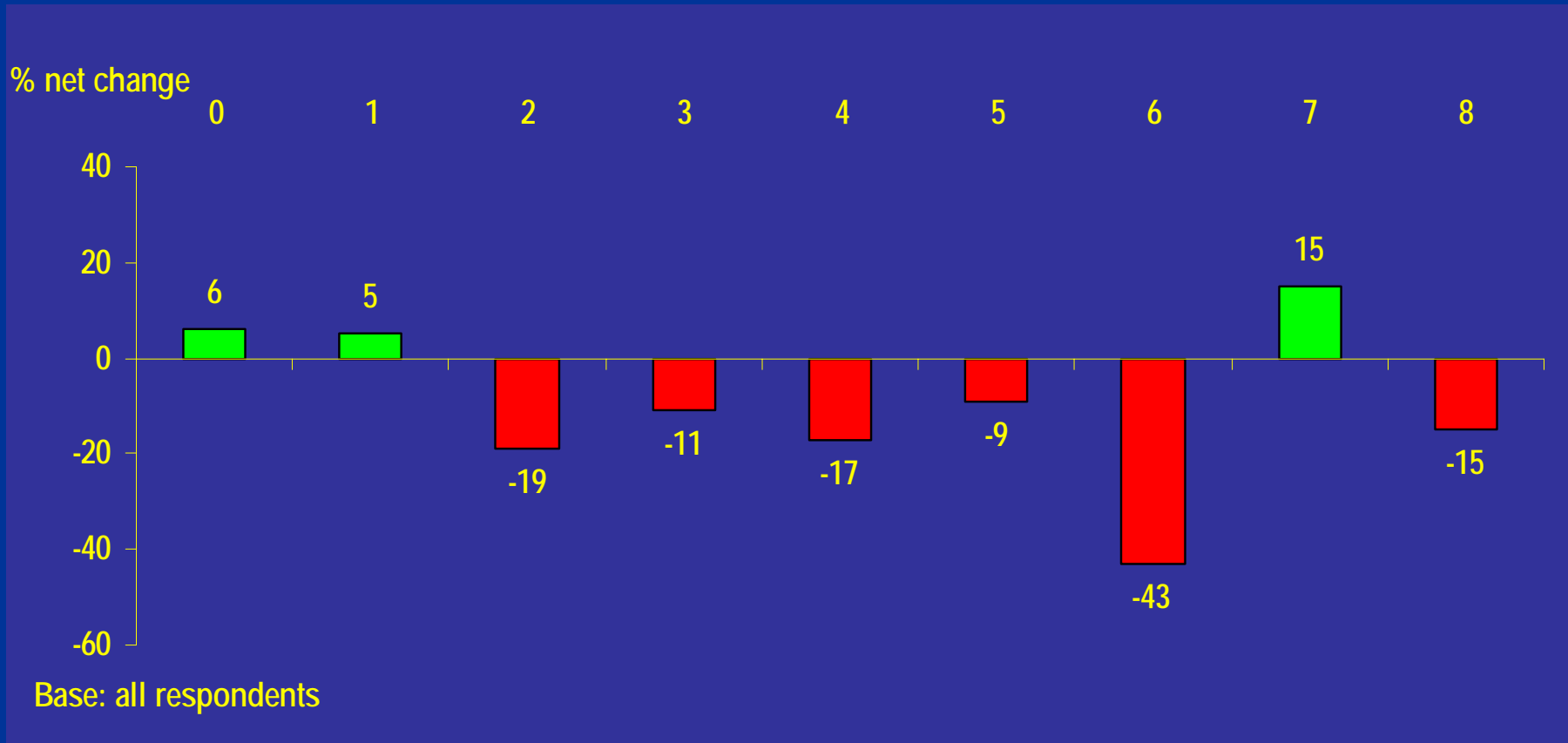
- the research suggests a high level of 'churn' among MCC entrants
- a third compete as often, a third less often
- only a minority compete more often, although these are balanced to a certain degree by the 22% not competing 5 years ago
- half of those doing fewer trials than 5 years ago described themselves as 'occasional' triallists
- almost 50 different reasons were given for doing fewer events, often in combination

Net Change in Number of MCC Events Entered By 2004 Bike Classes



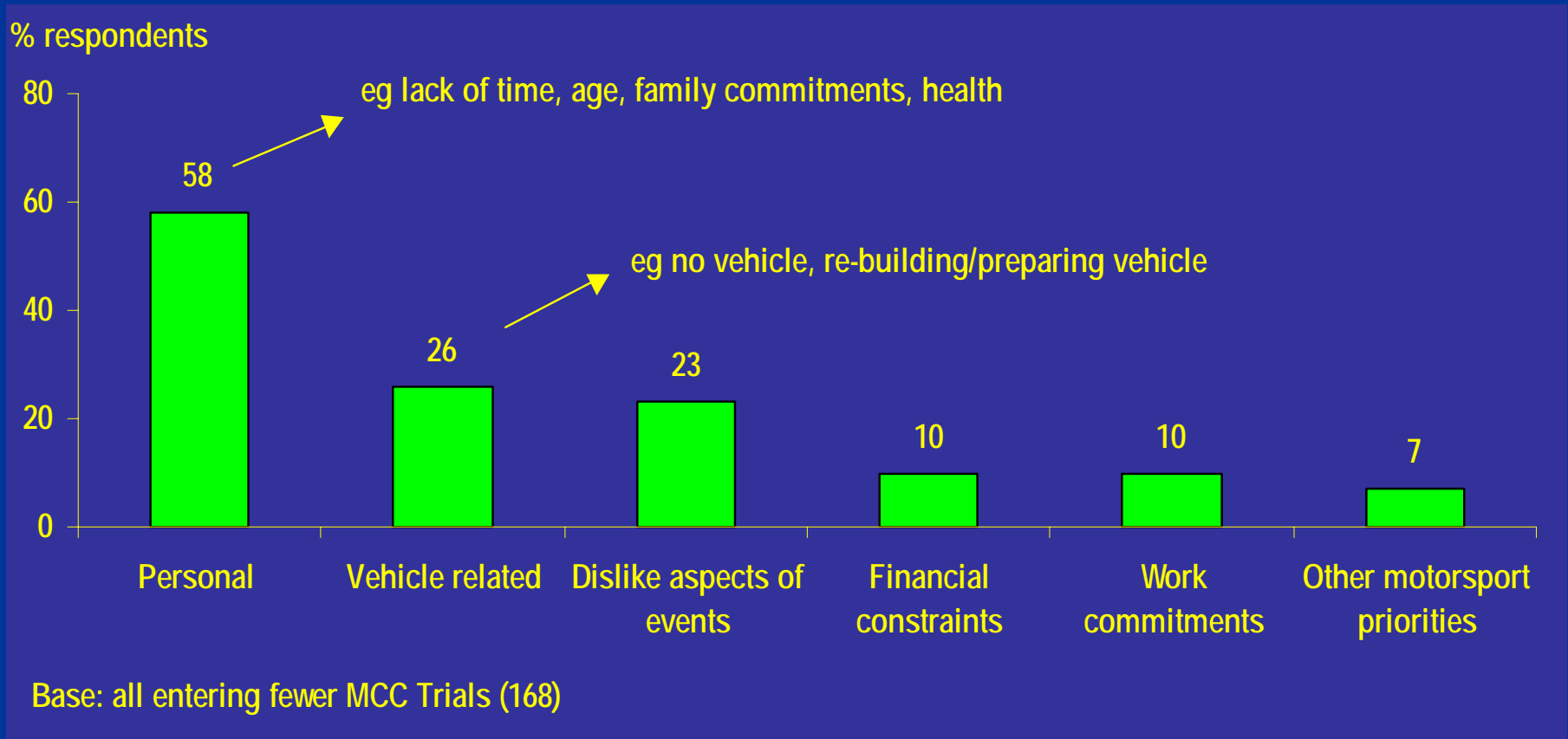
1) Calculated as follows: (% doing more events + % not competing 5 years ago) - % doing fewer events = Net change %

Net Change in Number of MCC Events Entered By 2004 Car Classes



1) Calculated as follows: (% doing more events + % not competing 5 years ago) - % doing fewer events = Net change %

Main Reasons for Entering Fewer Events



Aspects of Events Disliked (1)

- 23% of those doing fewer MCC trials said that this was because they disliked aspects of the events
- the main comments made were:
 - trials/some sections too rough (11 members)
 - no longer enjoy/
stay awake during night run (9)
 - feel sections are getting harder (3)
 - have to commit to entry too far ahead (2)
 - introduction of '2-up' rule (2)
 - my class no longer does all the sections (2)

Aspects of Events Disliked (2)

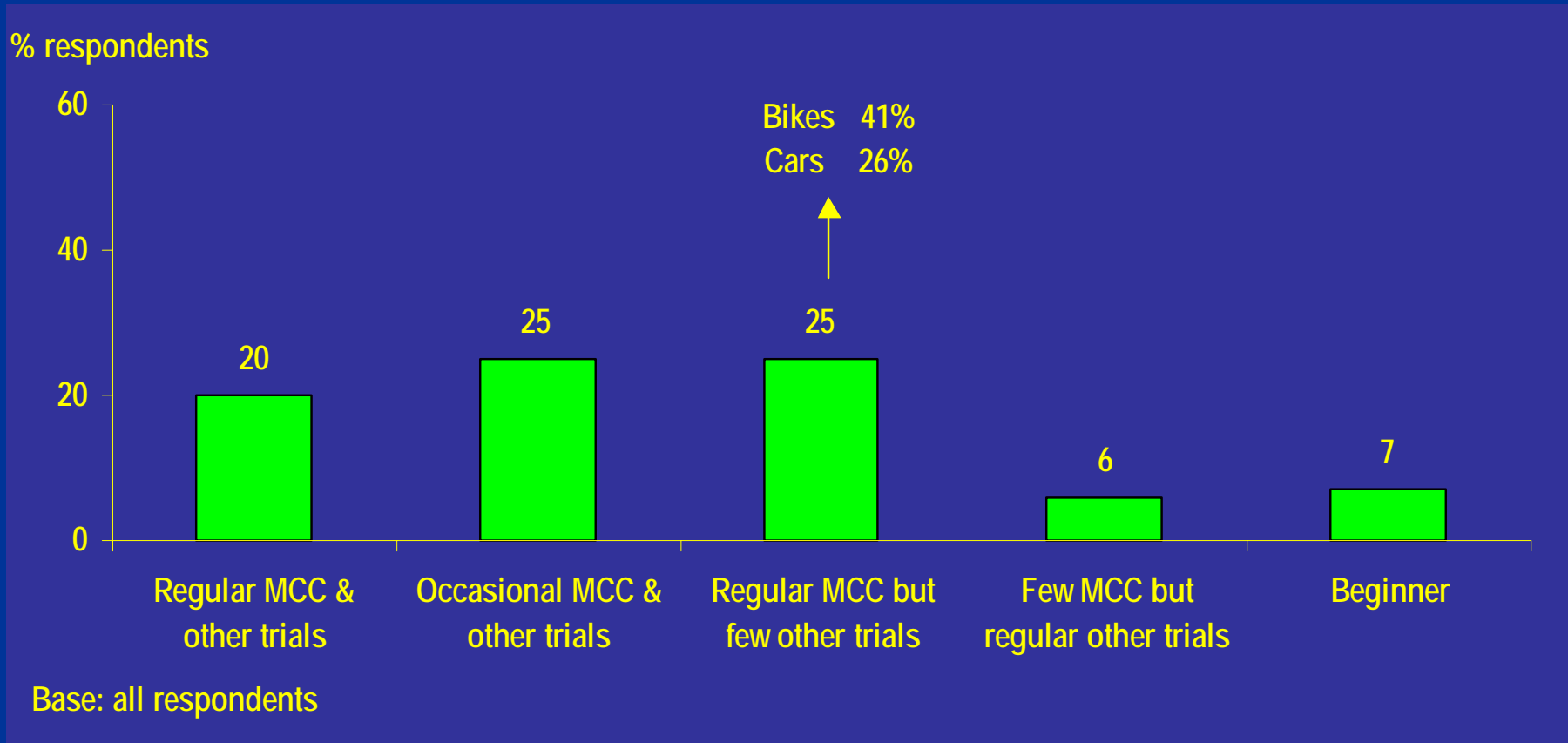
“Age & distance from home are issues. But sections are now much more difficult for 3 wheelers, possibly due to 4wd usage and/or bigger tractors forming bigger ruts on sections that were fairly easy a few years ago”

“I’m finding it hard to stay awake/alert enough around daybreak on the events”

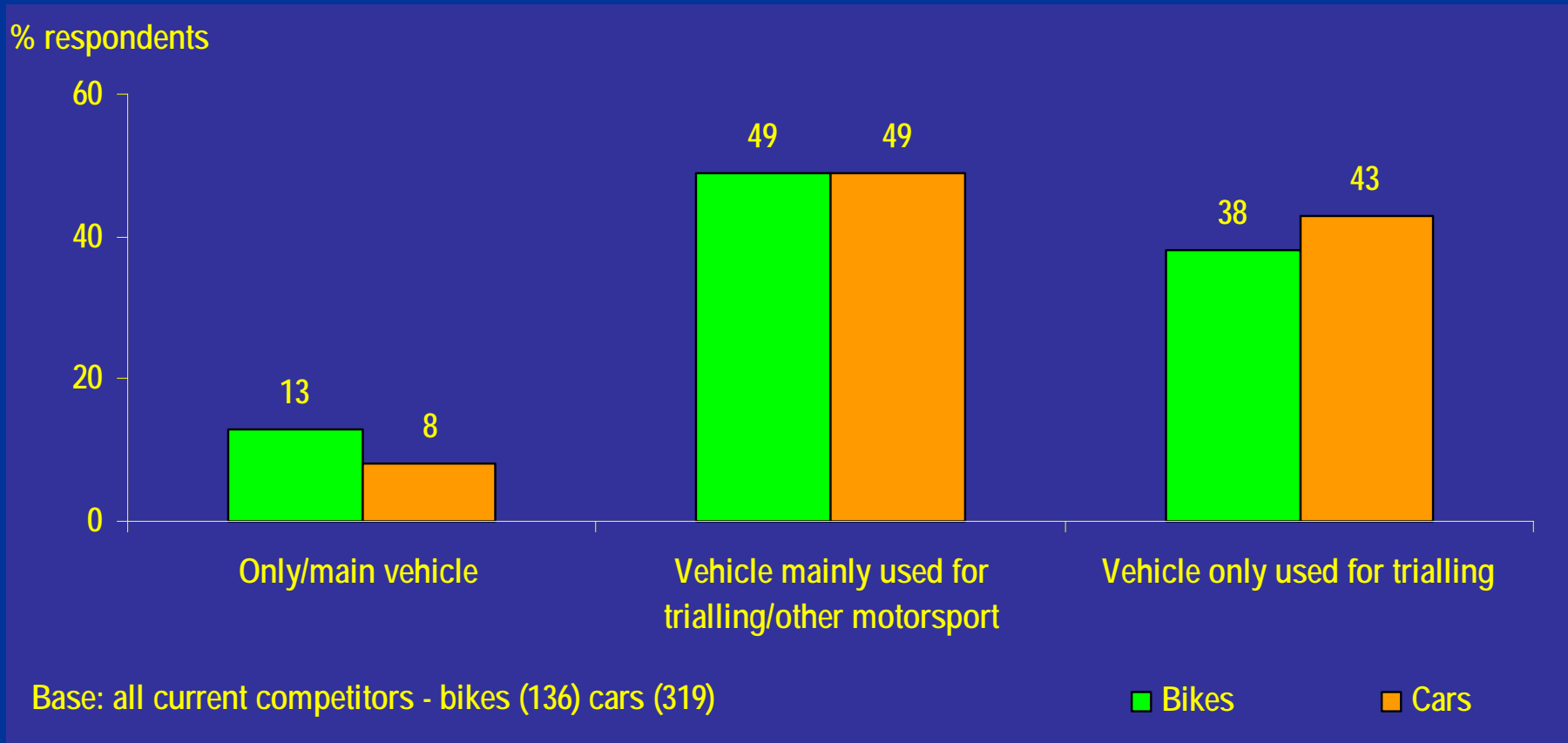
“I do more and more speed events on motorcycles as I started to find MCC events boring with too many jobsworths”

“I enjoy the challenge of climbing hills not the challenge of staying awake after many many hours of night driving to go nowhere”

Current Level of Trialling Activity



Vehicle Used for MCC Trials (1)

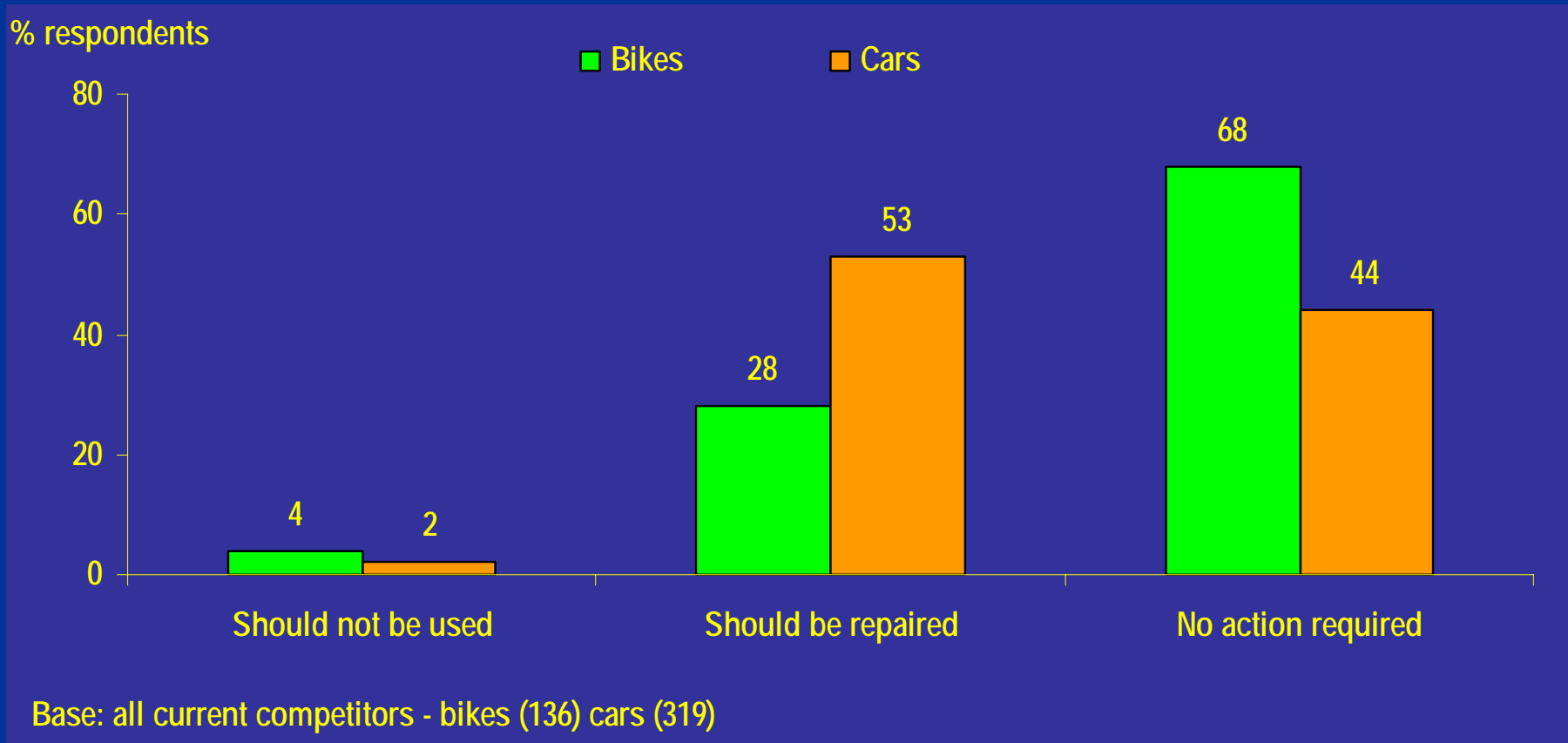


Vehicle Used for MCC Trials (2)

- less than 8% of MCC members use their everyday vehicle to do MCC events
- everyday vehicles are most likely to be used in:
 - bike classes 0 (23%) & C (36%)
 - car classes 1 (26%) & 3 (15%)
- the highest degree of specialisation is found in:
 - bike classes A (48%) & D (54%)
 - car classes 4 (66%), 6 (50%) & 8 (65%)
- younger members are more likely to use a dedicated trials vehicle than older members

Section 3: Specific Issues Relating to MCC Trials

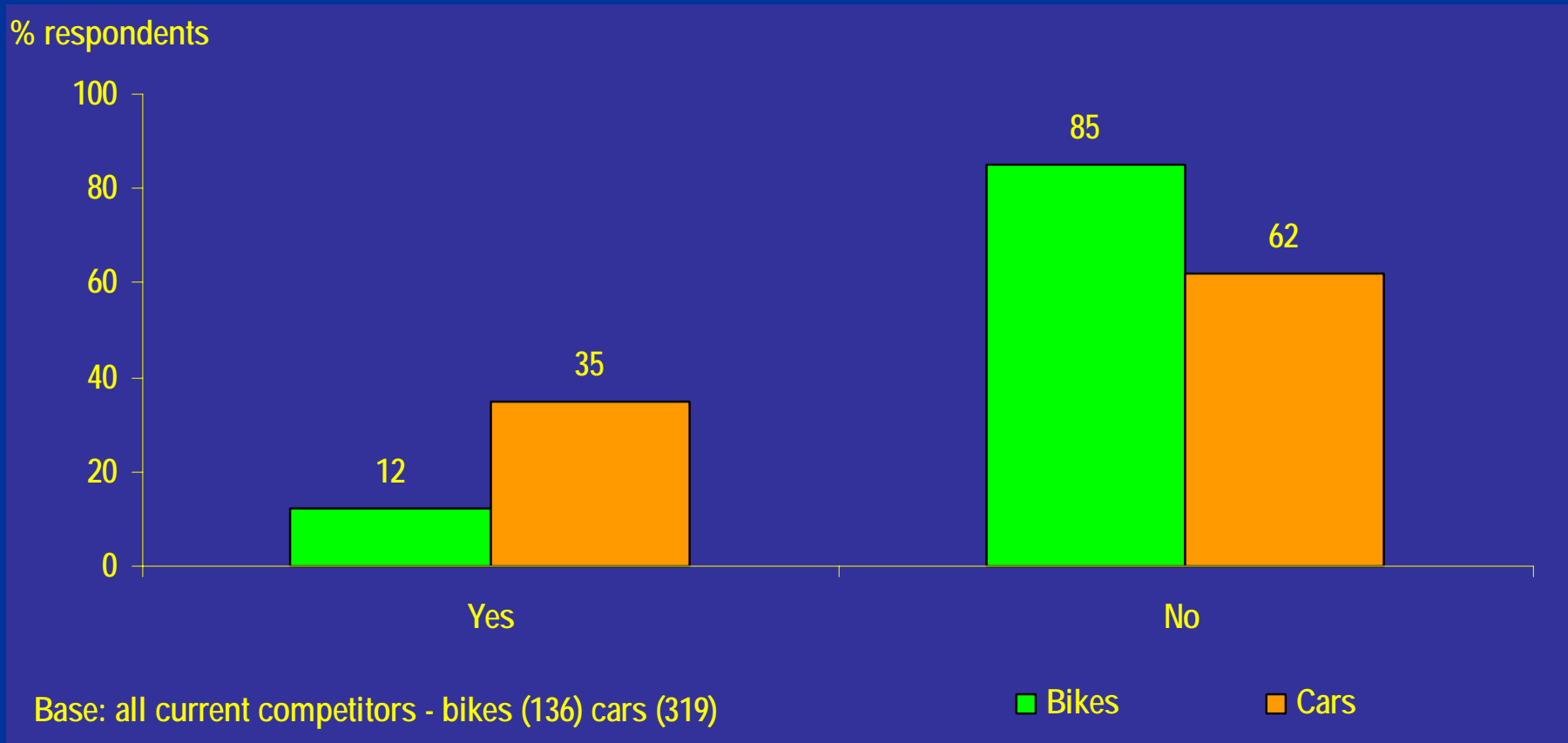
Attitude to Rough Sections (1)



Attitude to Rough Sections (2)

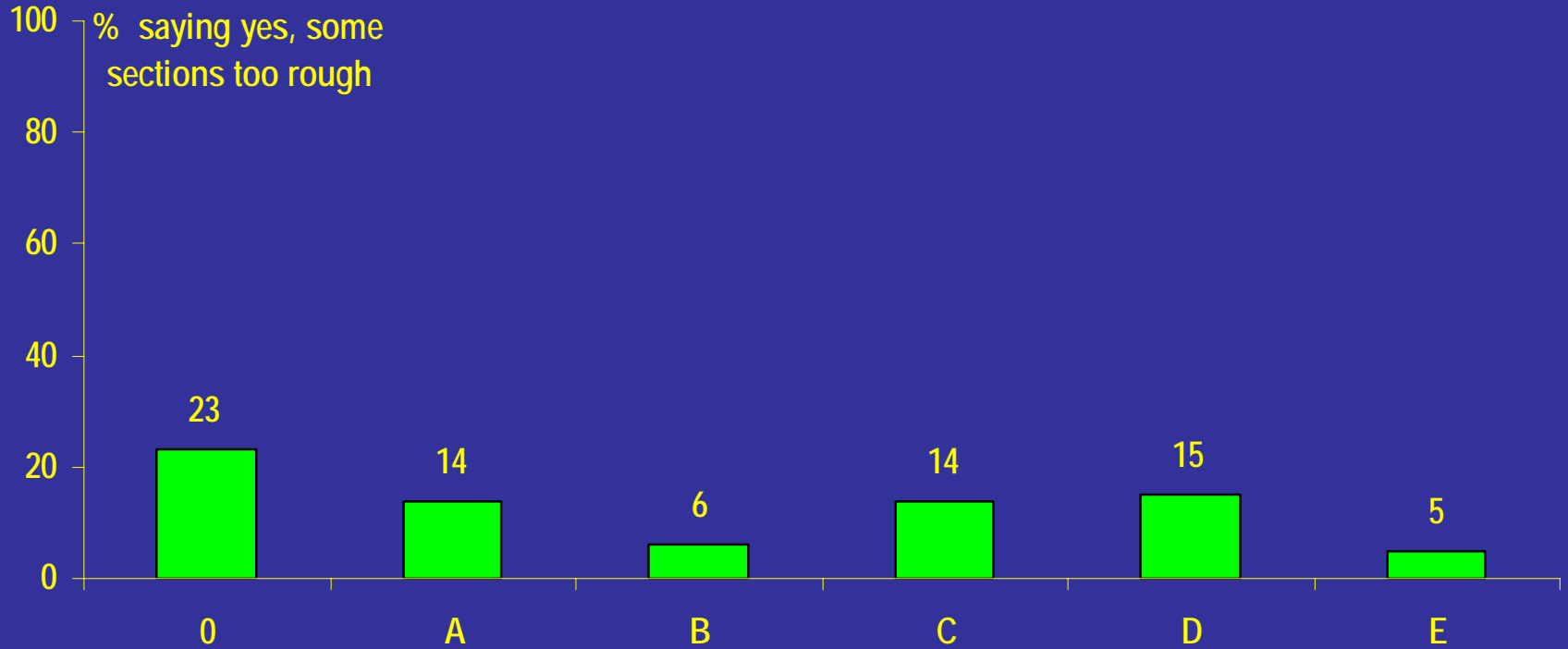
- member opinion is divided, almost equally, on the issue of what to do about 'rough' sections
- those more likely to say that nothing needs to be done include:
 - younger members (58%), regular triallists (62%), bike riders (68%) & those involved in other off-road forms of motorsport (54%)
- those more likely to suggest repairs should be made include:
 - older members, Class D bikers (54%) & those in car classes 0 (68%), 2 (72%), 5 (61%) & 6 (64%)

Do MCC Trials Contain Sections Which are Too Rough? (1)



Do MCC Trials Contain Sections Which are Too Rough? (2)

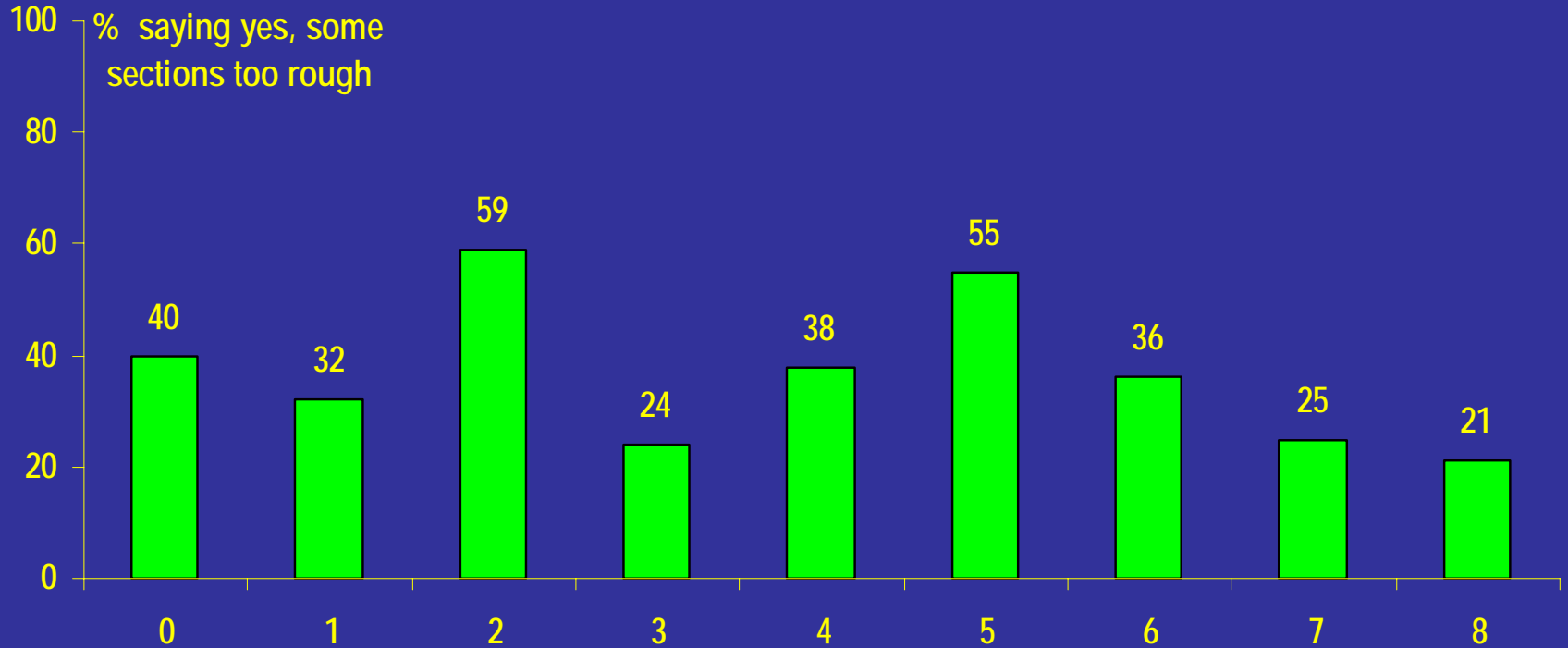
2004 Bike Classes



Base: all bike riders (136)

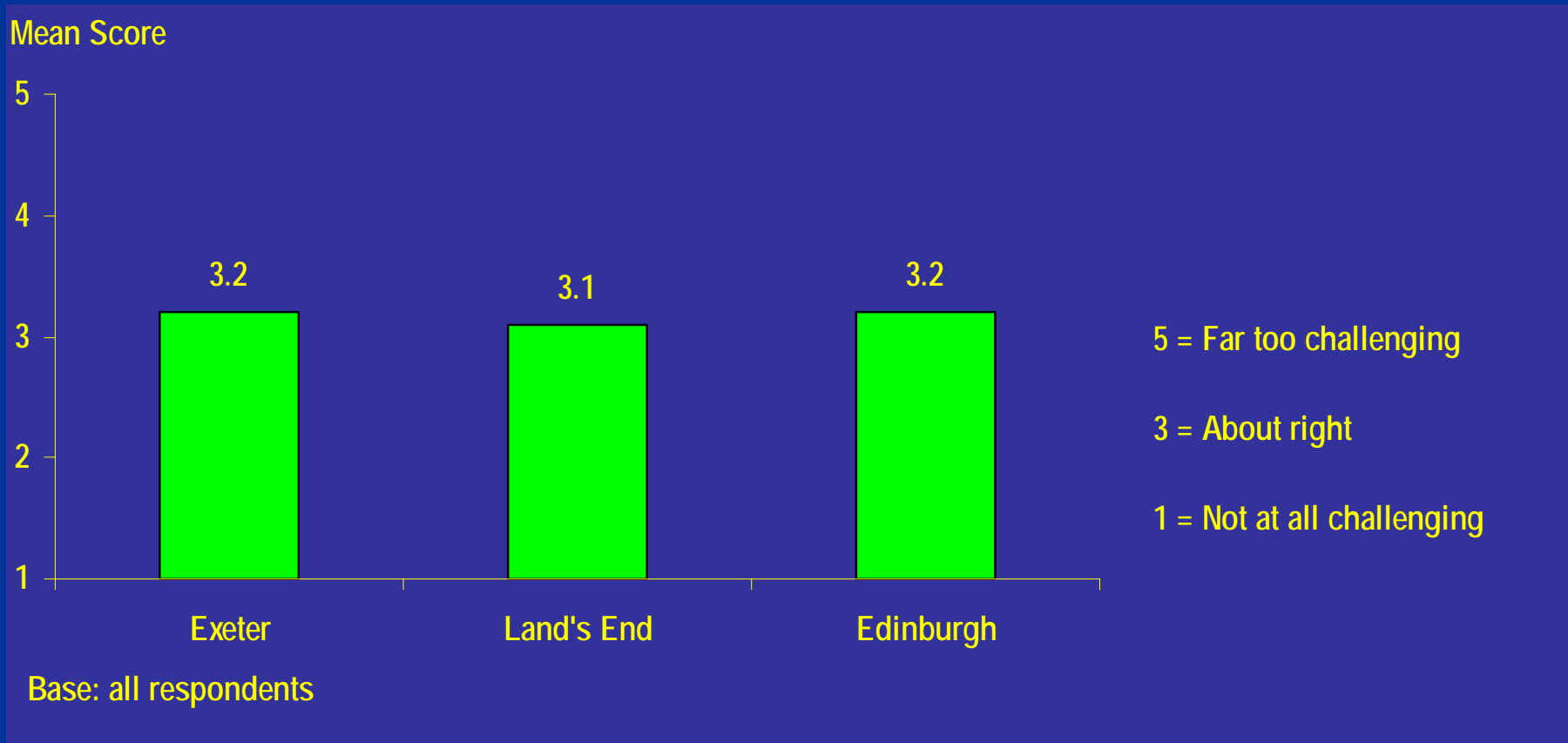
Do MCC Trials Contain Sections Which are Too Rough? (3)

2004 Car Classes



Base: all car drivers (316)

Rating of Overall Challenge in MCC Trials (1)

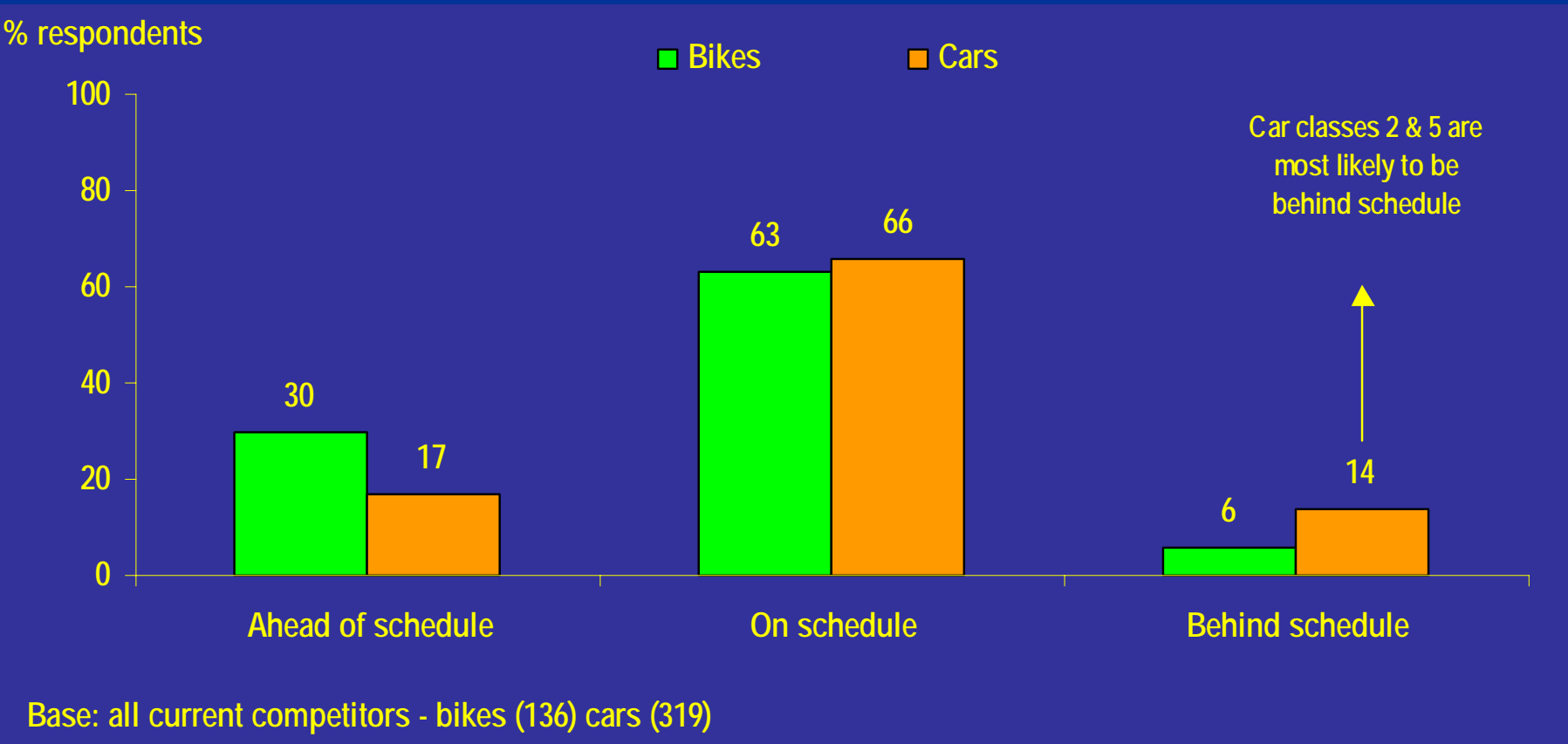


Rating of Overall Challenge in MCC Trials (2)

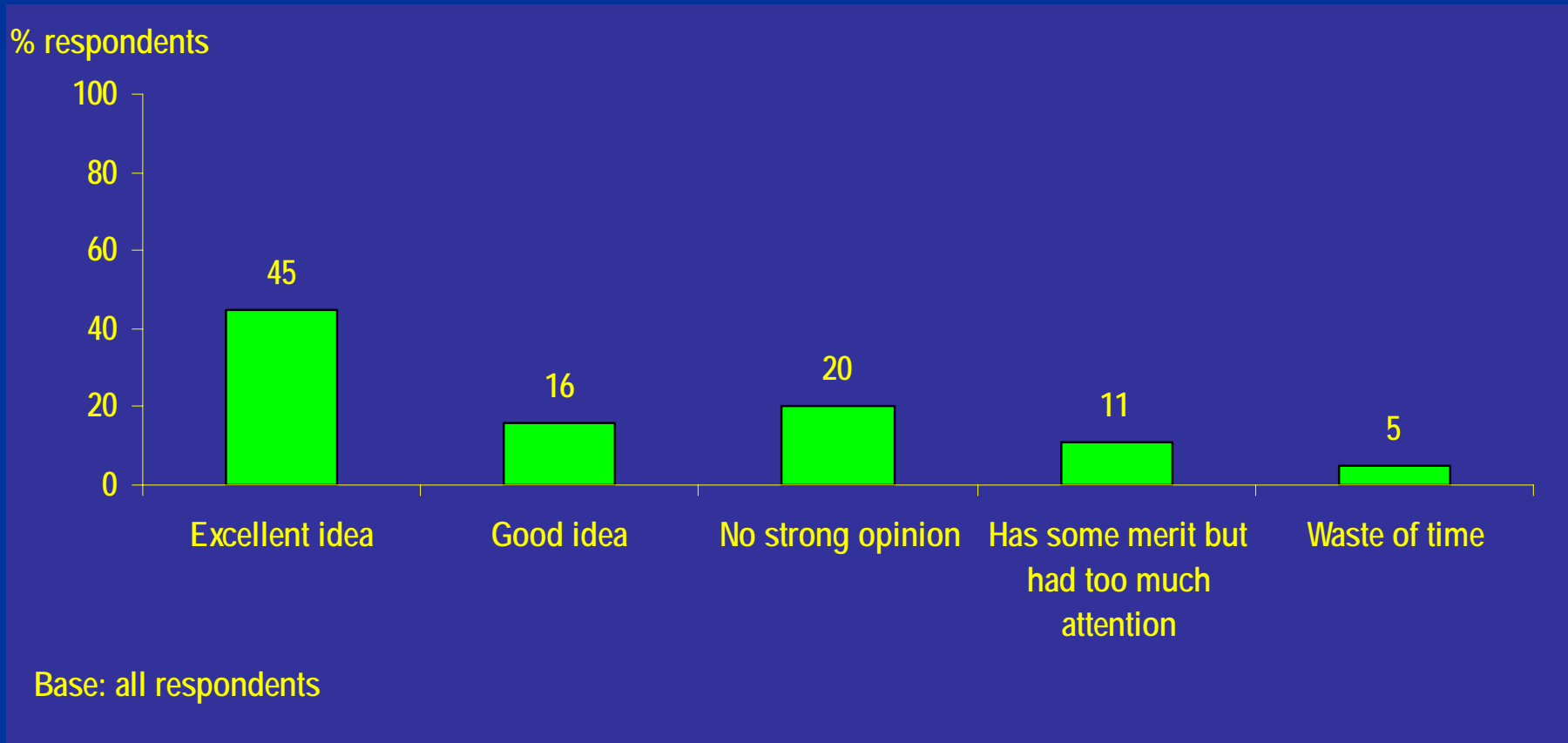
- a very impressive result:
 - the clear majority of those commenting in every class consider that the challenge faced on each of the 3 trials is 'about right'
- there are some minor complaints that events are too challenging from:
 - Class 2 entrants
 - those who consider some sections too rough
- there is, however, no clear consensus *in any class on any event* that the challenge faced should change

Attitude to Time Schedule on MCC Trials

Do You Typically Run...?



Overall Opinion of Class 0 (1)

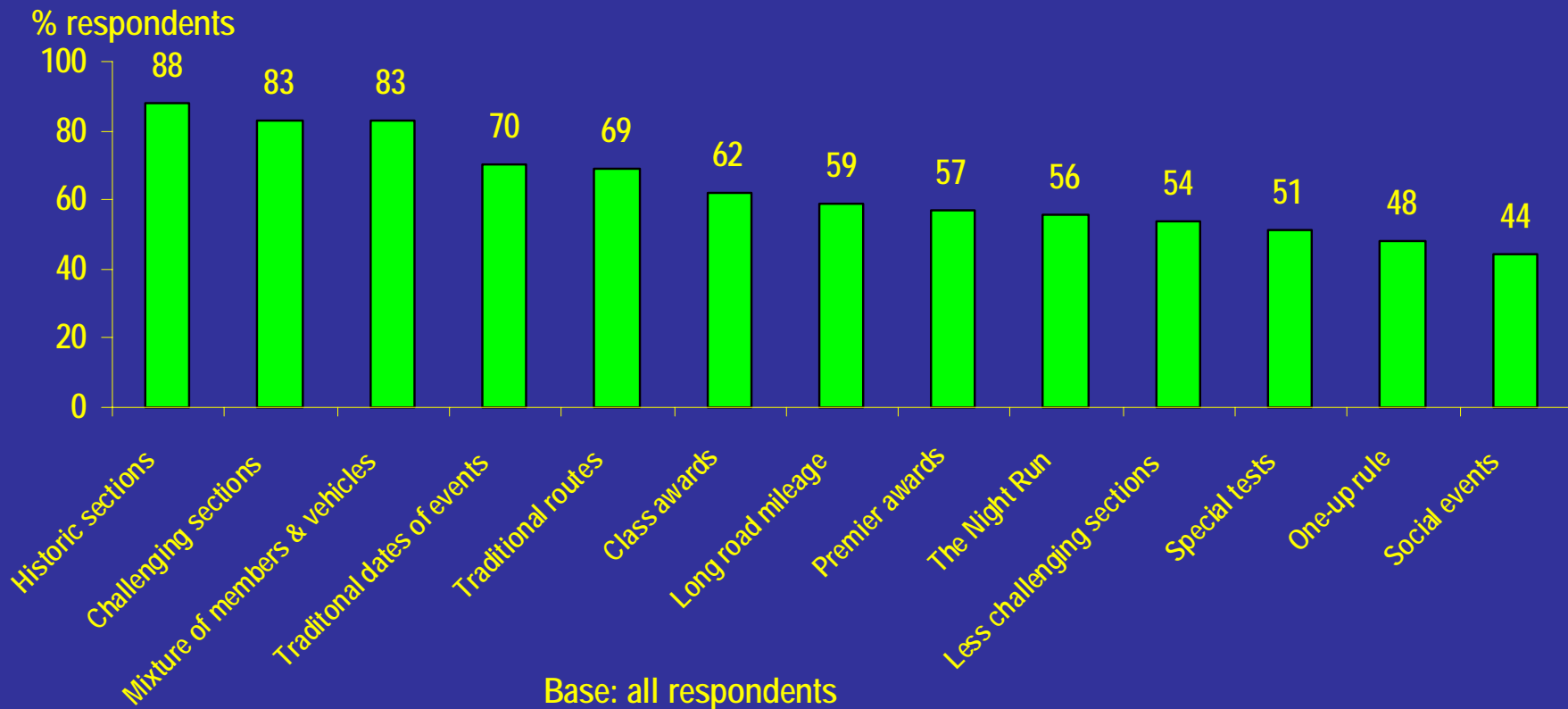


Overall Opinion of Class 0 (2)

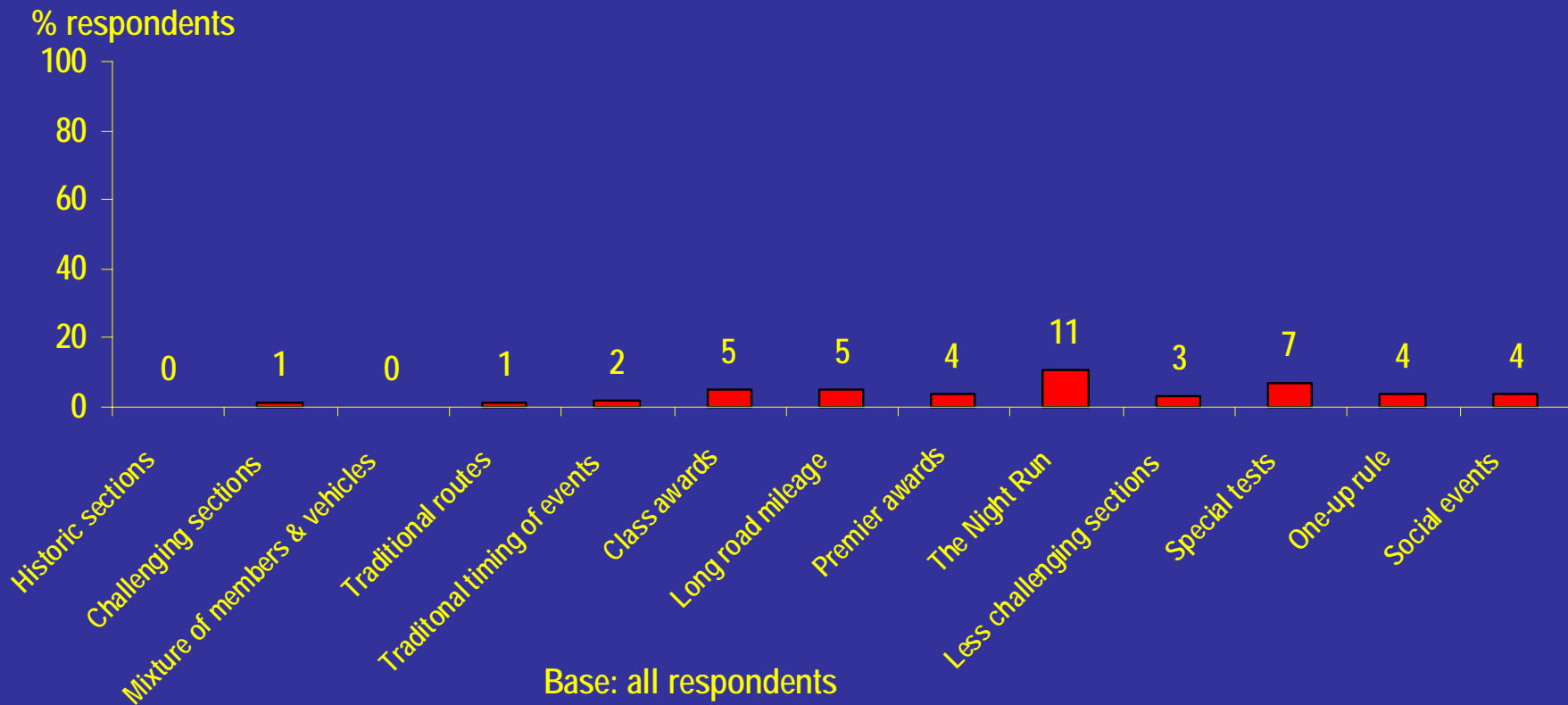
- in general, bike riders are more favourably disposed to class 0 than car drivers
- those who belong to the Club to marshal/organise or to keep in touch are also more likely to support class 0 than are current competitors
- beginners are the strongest supporters
- regular triallists are the least supportive of class 0, perhaps sensing a threat?

Section 4: The Spirit of the MCC

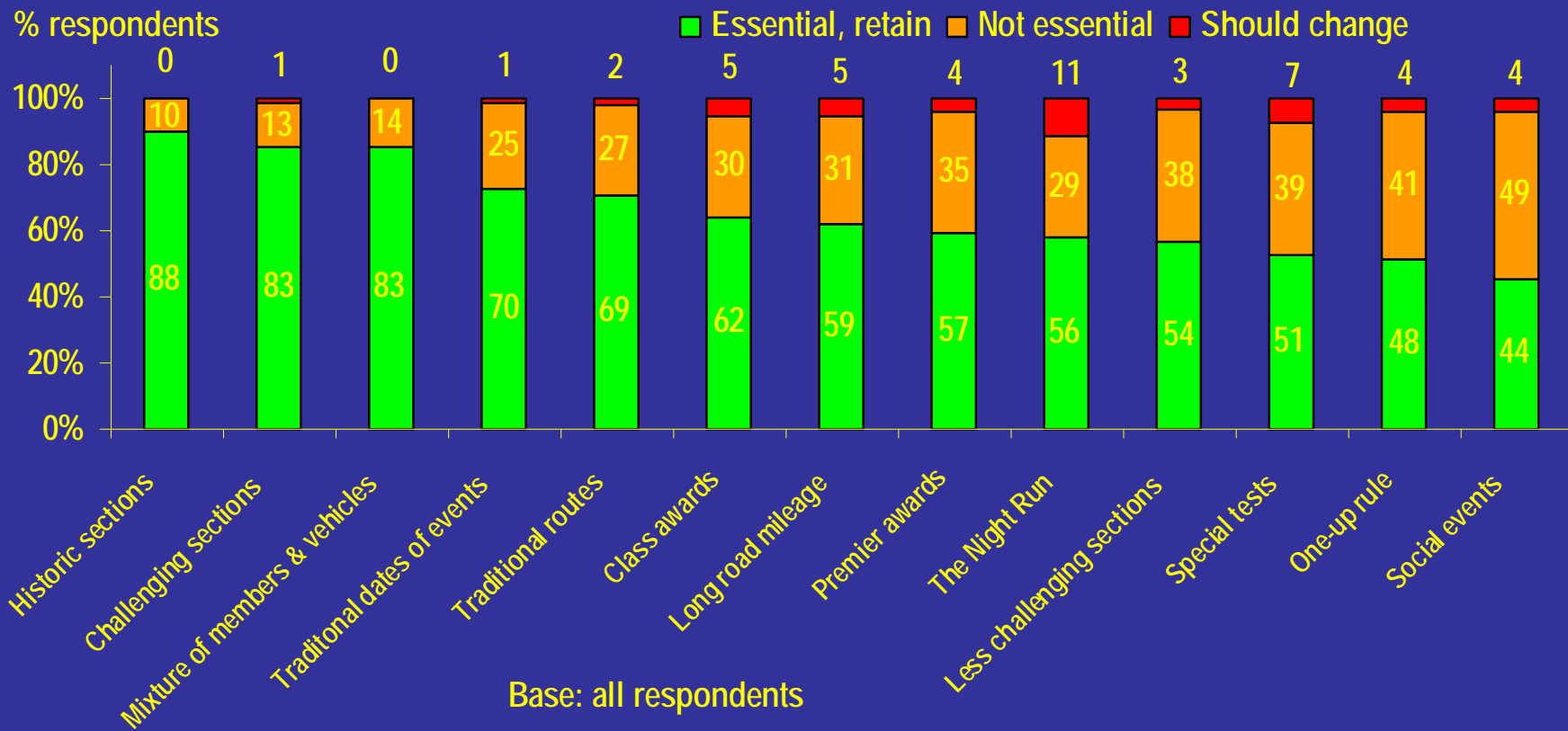
Features of MCC Trialling: Essential, Should Be Retained



Features of MCC Trialling: Not essential, should be changed



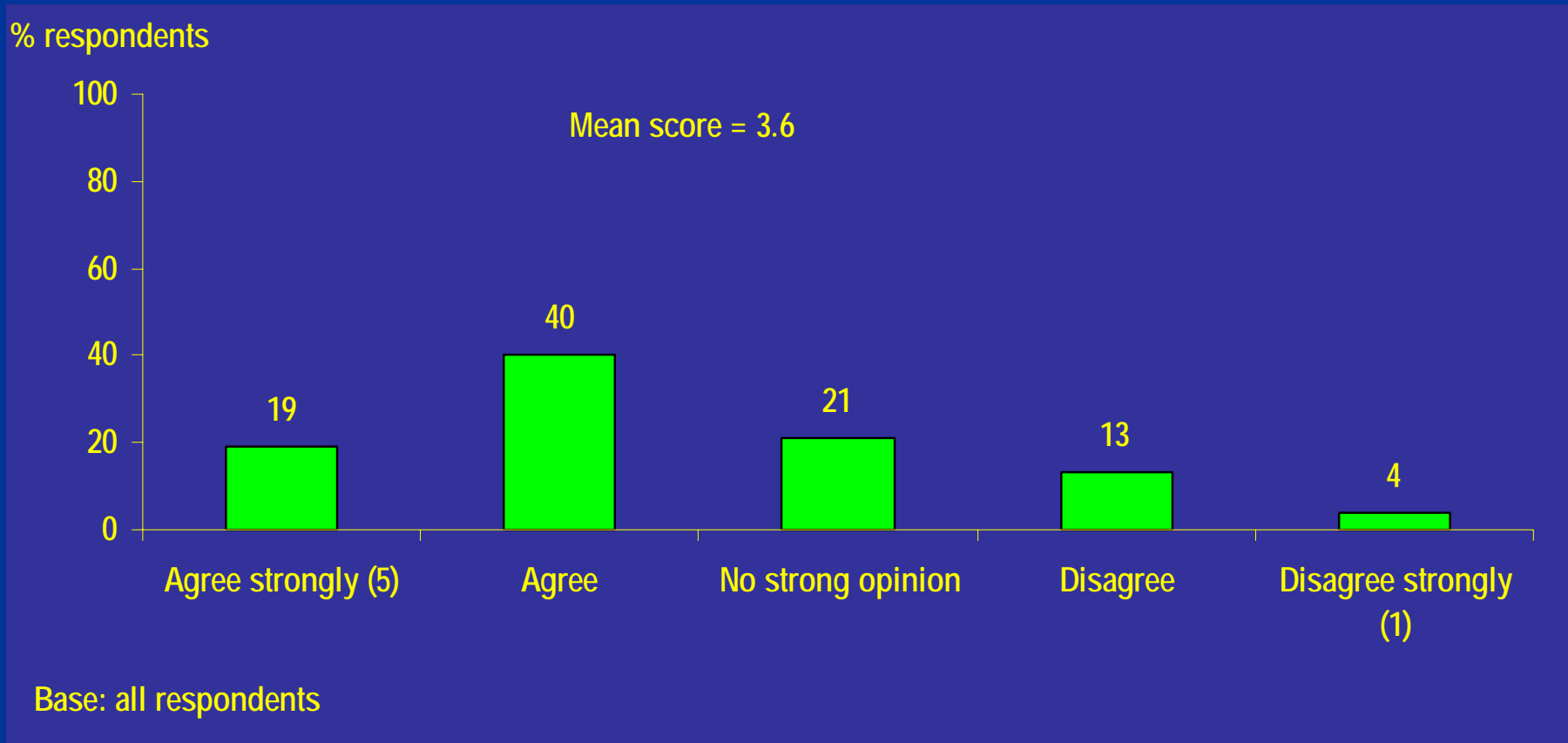
Features of MCC Trialling: Summary of Demand for Changes



Features of MCC Trialling

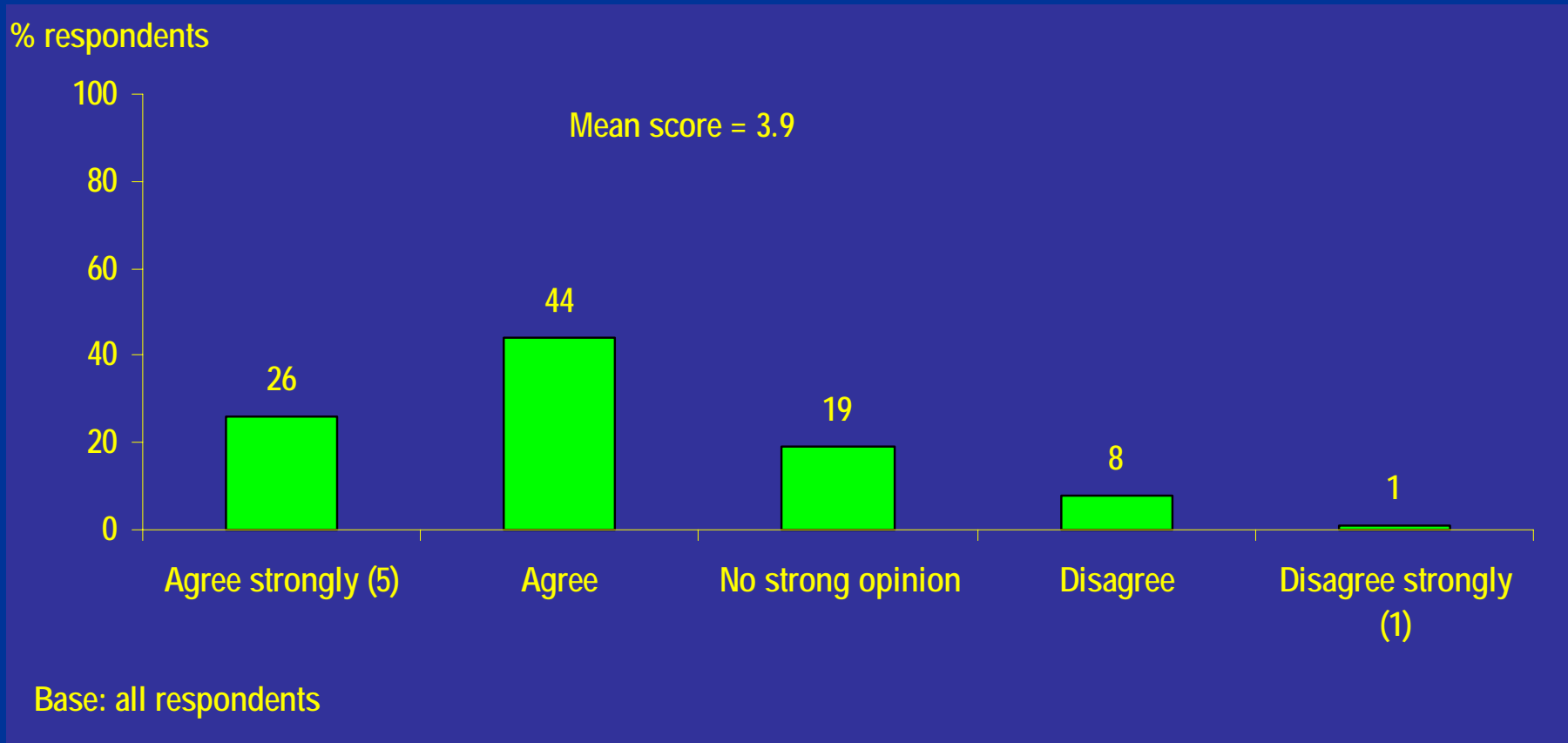
- little difference in opinion as to which features of MCC trialling are essential
- consistent answers from bike riders & car drivers
- those most resistant to change are:
 - regular triallists
 - current competitors
 - long-term members
 - those belonging to ACTC-affiliated clubs
- class 0 car drivers, those considering sections too rough & beginners least likely to resist changes

Extent of Agreement with Statement: *Competing, not just taking part, is important*

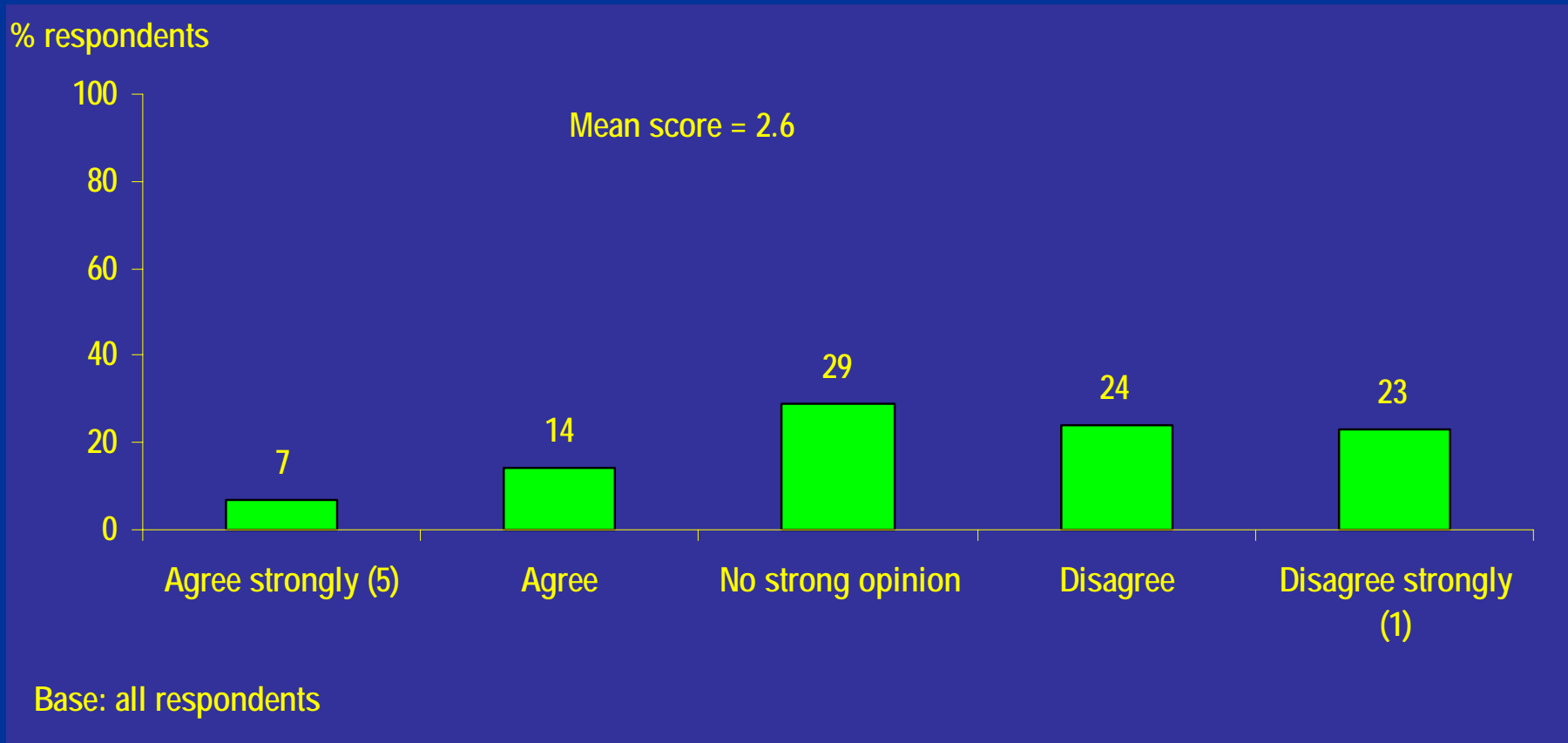


Extent of Agreement with Statement:

Competing against the club, not other members, is important



Extent of Agreement with Statement: *Class 0 should be seen as the future of MCC trials (1)*



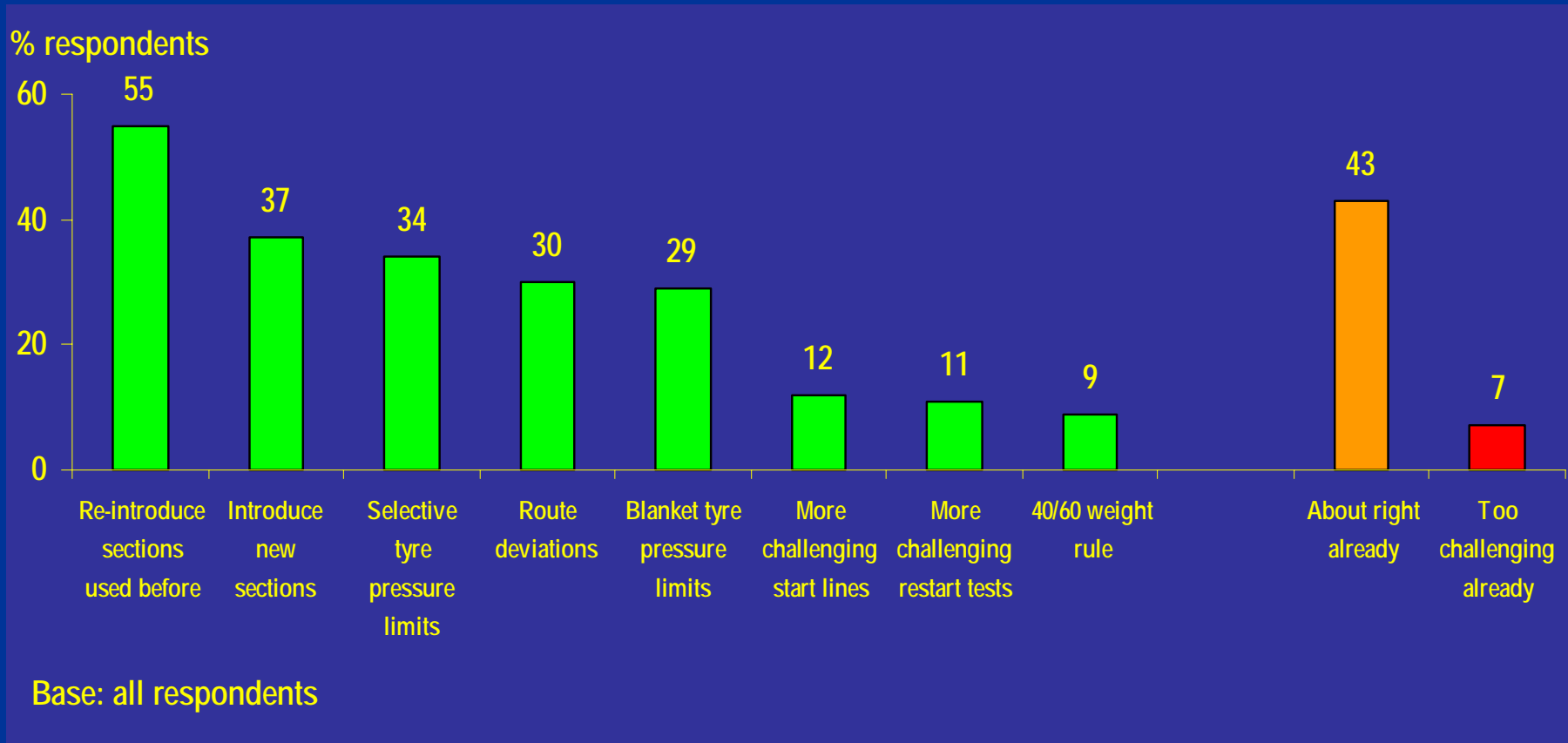
Extent of Agreement with Statement:

Class 0 should be seen as the future of MCC trials (2)

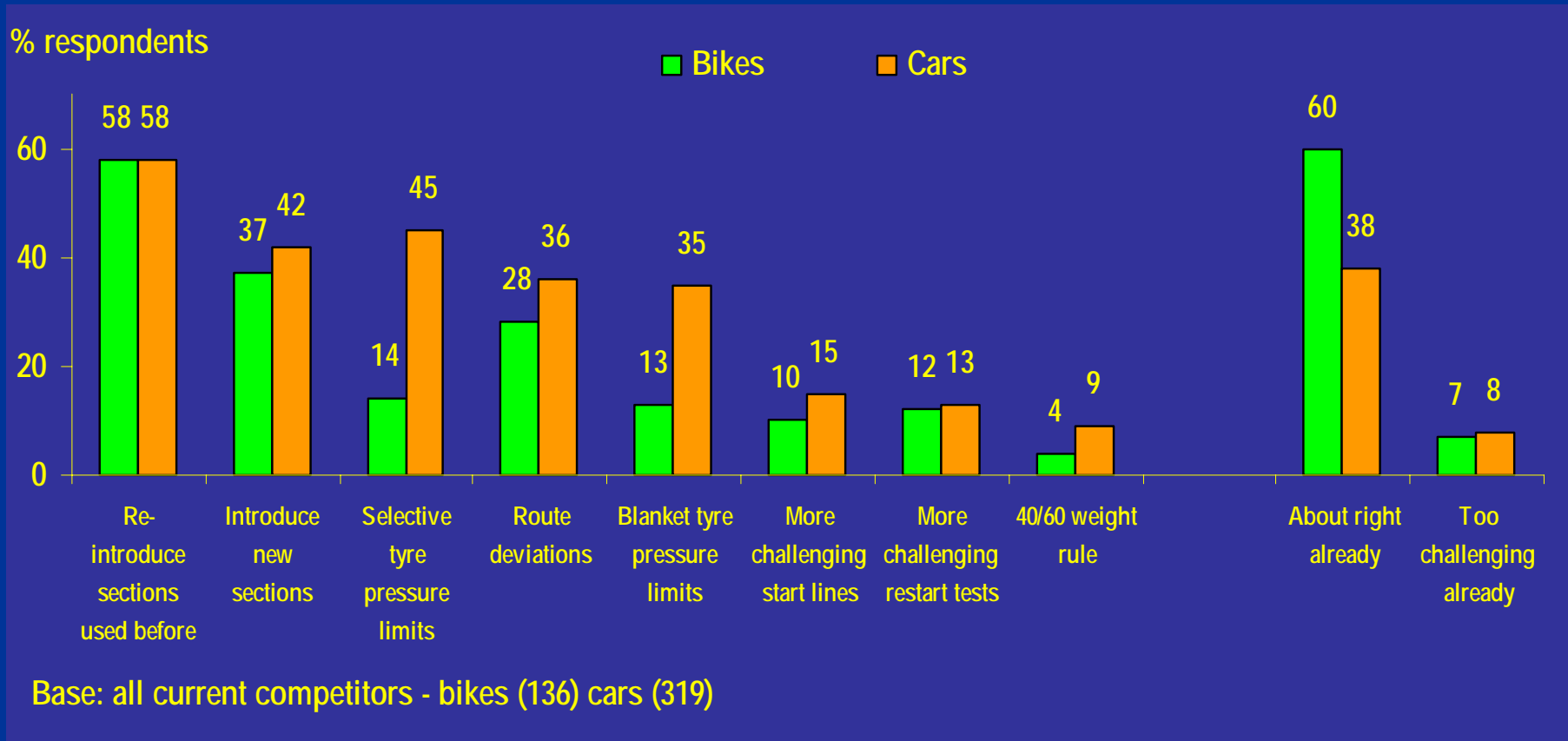
- there is a statistically significant difference in opinion on this issue between current competitors (MS 2.4) and those mainly involved in marshalling/organising (MS 3.3)
- the only other groups agreeing with this statement are: those aged 66+ (MS 3.1), class 0 bikes (MS 3.1), class 0 cars (MS 3.7)
- only 1/3rd of those generally in favour of class 0 agree with this statement; 1/3rd disagree

Section 5: The Future of MCC Events

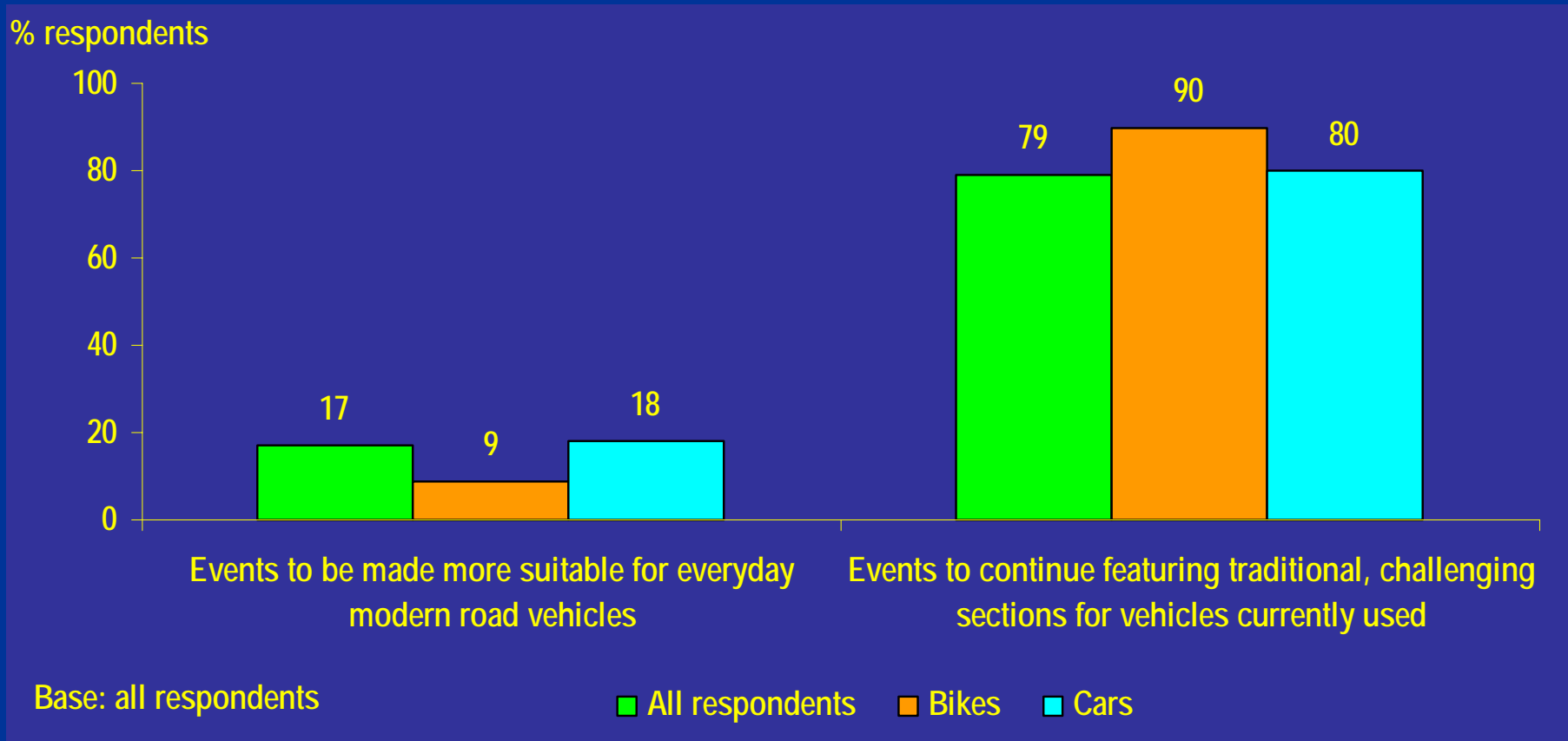
How to Ensure MCC Trials Remain Challenging (1)



How to Ensure MCC Trials Remain Challenging (2)



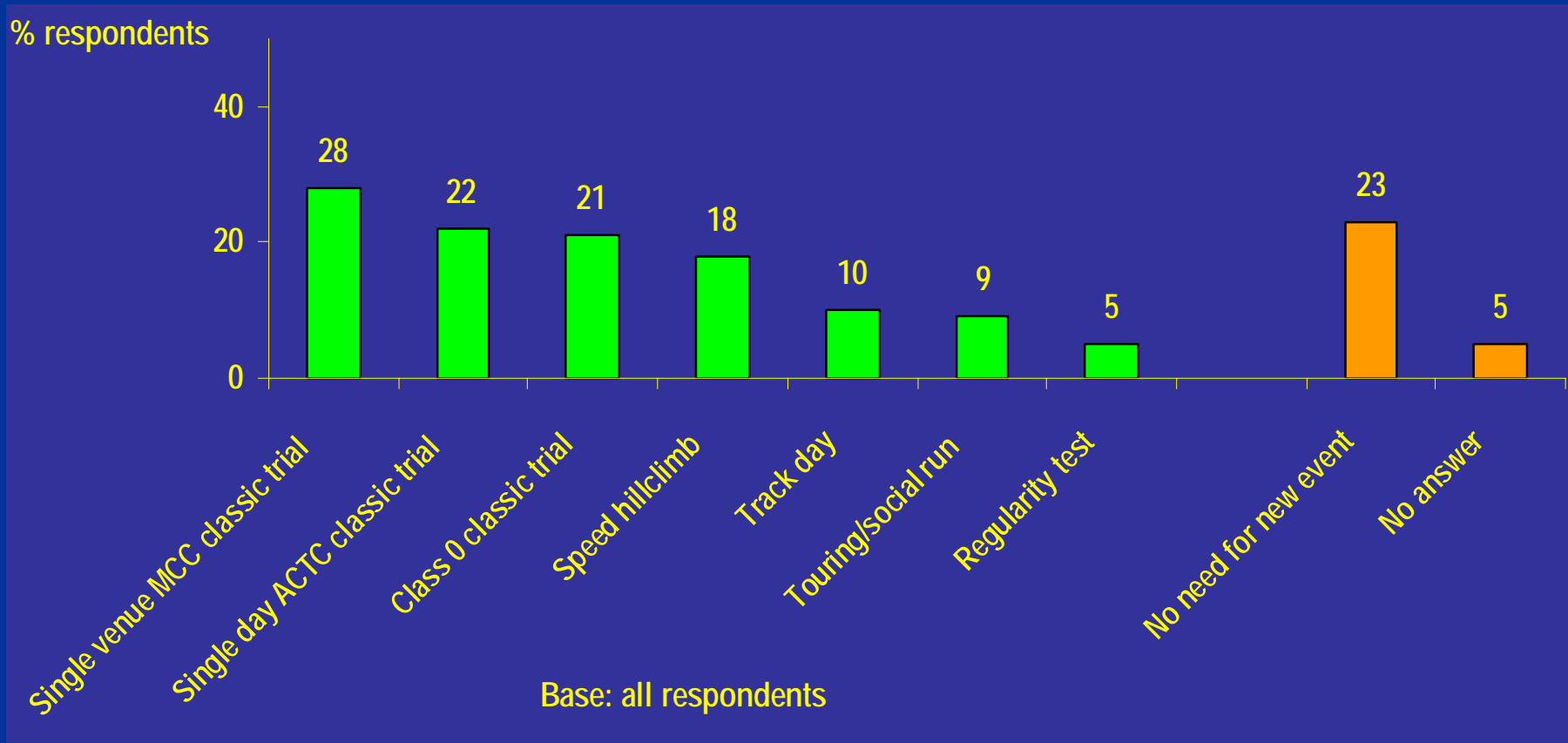
Long-term Future of MCC Trials (1)



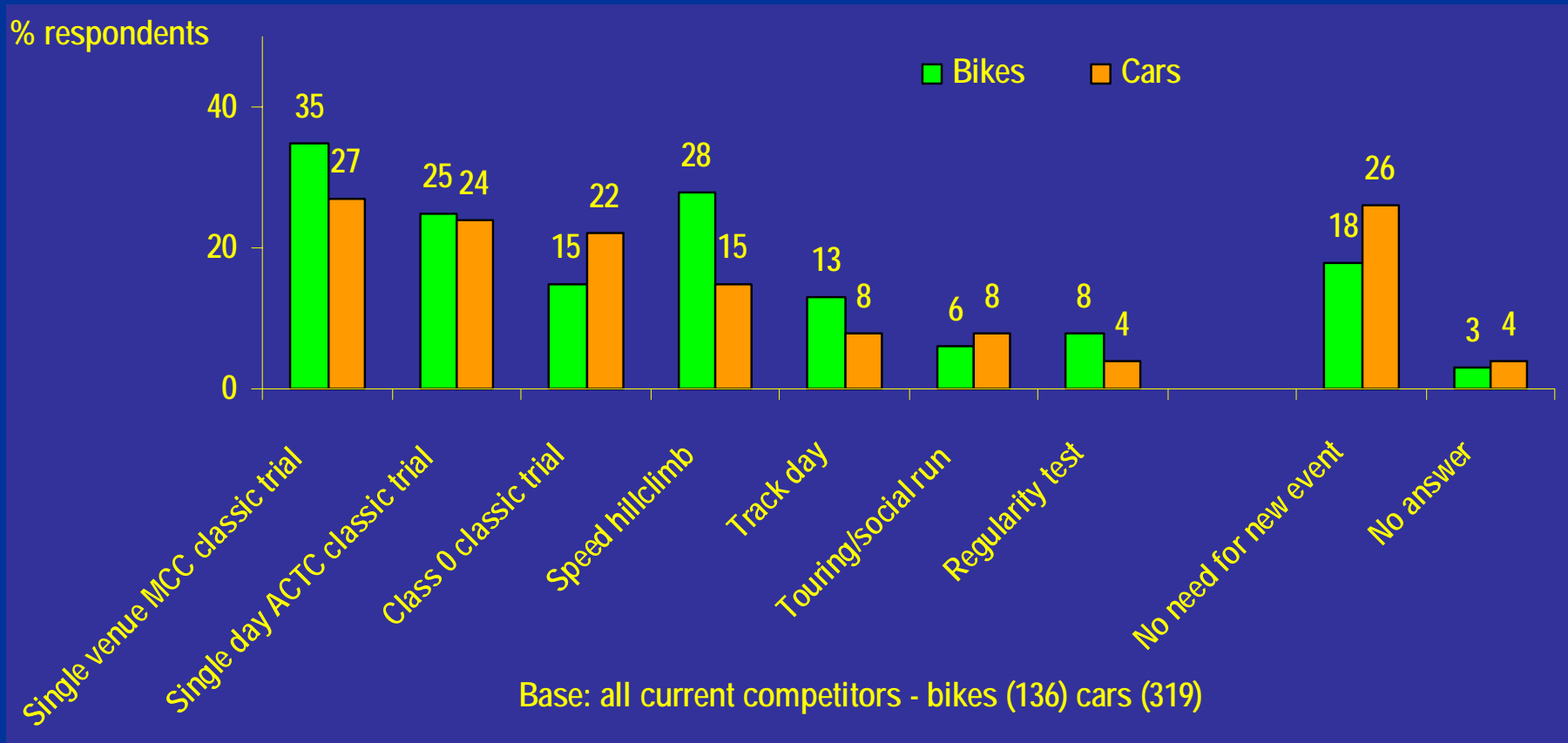
Long-Term Future of MCC Trials (2)

- current competitors (14%) are significantly less likely to want MCC trials to be made more suitable for everyday modern vehicles than those involved in marshalling/organising (40%)
- similarly, bike riders are less interested in moving MCC Trials in this direction than are car drivers
- attitudes vary considerably within the car classes, with 'higher' classes less receptive than classes 0-4
- there is no real difference in opinion between regular triallists (11%) and MCC stalwarts (14%)

Preferred Event to Replace Curborough (1)



Preferred Event to Replace Curborough (2)



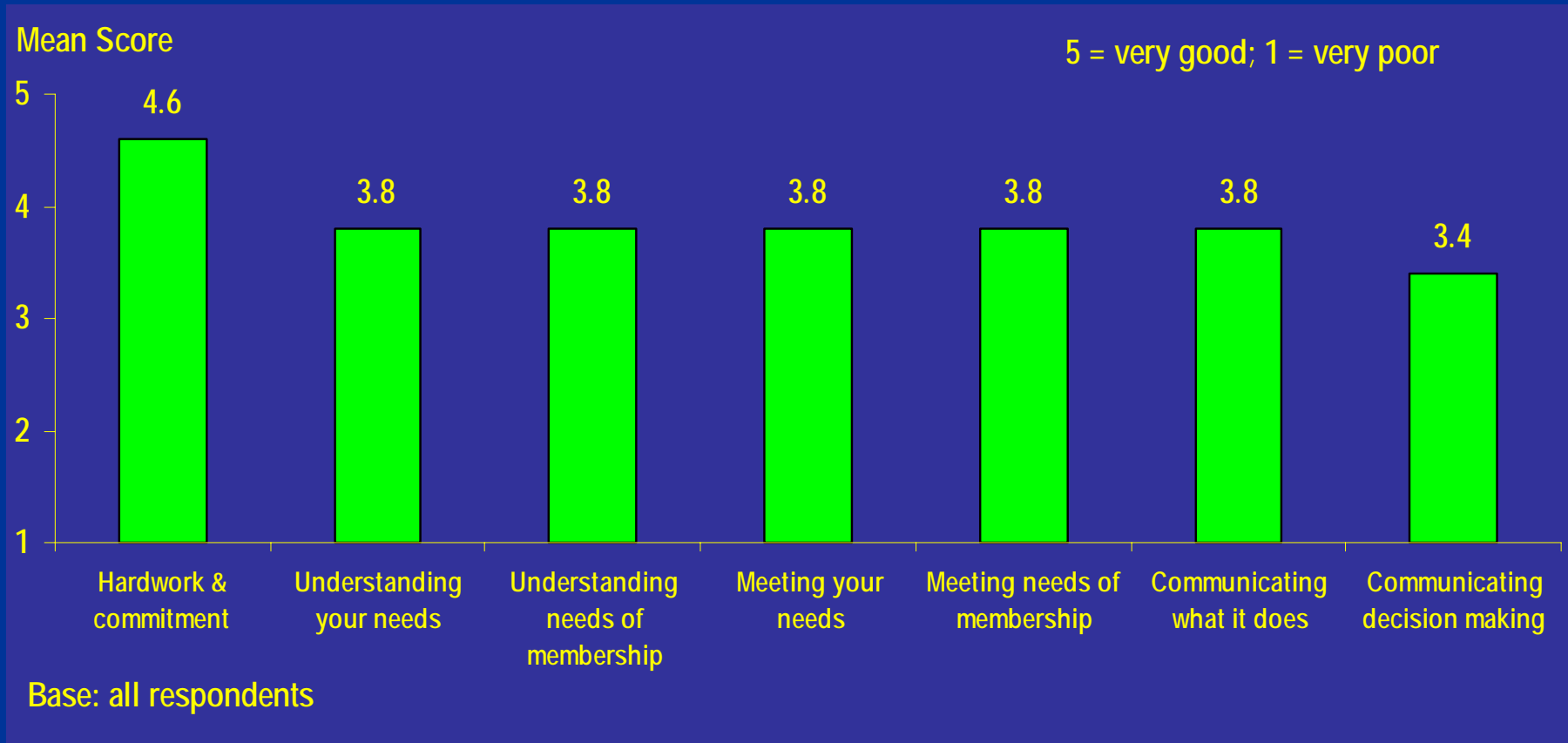
Need to Run Any Events Other than 3 Main Trials

- almost half (48%) think the MCC should run more than just the 3 main trials
- 37% disagreed
- 15% did not answer
- those more likely to agree include:
 - bike riders (56%)
 - those involved in marshalling/organising (71%)
 - long-term members (58%)
 - MCC stalwarts (54%)

Section 6: The Running of the Club & Communications

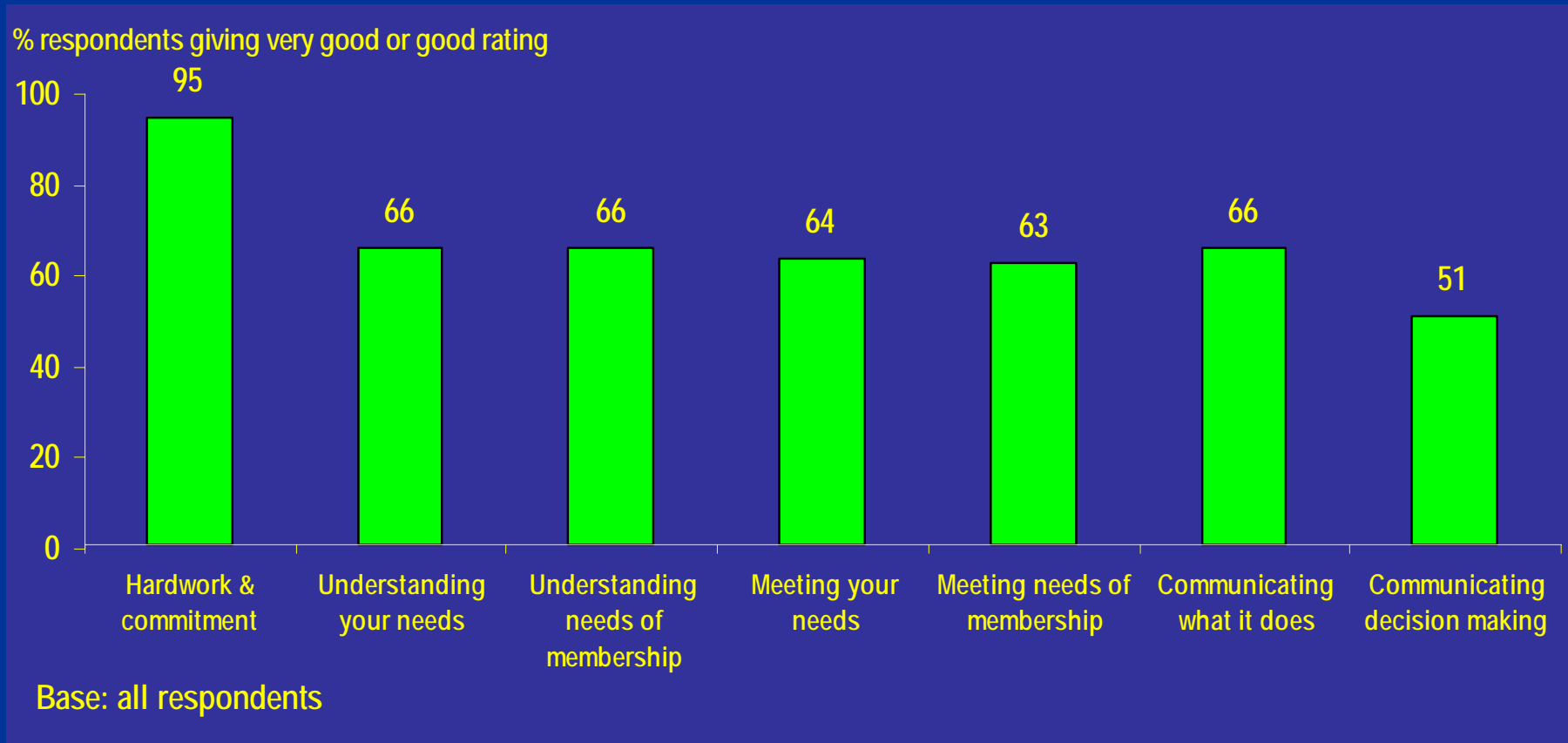
Rating of the Executive Committee (1)

Mean Scores



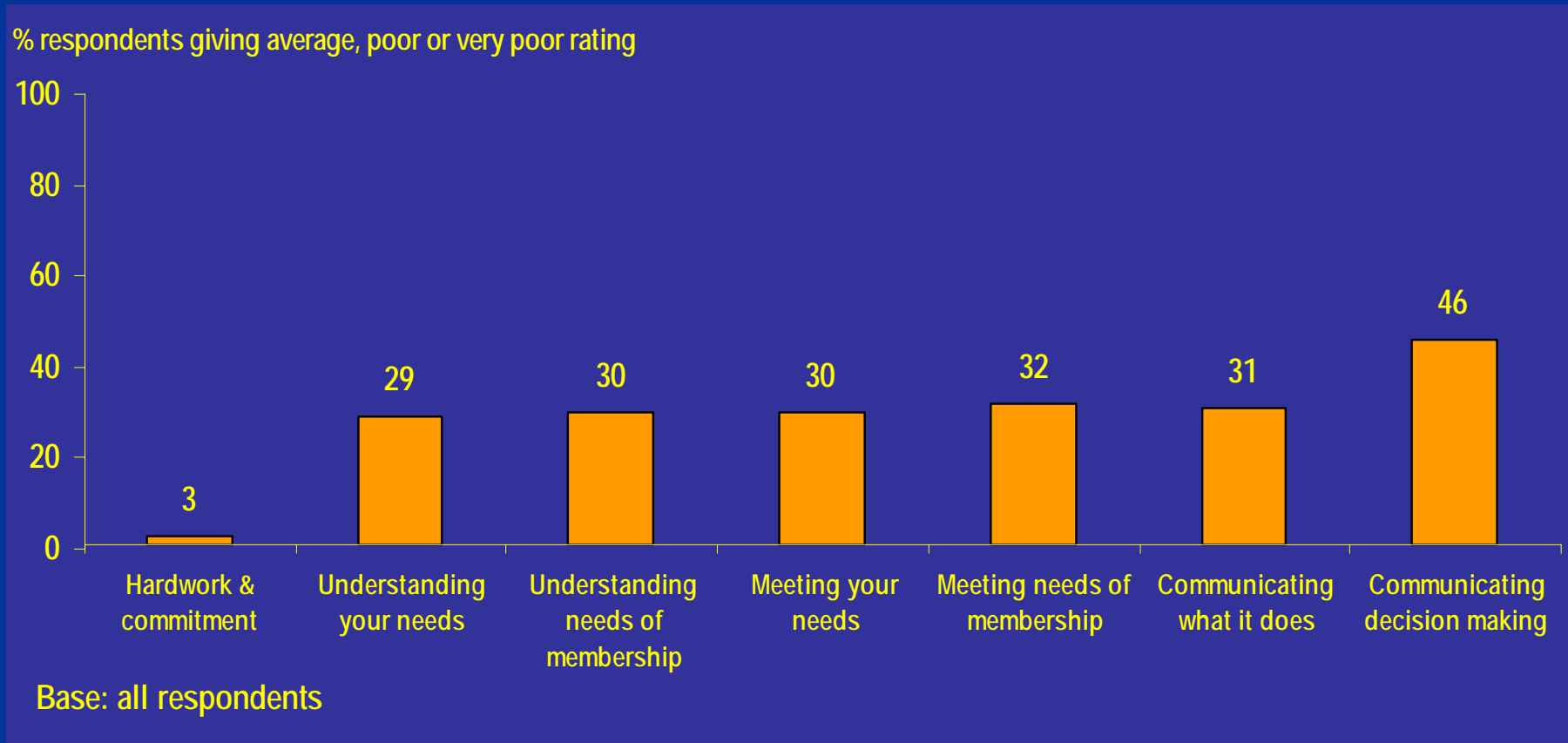
Rating of the Executive Committee (2)

% respondents giving *good* or *very good* ratings



Rating of the Executive Committee (3)

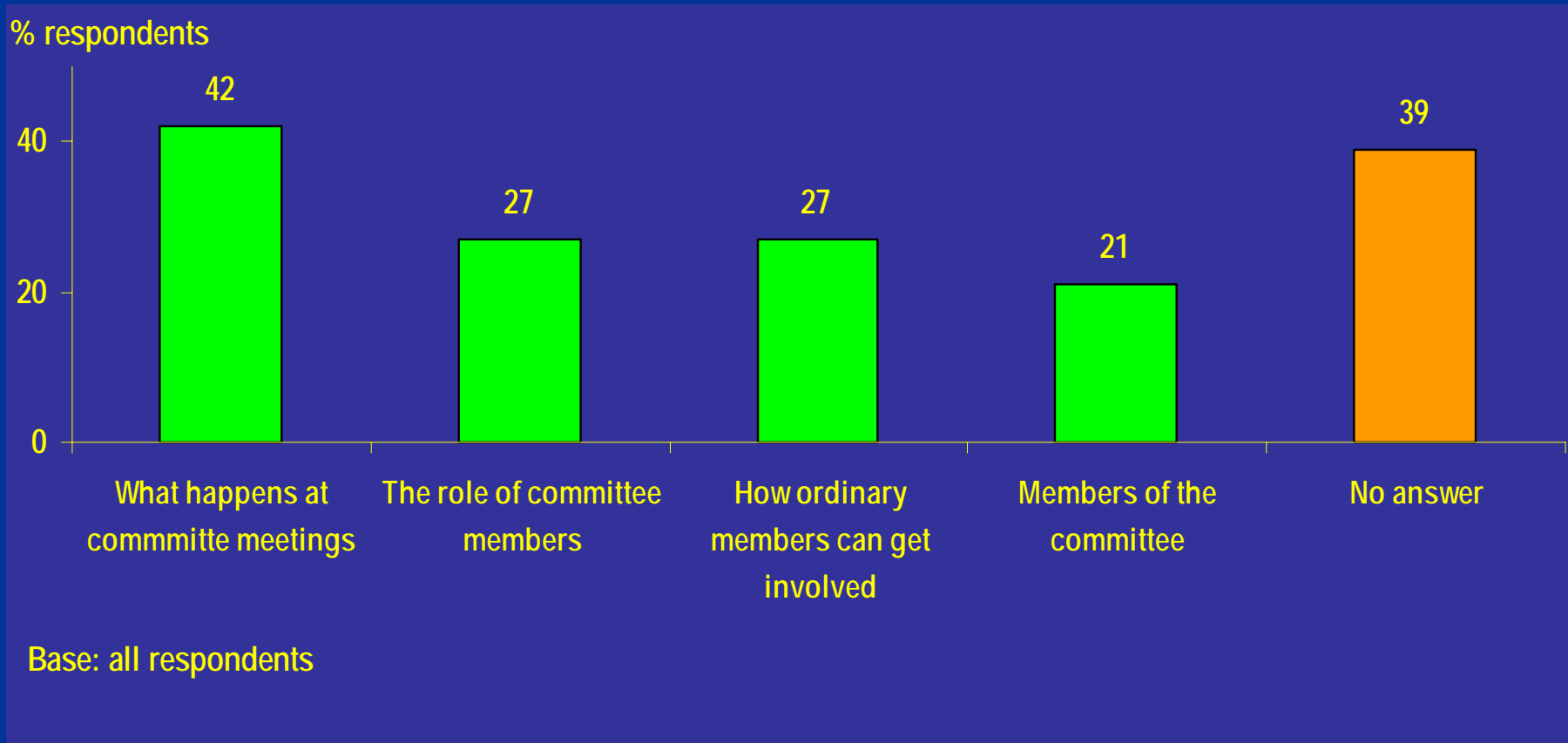
% respondents giving *average*, *poor* or *very poor* ratings



Rating of the Executive Committee (4)

- the following groups are more likely to rate the Executive highly on most factors:
 - occasional triallists/beginners
 - bike riders in general & in particular classes 0 & D
 - car classes 0 & 5 and, to a lesser extent, 2 & 7
- lower ratings are more likely from:
 - regular triallists
 - car drivers in general
 - bike class C
 - car classes 4 & 6 and, to a lesser extent, 3 & 8

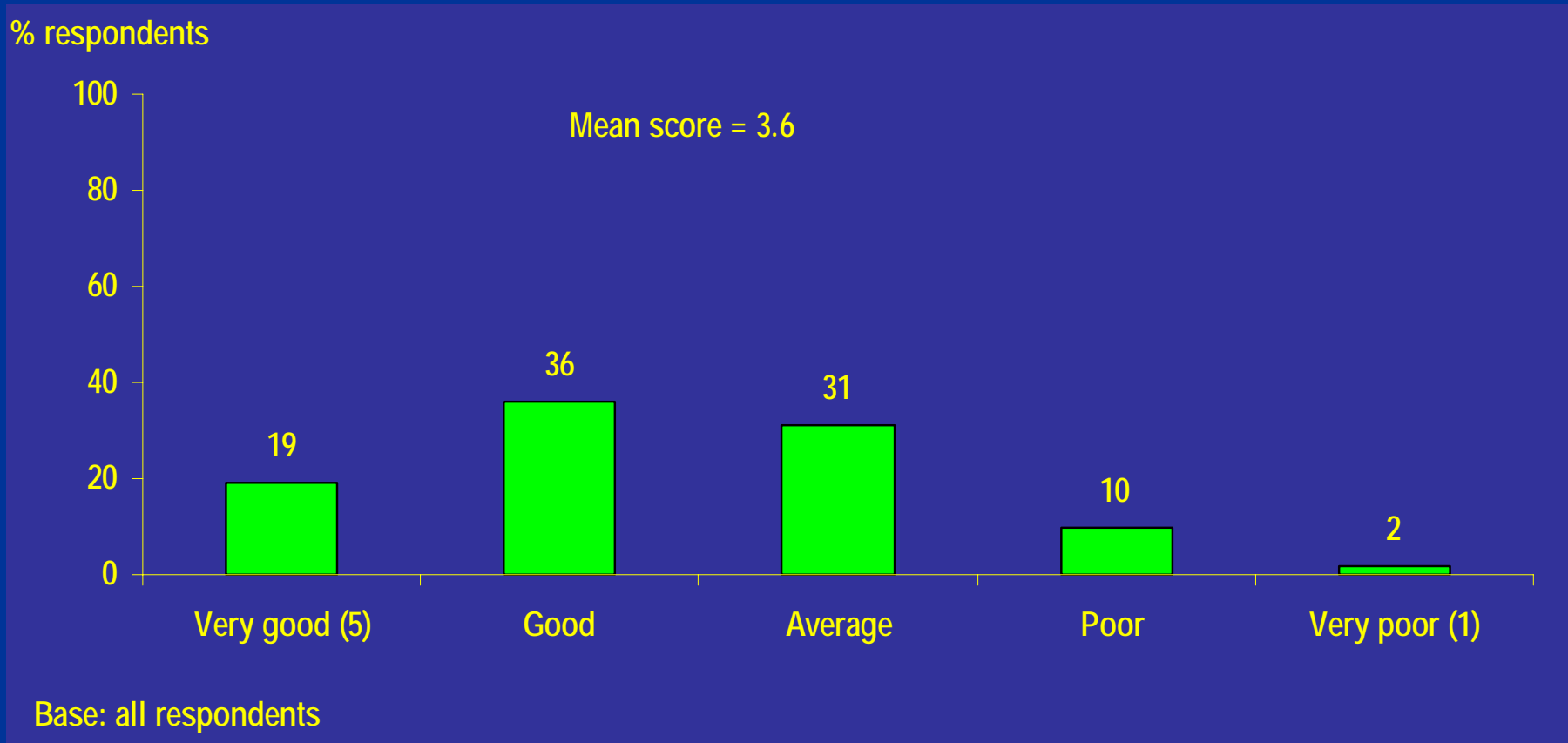
Member Interest in Knowing More About Committee Matters



Rating of Value for Money: Annual Subscription (£27.50)



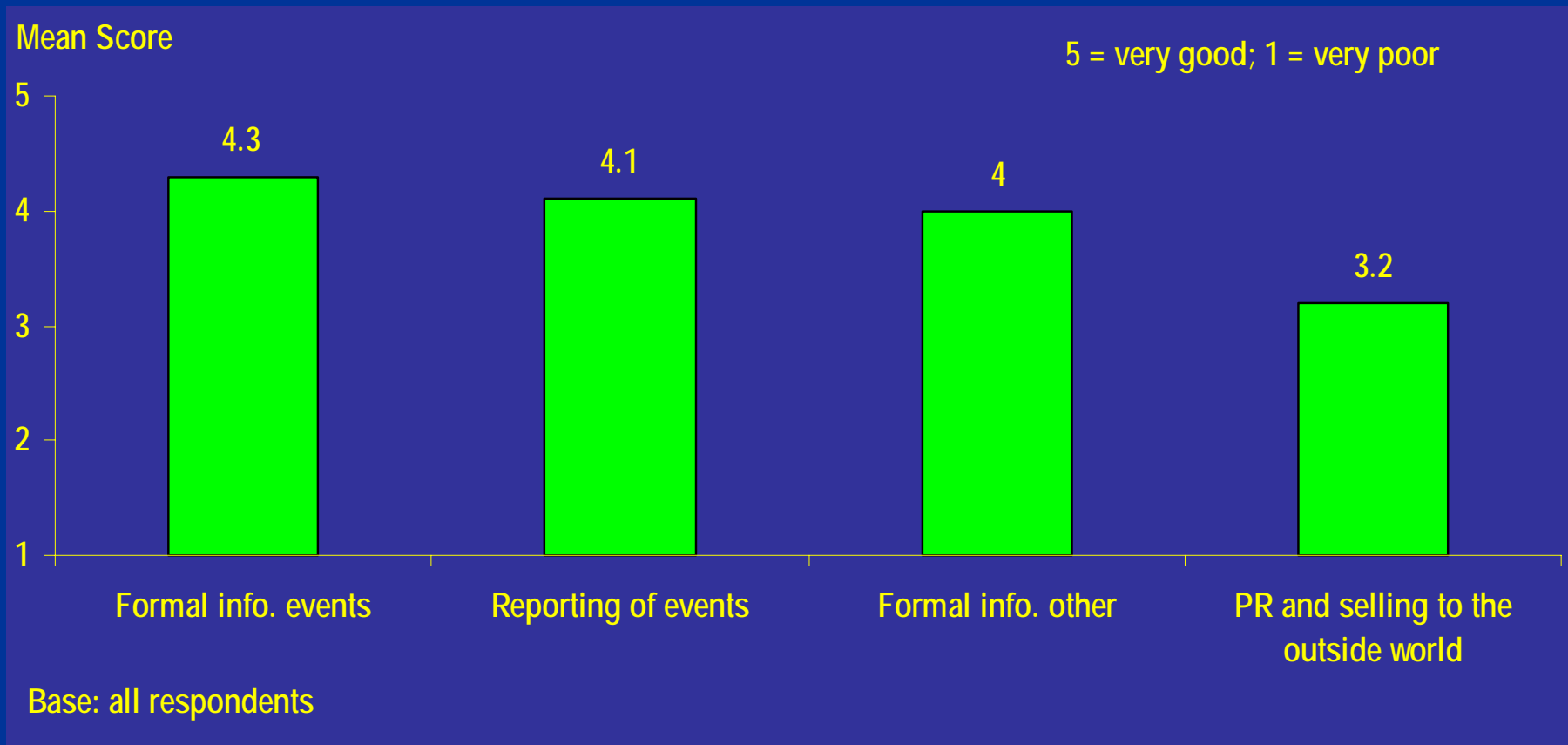
Rating of Value for Money: Trial Entry Fees (£40)



Rating of Value for Money

- the following groups are more likely to rate the club highly for value for money:
 - car drivers in general
 - car classes 0 - 5
 - those involved in speed events/circuit racing
- the following are likely to give lower ratings:
 - bike riders in general
 - car classes 6 - 8
 - regular triallists

Rating of Communications



Conclusions & Recommendations

“How many more of these lunatics are there to arrive, and why do they do it?”

Events (1)

- the majority are happy with the existing format & running of events; there is no call from the members for major changes
- a minority of competitors have concerns about roughness & the club has already taken steps to remedy this
- it may be that some sections would need less regular work if they were used in rotation rather than year in, year out
- consideration might therefore be given to resting some historic sections for 1-2 years to see what impact this has
- this would also have the benefit of adding some variety to the routes although there could be no question of resting the 'set piece' hills ie Simms, Fingle, Blue Hills, Bamford etc
- the club may feel, however, that continuous use of a section is the best means of securing its right to use them in future

Events (2)

- the most commonly mentioned factor members thought should be changed is the Night Run, albeit by only 11%
- this echoes public, Police & media concern with the issue of tiredness at the wheel
- how long will it be before falling asleep at the wheel is thought to be as socially unacceptable as drink driving?
- the club has already taken steps to relax time checks and enforces compulsory rest stops
- it is not clear that all members understand why these changes have been taken, so that further communication would be worthwhile
- consideration should be given to how MCC trials could run without the overnight section

Vehicles

- consideration should be given to whether the long-held MCC belief that events should be suitable for everyday cars is still valid in the 21st century
 - 90% of members do not use such vehicles
 - dedicated members are more likely to change their vehicle than leave the sport
 - car ownership is at a far higher level than when this belief was voiced in the 1950s
 - modern everyday cars which are eminently suited to MCC events cannot compete as they have four wheel drive or traction control
 - there are few motorcycles on the market designed for everyday use - most are twist & go scooters or specialist leisure machines
- if it becomes overly prescriptive over the vehicles it would like to see, the club may alienate many current members

Involvement & Activity

- like many organisations in the leisure & voluntary sectors, MCC faces a decline in membership & involvement, especially from younger members
- for many active members MCC is only one of a number of organisations with which they are involved
- it is recognised in the voluntary sector that, increasingly, people wish to participate on an 'as & when' basis but are reluctant to make a formal commitment
- thus they enter and are involved in MCC events which fit in with their life but for many it is not the be all and end all of their motorsport activity
- MCC must accept that this behaviour is the norm; it is not in a unique position nor in a disastrous one

Implications for Planning of Future Events

- a long distance MCC trial involves almost as many signed on officials as participants
- it is impractical to think that all of them can be members
- one way round this is to continue the practice of encouraging other clubs to provide marshals and helpers
- where sections are also used by other clubs perhaps these other clubs should be invited to be involved in terms of marshalling, PR & maintenance/repair work
- the *quid pro quo* is that MCC should offer something in return
- this could be in the form of an invitation to members of other clubs to participate in MCC 'closed to club' events
- or perhaps the resurrection of the inter-club trial

Implications for Future Entry Requirements

- several new MCC members commented that it was difficult to find out about the club and that they felt as if they were in some way being vetted during the joining process
- to enter an MCC event requires membership and then completion of several entry forms, months before the first event in which a new member can take part
- other clubs running similar events make the process of entering an event much easier:
 - they run events which are not ‘closed to club’
 - closing dates for entries are set days or weeks in advance rather than months; in some cases, potential entrants can ‘enter on the day’
- it is believed that this is especially the case for bike riders where riders have a great variety of events to choose from

The Need for New Members (1)

- the research shows that the Club is heavily dependent on the late middle aged for its members/entrants
- it can be reasonably assumed that these members will reduce their involvement over the next 10-15 years
- the decline in entries and membership may well be a symptom of demographic change; the population as a whole is getting older
- simply put there will be more older members leaving the club than new, younger ones joining it
- this means that in order to stand still the Club will have to work harder to attract new, younger members
- the good news is that for the MCC, young is a relative term which really applies to anyone under 50

The Need for New Members (2)

- it is reasonable to ask if the club & its events would be viable with lower numbers of members & entrants
- it is also reasonable to assume that this is not the case
- clearer communication & transparency regarding the finances of the main events would, however, enable members to better understand the Executive's concerns
- assuming the club needs to take action, the options are:
 - increase fees
 - reduce costs
 - maintain/increase the level of membership/entries
- given the choice, the third option seems preferable

Is Class 0 the Answer?

- Class 0 should allow older members to carry on for a bit longer but they cannot go on for ever
- EPR's conclusion is that the club needs new members
- Class 0 has also attracted beginners & they comprise approximately a third of the class
- but entries to Class 0 have levelled off at around 12-15% of the main event
- a detailed analysis of Class 0 is now needed to determine:
 - its financial contribution - does it bring in more than it costs to run?
 - where have Class 0 entrants come from?
 - how many events have they done?
 - what are their future intentions?

A Potential Problem With Class 0

- some of the new Class 0 members have indicated that even in its present form it is too arduous and have asked whether there is any real need to bother with the 'off-road' sections
- it has to be questioned whether such members will have the desire to progress to the main events
- if not, is it in the club's interests to attract such members?
- or will ever more effort be expended in meeting the needs of new members who have no interest in & little understanding of the *raison d'être* of the club?
- the needs of such potential new members would surely be better served by other organisations promoting other events

Increasing Involvement via Class 0

- much of the concern generated by Class 0 must relate to the fact that many members have no real understanding of what its purpose is
- EPR's recommendation is that it remains a slightly less demanding version of the MCC trialling experience but that it is promoted to the outside world as a gateway to the main events, not as an end in itself
- it should allow new members to get a flavour of what the club and its events are all about without the full commitment required for the main trials
- but in doing so the entry level should not be set so low that potential new members are misled

Increasing Involvement via Existing Members (1)

- friends & family are the main way in which members are introduced to the club
- the importance of keeping existing members happy cannot therefore be over-stated
- the research indicates a substantial & significant section of the membership which appears less satisfied
- this is the group described throughout as regular triallists
- from a marketing perspective, this group could be the best possible advocates of the club; their opinion of the spirit of an MCC trial is in line with the opinions of MCC stalwarts
- as such their contribution to the club needs to be understood and respected

Increasing Involvement via Existing Members (2)

- but the feelings of these members towards the club is ably summed up in one comment

“I competed in most MCC trials for 20 years. I was always competitive in my approach but never went home in a sulk when things didn’t go my way. I thoroughly enjoyed the camaraderie of events and found equal enjoyment expressed by other less competitive drivers. I made many good friends amongst all levels of competitors. Why then did I always feel that the MCC hierarchy happily accepted my entry fee but would have preferred me to stay away? Whatever. I learnt to ignore the pettiness and continued to enjoy the best trials ever”

Increasing Involvement via Existing Members (3)

- the best way of recruiting new members and gaining entrants is by encouraging them to take part in events
- but if events are promoted that are contrary to what most existing members want and enjoy the potential for resentment and even conflict exists
- if the MCC is to promote a new event it is recommended that it is something that existing members would want to do themselves and which they would feel comfortable promoting to friends and family
- it is recommended therefore, that the club considers promoting a new trial, specifically aimed at allowing new members to get a taste of real MCC trialling

Increasing Involvement via The Outside World

- the club has made efforts to promote itself via the internet, press articles, exhibitions & shows in recent years
- further efforts are needed in the existing target markets to attract more new members
- consideration should also be given, however, to having a presence at country shows and maybe outdoor events
- the aim in each case would be threefold:
 - to attract new members through complementary target markets - affluent, active, mobile, respectful of the countryside
 - to inform and educate others about our responsible & legal use of 'rights of way'
 - to associate with our natural allies - other RoW users & landowners

The Need to Communicate with the Outside World

- some members are critical of current PR activities, others are fearful that it alerts the attentions of those opposed to what we do
- it is recommended, however, that MCC continues & expands its PR activities
- it allows the club to set its own agenda and project a positive image
- the club is full of great PR stories:
 - the responsible use & maintenance of rights of way eg Bamford
 - the contribution to community fund raising eg Ilsington
 - the contribution to the local economy eg Torquay
 - the contribution to charitable causes eg RNLI
 - as a result MCC enjoys great relationships with local communities

Growth Action Plan (1)

- have confidence in the club's core product - its trials
- demonstrate that MCC recognises and respects why people go trialling - primarily for adventure and competition
- show that the club 'ethos' of fair to all still exists and that it does not favour certain groups of members/types of vehicles
- communicate more openly & transparently with members
- make it easier to enter events:
 - shorter and simpler form filling, online entry forms
 - more realistic closing dates
 - consider promoting open or invitation events - non-members could pay a higher entry fee £10 but receive a discount when they join
 - at the very least consider day, joint or family membership

Growth Action Plan (2)

- continue and build on PR activities
- build relationships with potential allies, both in the trialling world and in the world at large
- if the club truly is committed to increasing the number of members and participants on its events it needs to be less, not more, restrictive in terms of the vehicles which can compete
- at some time in the future, cars with traction control and/or four wheel drive will need to be accommodated
- care will be needed to ensure that:
 - such vehicles compete on a level playing field with existing vehicles
 - the club does not become embroiled with the potential PR disaster that the off-road brigade represents

And finally...the original answer

“Ever since normal motoring ceased to be an adventure...reliability trials...have become a popular sport, in which the enthusiast can enjoy the thrills of strange adventure and satisfy that competitive instinct which is present in all of us”

From:

‘Why not enter for a trial?’ by J Maurice Toulmin

(first published in the Autocar 1935)

Referred to in:

‘Wheelspin’ by CAN May

(first published 1945)

And the modern answer...

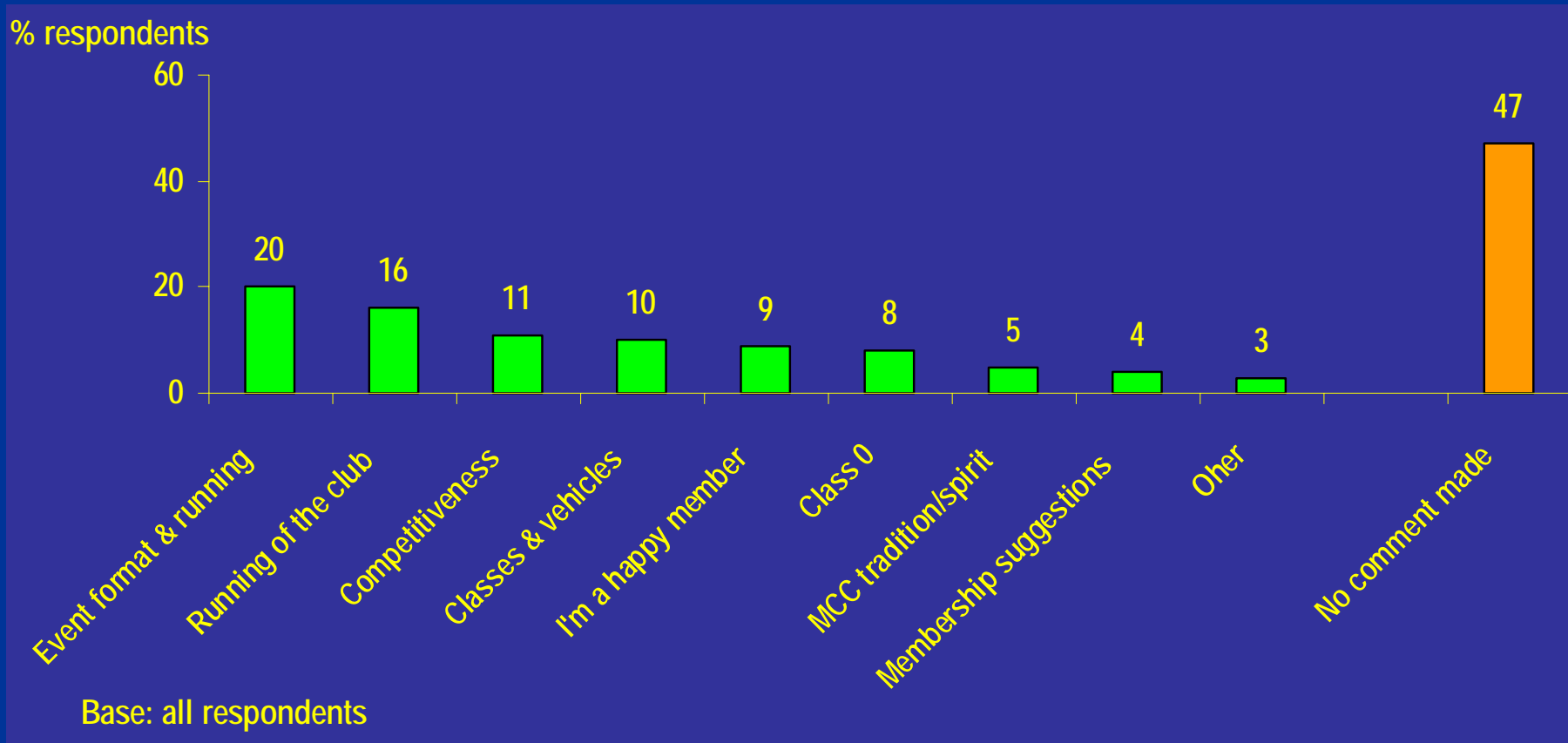
“I only joined this year (2004) and rode the Land’s End & the Edinburgh. They have been fantastic events - I wish I’d joined the MCC years ago!”

Appendix:
**Section 7: Spontaneous
Comments on Issues of
Importance to MCC**

Contributors

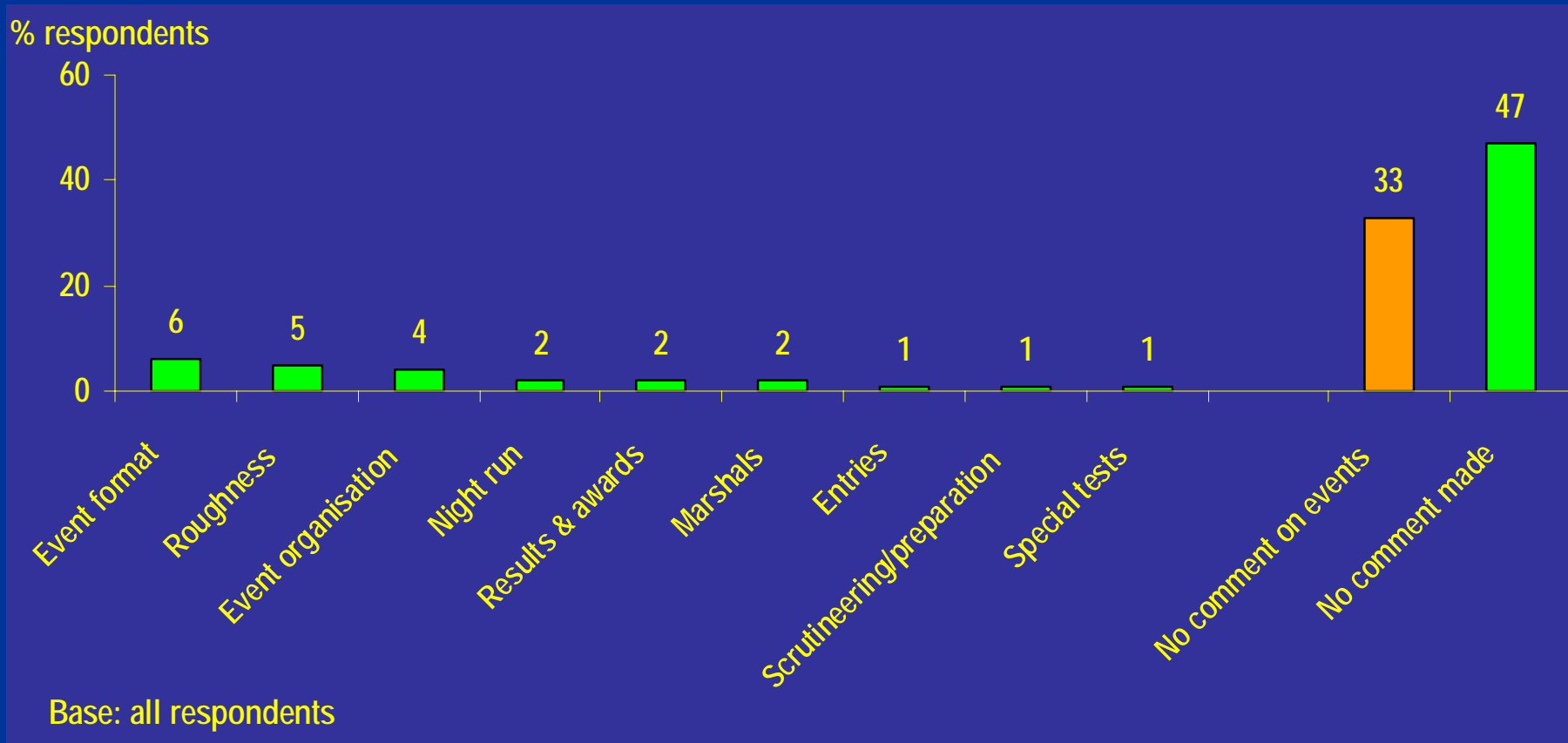
- in addition to answering questions, members were invited to comment on issues of importance
- 53% of respondents (305 members) did so
- every comment has been read & assigned a code
- in total, approximately 300 individual codes were needed & all are listed in the full data tabulations
- comments on a specific issue are grouped together under an overcode eg 'the night run'
- these have been placed into further, more general topic groupings eg event format & running

Summary of Member Comments: Number of Members Commenting on General Topic



Event Format & Running (1)

Summary of Comments



Event Format & Running (2)

Event Format (1)

- many different comments were made regarding the the format of existing events

“I’m disappointed at the removal of hills for Class 1 which are considered too difficult”

- suggestions were also made for future events

“A grass speed hill climb would very nice but only on your regular MCC vehicle to keep cost down”

Event Format & Running (3)

Event Format (2)

*“Why are Classes 1, 2 & 5 being treated differently in trials?
Class 2 are some of the best prepared cars and 1 & 5 are as
tough as anything else”*

*“I really don't think the Touring Assembly is relevant or
justifiable in today's environmentally-aware world - especially
with fuel prices going up”*

*“The touring assembly on the LE is pointless. Long distances
are fine if they involve sections”*

Event Format & Running (4)

Roughness (1)

- the main themes are:
 - sections are rougher than they used to be
 - the need to repair ‘damaging’ sections
 - the need for hills which are technically tough but not damaging
 - the need for members to prepare and use suitable vehicles

“I like challenging sections, I don’t like damaging sections - that’s the problem!”

Event Format & Running (5)

Roughness (2)

“The events are challenging and some sections already quite rough. Grading of these via working parties/with local council help would be the ideal but how do we make this happen?”

“Classic trials, not just MCC trials, are becoming much too rough, damaging cars and resulting in higher running costs”

“Several sections...are becoming too challenging and too rough for the average vehicle and competitor. We all enjoy these trials but having to repair increasing avoidable damage, post-trial, somewhat dampens this”

Event Format & Running (6)

Roughness (3)

“The future needs to be sections that are ‘tough but not rough’. Somehow the club needs...to restore traditional sections to a state that members find a challenge without them being demolition courses. We need groups of members to ‘adopt a section’ and...keep that hill in a competitive & useable state”

“I have moved from Class 5 to Class 0 because some Class 5 hills have become too rough. I would rather move back to Class 5 but cannot risk too much damage to my Morgan”

“To suggest MCC sections are too rough is ridiculous. As a midget driver I am quite prepared to take on what the club offers. We must however preserve these sections - getting stuck in ruts is a pointless exercise!!”

Event Format & Running (7)

Event Organisation

- perhaps not surprisingly, comments appear to have been influenced by the previous event (Ed '04)
- the main themes were:
 - problems with timing & delays & how to resolve them
 - need for adequate facilities at rest stops
 - difficulties encountered with last-minute route changes

Event Format & Running (8)

Night Runs (1)

- although the number of those who would like to see Night Runs dropped is small, feelings are strongly held

“The days of the overnight run must be numbered. I fell asleep while driving in the early hours of a trial 2 years ago - fortunately without damage to property or person”

Event Format & Running (9)

Night Runs (2)

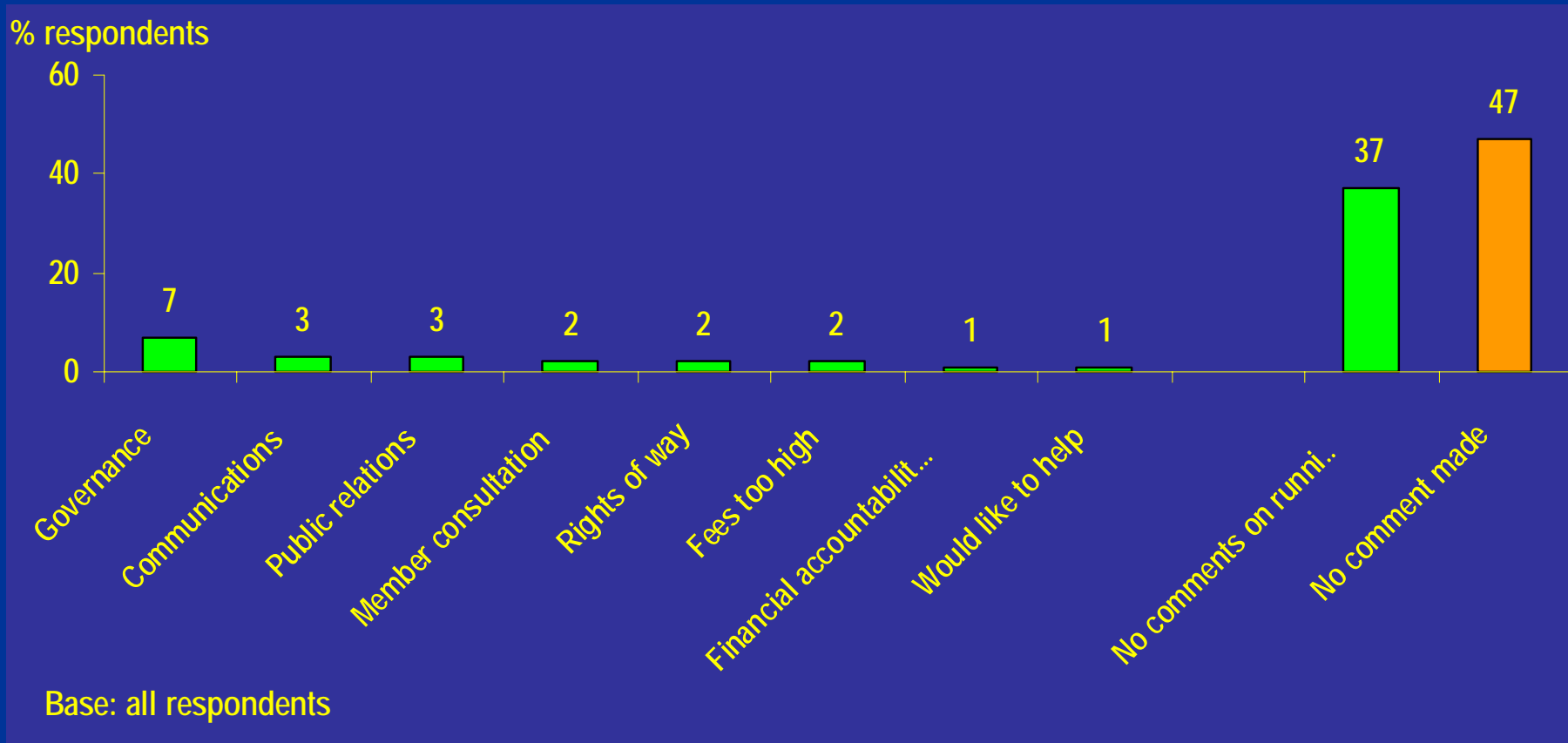
“The Night Runs are not very nice and frankly dangerous due to lack of sleep. How long before someone is killed?”

“The sections in the dark must be continued, they make MCC trials what they are. But I wouldn't object to a reduction in night mileage”

“We need to consider the present legal issues over drivers being tired and having an accident...we have no choice but to dispense with the Night Run before someone ends up in court”

Running of the Club (1)

Summary of Comments



Running of the Club (2)

Governance (1)

- the main comment is

“If it ain’t broke, don’t try to mend it. If the club had not got it right it would not have just celebrated a centenary”
- other themes include:
 - the club is generally well-run
 - the need for younger members on the committee

“The committee should not feel under siege every time a member raises a criticism or two. They do a great job and their efforts are generally spot-on”

“The MCC is the best-run motoring club I belong to and I hope that it does not change too much”

Running of the Club (3)

Governance (2)

“The club should concentrate on maintaining a high standard on the 3 main events plus possibly the testing trial. The trials are what the club should be all about. It appears to me too little emphasis is placed on the trials and too much on policy matters - changing things for the sake of it - and trivia”

“Too much time seems to be spent by certain members of the committee moaning about sections & classes, mostly class 8. The formula is about as right as you can have it”

Running of the Club (4)

Governance (3)

“The main purpose of the MCC should be the running of the 3 main trials. All other MCC events, no matter how worthy, are merely sideshows. No-one pays their subs to do the Summer Run”

“The club has evolved over a long period. Great caution should be exercised before any change, which should be gradual”

“2004 MCC AGM was somewhat farcical - it appeared the committee don't like to be questioned. If it ain't broke, don't fix it but the committee seem to have been trying to fix it for the past 5 years”

Running of the Club (5)

Governance (4)

“What is needed is younger committee members who are involved in classic trials”

“It seems difficult to get involved with the organisation of the club and events. I have been a member for 18 years and have never been asked an opinion or to help in any way. I have volunteered and I would like to be more involved”

“I have marshalled in the past as a non-member and will do so again. I am a former director of a classic car club and willing to get involved but don't know how to”

Running of the Club (6)

Governance (5)

“Rule changes should be made through consultation and not by the committee. I live in hope that this survey will be used effectively & collectively see another 100 years of classic trialling”

“MCC committee has many excellent qualities, but must communicate more with the members, who are competitors. Competition is not a dirty word”

Running of the Club (7)

Communication & PR

- members like the newsletters
- there is recognition that the Committee is communicating more effectively with members
- but also demand for further communication/ openness
- there is also interest in improving Public Relations, particularly with regard to:
 - promoting a positive image to the general public
 - promoting the club to prospective members

Running of the Club (8)

Internal Communications

“The committee appear distant to some members, not because they are but because not enough effort is made to ‘introduce’ them to members & publicise their aims”

“Congratulations to the Committee for the recent improvement in communication. This has improved immeasurably over the time I have been a member and is to be welcomed”

“Better communication of why decisions have been made and other options rejected would help. Don’t lose sight of the club’s success!”

Running of the Club (9)

Promoting a Positive Image

“The biggest single factor acting against our sport is threat of a regulatory or environmental nature...we must promote ourselves as responsible and use every political means to promote our case”

“MCC needs to be very sensitive to ‘countryside’ activists. Support of communities near to key sections therefore needs to be developed further”

“How about stands at Country fairs to promote ourselves as a responsible country sport?”

Running of the Club (10)

Selling MCC & Its Events

“Public relations on the whole are excellent but more magazine articles are needed to promote the events. I had an excellent response to my article in Classic Motorcycle Magazine”

“More motorcycle entrants could occur if the club was publicised better. Very few know about classic trials”

“Do we need to sell the MCC to the non-motorcycling world? The higher our profile, the more flak we could receive from groups like the Ramblers”

Running of the Club (11)

Consultation

- most of those commenting commended the idea of consulting members:

“Sorry to rabbit on but we have been asked to express our views & I thank the MCC for allowing me to do this. I wish the club every success in mapping out the future and giving people the same enthusiasm & satisfaction which I have enjoyed for many years”

“Great survey - please publish the results”

- one member, however, disagreed:

“The questionnaire totally fails to address the fundamental question of what is good for the sport and for MCC events in particular. Frankly, the views of the current membership... are not particularly relevant to this”

Running of the Club (12)

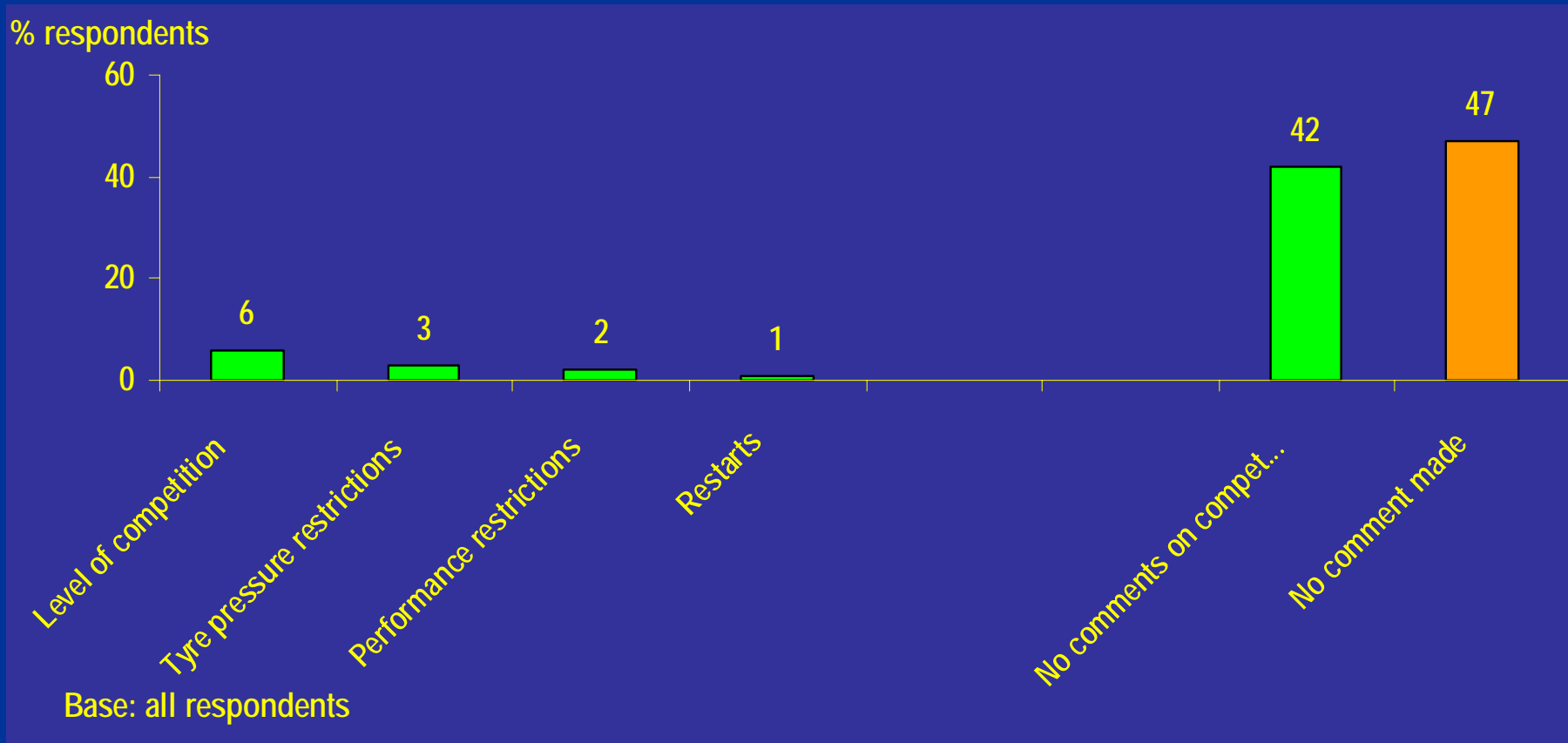
Fees

“Why does the club continue to increase fees year in, year out? The club is awash with money - either spend some of it on a social event or stop putting up fees. What is the club saving up for?”

“My major concern with the MCC and its events concerns the ever-increasing cost. The 2005 EX costs £40 with insurance a further £15. The imminent Neil Westcott organised by the Exmoor MC is £15 with insurance costing £9.50. Surely this must be a reason why the motorcycle entries are falling?”

Ensuring events Remain Competitive (1)

Summary of Comments



Ensuring events Remain Competitive (2)

- the main comments on competitiveness were:
 - the benchmark should be the average club man, not the expert
 - the MCC should not ‘dumb down’ its events
- those commenting on tyre pressures mostly oppose the current policy of blanket restrictions

Ensuring events Remain Competitive (3)

“Class 0 is very important but the club should not forget the competitive driver/car combination”

“The club is currently well run and, with the web, is now communicating better. For the 3 trials, stick to ensuring members adapt cars to compete successfully, don’t ‘dumb down’”

“Each clerk of course caters too much for the aces & class C, 7 & 8. The events should be aimed at the majority of average competitors”

“ACTC one day events are not MCC events and should not be used as a yardstick to judge MCC events”

Ensuring events Remain Competitive (4)

“Recent ‘across the board’ tyre pressure limits have taken a lot of skill/judgement away from the driver and been very unfair on the lower classes. 16psi on a wet Litton Slack for class 1? We just sat on the line”

“Overall minimum tyre pressures are OK but not for Class 1 or Class 2. 16psi is too high for cross-ply tyres. Either lower overall pressure or more freedom for these classes on difficult hills”

“Minimum tyre pressures should not be applied to bikes. But if they must be then they need monitoring. The 16psi on Ed 04 was clearly ignored by many bikers”

Vehicles & Classes (1)

- some are concerned with how today's vehicles will be able to compete in the future
- a minority are opposed to specialist trials vehicles, particularly car classes 7 & 8 and 'off-road' bikes
- other than 'more bikes in general', some would like to see more vehicles which are older & 'interesting'
- others have special interests eg which class a side valve Dellow should run in

Vehicles & Classes (2)

“As the traditional MCC cars get older (eg Beetle, Escort etc) it is important to make the events welcoming to modern cars”

“To encourage existing & new members to join Class 1 I believe the modern technology used in these cars should be accommodated within the class regulations. ABS traction control etc are not allowed, even in Class 0. We need to plan how to encourage the younger generation into this great sport with modern high tech vehicles as well as Class 7 & 8”

“Say 3 classes for motorcycles - pre Unit, twinshock and monoshock or by weight. It would be difficult but would reflect restart ability”

Vehicles & Classes (3)

“It is important that trialling is a grass root sport which appeals to a wide range of people & vehicles. Don’t make it too complicated with lots of rules and regulations”

“The answer, perhaps, lies in taking a somewhat VSCC attitude to our events. The club must decide what sort of vehicles are suitable...and then stick to its principles”

“There are too many restrictions on the trials car. We need a class with the same sections as Class 7 & 8 but with no restrictions. I don’t want awards just a nice weekend out”

Class 0 (1)

- 47 members (9% overall) commented
- 31 different topics were raised
 - about 1/3 rd of those commenting are supportive of Class 0 as it stands
 - a further 1/3rd make suggestions about the running of Class 0, including several who imply a grudging rather than an enthusiastic acceptance of the concept
 - a variety of other comments are made, including several on the purpose of Class 0
 - only a small number express total opposition

Class 0 (2)

“Class 0 is very good but must continue to be a proper trial and not made too soft. It was always stated that vehicle prep such as sump guards would be required but now people say sections are too rough because cars straight out of a showroom cannot handle them...”

“Keep going with Class 0 and widen the ‘customer base’”

“Many riders like myself love riding through some of the best countryside but without the worry of breaking their pride & joy on the off-road sections”

Class 0 (3)

“I think Class 0 is a great way of allowing people to dip a toe into the water and to allow some more ‘interesting’ vehicles to take part”

“Class 0 gives you nursery slopes to bring on the experts of the future and allows the old duffer to continue competing”

“Do not divorce the ‘0’ route from the main trial - newcomers like to feel included”

“Class 0 should return to following the main event and only do the less challenging hills but have none in addition”

MCC Traditions & Spirit (1)

- 26 respondents (5% overall) commented on the continuing importance of the spirit of the club
- opinion is divided, however, as to whether:
 - the spirit of the club has somehow changed and that the club should be seeking to re-capture a ‘golden age’
 - the spirit of the club is in fact alive and well but that it is in danger of losing it through changes to the format & running of the main events

MCC Traditions & Spirit (2)

“The MCC is a unique organisation catering for the British eccentric spirit in a man & his motor way...it carries on the traditions of past members in an excellent manner - long may it continue”

“I have been a member since 1975 and MCC trials have always been challenging. I think they are excellent so please don't change them”

“I have been a member since 1996 but my interest in the MCC is waning away. Concentrate on the 3 main trials and forget about the cream tea runs. Let's get back to the original trials format that people have enjoyed for the last 100 years!”

MCC Traditions & Spirit (3)

“Club events should give members the experience that was given to triallists of the early years of the MCC - an experience unlike everyday motoring”

“MCC trials have their own distinctive flavour - different from other ACTC events. If that means the more extreme cars find the trials too easy that is their problem - not that of the MCC”

“Let’s go back to the ‘spirit’ of MCC trials rather than turning it into a cheap version of rallying!”

Membership Suggestions (1)

- 22 respondents (4% overall) made suggestions regarding membership of the club
- many of these are for some form of reduced or family membership as a way of encouraging new members and greater involvement
- a number of newer members commented on how difficult it had been to find out about & join the club

Membership Suggestions (2)

Encouraging New Members?

“I found it difficult, even impenetrable, to get to grips with and to join the MCC. The club almost seemed obstructive to new members. The ethos seems to be ‘if you want to join you make the effort - if not, we won’t worry’”

“As a new competitor I found the MCC a little daunting. It seems one has to have personal contacts to fully find out the ‘ins and outs’”

“Without any social contact with other MCC members it is very difficult to find the easy route to successful trialling. A club ‘buddy’ would be a good thing for members new to trialling”

Membership Suggestions (3)

Family/One Day Memberships

“Could membership include spouse & children? This would enable greater participation & provide even better value for money”

“Need to bring in family membership, for the amount of money we pay. This would encourage young family members to get involved, which this club definitely needs!!”

“How about 1 event per year...inviting friends of members to compete on day membership to introduce new blood”

“The rules covering trial entry/club membership are too inflexible & discourage membership. More must be done to increase motorcycle entries”