

RESTART

*The Quarterly Bulletin of the
Classic Trials World*

The official newsletter
of the
Association of
Classic Trials Clubs

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Cover photographs :

2024 ACTC Champions

Paul Merson Wheelspin League *(photo by Dave Cook)*

Simon Oates Crackington League *(photo by Paul Jones)*

Andy Beveridge, Red Rose Bowl *(photo by Dave Cook)*

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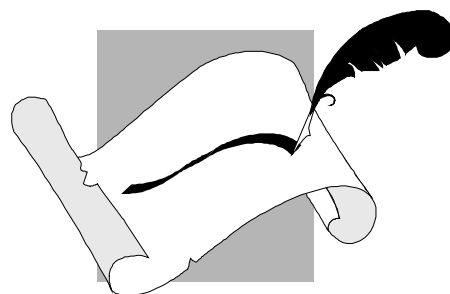
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NEXT ISSUE :

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EDITORIAL

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Having sold our X90 (to Roger Bricknell, who writes about the Lands' End Trial in it, as his first event for quite a few years in this issue) we had a very different experience on this year's Lands End.

We competed in our modern MG TF in Class R. It was very different from our previous events..... I enjoyed it very

much and in particular the roads we travelled along were stunning—with very beautiful scenery almost around every corner and these roads were very quiet. However it was very different from the main trial, but I understand why.

Many thanks again to all the contributors to this edition of Restart. I already have some articles on the Yorkshire Dales for the November issue of Restart, which is good, but please keep your articles coming.

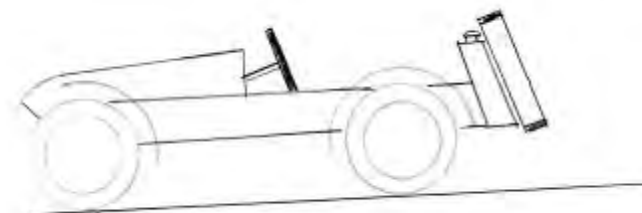
Hope you have an enjoyable summer.

Best wishes,

Pat

PS I love Dave Ditchman's Lands' End photo on page 51—very atmospheric!!

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CHAIRMAN'S CHAT

After a very successful first half of the 2025 trialing year, we find we have a Class 3 and Class 6 leading the championships, and a class win for the FWD of James.

Recently we have had a ACTC zoom meeting and a matter bought up was the organisers helping the blue category classes on the hills with preferential start lines, especially the class 1 who struggle on the hills getting away.

After a very successful Torbay with the new hills working very well, the VW golf was used by Aaron with my grandson Jax in the back bringing

back the memories of 30 years ago when we were a very formidable team, watch out on the Taw & Torridge when another outing is planned.

Hopefully if all goes to plan the Kyrle will be back latter in the year, and Camel Vale are making plans to bring the Presidents trial back in early September but after a site visit from James the ground is looking very challenging.

Hope to catch up with you on the hills at the start of the 2nd half of the season.

See you on the hills.

Dave H ...



(Photo by Dawn Bewes)

Sect's Spin

As the Championship season progresses it's great to see the events continue to be well subscribed.

It's unfortunate that the Bovey Down Trial has had to be cancelled this year, due to Landowner activity on the site I believe. However, missing it this year helps to secure the long-term use of this venue which is the best approach to take.

Conversely, it's great to see the Kyrle Trial is running again this year with a new Organisation Team and new Sections. This event has been popular in the past so hopefully it will be well supported in the new format.

The President's Trial had also been cancelled for this year, however there is now a reasonable possibility that it may

run after all on 7th September. Hopefully there will be confirmation and further information in the coming weeks.

Like many others I have a long list of repairs needing to be done on the Scimitar over the summer. I had all intentions to get cracking on this soon, but this hasn't happened yet. Not to worry there's plenty of time yet (famous last words)!

Anyway, that's about it for now so hope to see you back out in the mud soon. Keep those wheels spinning!

Regards,

Keith Sanders

ACTC Secretary



(Photo by Peter Browne)

Bike Bits & Stuff

Ahh yes.... The summer break. Time to sit back and reflect on the first few events of the season. However, I'm typing this in between welding up some equipment for work and all the while, a dodgy BSA ignition is staring at me, waiting to be fixed. Life seems to be busy all year around.

I'm not sure how others went with the Exeter trial, but conditions were slippery and as an early number, I had my fair share of challenges along the way. Great event though; despite the ice it was a really enjoyable outing.

I was really pleased to see the Bodmin Heights trial allowed solo entries this year and entered as soon as the regs came out. The event didn't disappoint and had a brilliant variety of sections around the Bodmin area. Conditions were slippery but what an outing! Definitely one for the calendar in 2026.

While not an ACTC championship round, the Launceston trial proved to be an awesome event. We rode it on my combination and while our score was just short of a century, we learned a lot and are steadily improving.

The other events we rode (NDMC's Exmoor Trial, the Torbay and Land's End trials) were all well supported and proved to be excellent riding. The quality of events is high and we're extremely lucky to have such variety available to us – and long may it continue.

Otherwise, it's all quiet on the ACTC biking front. There appears to be a Long-Distance Trial going out most weekends somewhere in the UK, so the LDT/Classic trial formats are buoyant.

Take care and hope to see you on the trials.

Best regards,

Andy Beveridge
Motorcycle Co-Ordinator



(Photo by Peter Browne)

Cotswold Clouds 2025 by Sam Holmes

A 5am start saw us arriving at the Fromebridge Mill start just before the first cars headed off at 8am. We managed to squeeze the trailer into a remaining space before scrutineering, signing on and then watching most of the field leave. Running number 70, we were expecting a long day.

Finally, off at 9.45 and the first hill – **Tin Pan Alley**. A familiar start hill that didn't cause much trouble for anyone but was noticeably slipperier and wetter than when we last visited in October on the Mechanics - a sign of the day to come perhaps?

Test 1 and Sandra's Stink. This was a new field type venue for the Clouds but is apparently used by Stroud MC for PCT events. The first test was straight forward: Set off down hill from A, sweep round a long 180 curve through B and back up the hill before swinging back round to head back downhill and stop astride C. This was an enjoyable blast in the greasy field, but stopping on the downhill was even trickier than it looked and may have caught a few out.

Sandra's Stink looked quite a tricky climb; right and up from the start and was quite a mud bath by the time we got there. However, there seemed to be grip with most cars scrabbling to the top of the first climb with a bit of effort. There it all went wrong, as the markers left the rutted, muddy track and ventured 90 degrees up the field. Try as we might there was no hope of us turning out of the ruts and we sailed straight on for a 3, along with nearly everyone else.

Crooked Mustard. I have some history with this fearsome hill and am determined to conquer it. I have been over the 'step' 3 times but still defeated

by the final left hander twice – including last year. I have cleared it once, but with my front wheels past Section Ends my back end stuck on root and I still needed a push to get out of the top. I am determined to drive out un-aided. We arrived around 11 and joined the lengthy queue. Eventually, around 12.20, we were ushered up to the hill.

Taking it steady, we set off up the track before swinging right. Foot down now, I tried to keep a highline while swinging back left and in the blink of an eye found myself pointing at the next bank and a wall of roots. I kept left as I could and kept the power on and could feel grip. Then, I felt the back end hit the slab and slew instantly to the right – game over. I stopped straight away, knowing there is no getting away from there, and let the marshal guide me back down – disappointed. However, according to the provisional results only 11 cars made it up – all class 7 or 8.

Nailsworth Ladder. After a quick change of a punctured wheel, we were off to the ladder. The start is the worst part of this hill, with the sump guard crashing into the tarmac behind us as the front climbs up the first steep rise. A bit of throttle and all soon settled down. Class 4 were spared a restart this time, so we sailed up steadily, keeping hard right in search of the least daunting part of the huge step halfway up.

Ham Mill. Just over the common is Ham Mill, a lovely traditional section of rocks, leaves and mud winding up a wooded hillside. When our turn came, we took it steadily to the higher of the 2 restarts which was on a fairly even looking bit of ground. Keeping the revs down, I set off steadily and had a nice drive to the top.

Bryans and Wicked Juniper. Interestingly, on the way to this hill we passed early competitors who had finished already – and we still had 10

hills to go! I was looking forward to these 2 sections as I enjoy a nice blast up a hill. We had pressure limits at Bryans so were unsure about how well we would climb. I eased off the line and round the first kinks where there was stony track before booting it for the muddy climb. She gripped well and we were climbing well, but after the higher classes' restart things became a bit murky. I tried to keep high and swung round to face straight up the hill and found more grip, heading to the top for a clean. The pressure limits took a toll on this hill, with only 5 other cars going clean.

After a compulsory 20-minute lunch break Wicked Juniper was next door. This time tires were free. I took it steady off the line and up the lower reaches, as near the bottom there is a vicious kink that can throw you off if you hit it too hard. That passed, I went for it and the Beetle was on song. Trying to guide it along the ruts I kept on it, and we were soon passing over the roots and holes of the higher class restart. Still flat out she kept climbing and we were soon at the top, a hugely enjoyable climb and a great result – only 2 other saloons cleared.

Merves Swerve. I cannot clear this hill, and this year got to the same place as always, just over the hump after the restart.

Climperwell. In recent years, Climperwell has been run backwards as a climb off the track, up through the woods into a field; a format I much preferred. This year it was run the traditional way, following the ruts along the valley floor. The ruts were deep as ever, and muddy, and kinked left and right around tree stumps, but with no tyre limits and not a lot of incline most of the field cleared, even with a restart.

Bull Banks. The restart here is often devilishly slippery and being on rounded

stones, often highly polished after the first 20 cars or so. We had pressure limits, and the restart was positioned in the most cunning place and as we approached, I was not too hopeful. However, we found enough grip to move away, as did most others – it was in kind form.

Station Turn. This was a new hill for this year in the familiar wooded complex up from Station Lane. After a bump across a stream, it was hard left through a quagmire before heading up a greasy looking track to a restart. While having my pressures checked, I watched the 2 lovely HRGs make the restart look easy – so the pressure was on. I eased off the restart steadily, but with enough revs on to give it the beans if needed. There was some grip, and we got off and clear without too much fuss – relieved.

Jerry's. Dropped some air, and briskly off up the first incline. As we dropped carefully into the gully, I wound the 1300 up and as soon as we were facing the right way dropped the clutch and raced up, gritting my teeth as we crashed over the roots on the final incline for a clean.

Rick's Revenge. This hill looked tough. With a tight right hander from the start line, in an absolute quagmire, onto a steep and slippery climb with much higher tyre pressures than we would have liked - we were not hopeful. Slipping the clutch and winding the little engine up while getting it pointed, it was soon giving its all. Surprisingly we found grip and I thought we were going to make it, but near the top slipped to a halt. Dad bounced and we inched forward a bit and I kept my foot in but that was it – a 1.

Ryan's Revolution. Sadly, this hill deteriorated quite badly and was barely drivable by the time we got there. Both start marshal (and assistant clerk) Gary

Browning and Clerk Paul Watson were apologetic about it – but these things happen. The hill was a sharp 90 degree turn off the main track, with the lower classes approaching from one side turning left and the higher from the other side turning right. By the time we got there, all classes were unable to make the turn and were heading straight on into one of the banks for an 11. I tried to not do this, and as a result scored 12 – my worst ever result.

This was a hugely enjoyable event, still full of challenge as well as achievable sections. A few restarts and tyre limits were used well to even out the field. I was pleased to have my tyre pressures checked at every hill where there were restrictions as I think this is essential if limits are in place. I hope to be back again next year to try Mustard once again and would like to thank all the organisers and marshals for their time.

A working weekend and a 1st team award for the Duttoneers...? by Dave Middleditch

The first weekend in February was always known in Nailsworth growing up as the 'Ladder' day. My family would go up and watch, gramps house being across the valley by the football pitch that you can see from the hold control, our house being further up the Horsley valley. When I finished playing rugby week in week out, a memory sparked and I looked up classic trials, and went to watch there, then the following year on Mustard and Axe, and then the decision was made - I'm going to do this. A few years later, and I now have a double appointment in the calendar for that weekend - doing all the PR work for the March Hare and doing all the hedge trimming and fallen tree clearing required on the Saturday, then marshalling or competing on the Clouds on Sunday.

This year we had a good turnout of Falconers and other volunteers, and we met for breakfast in a lovely little cafe in Guiting Power. Many won't know what has to happen to put a Classic Trial on, but on the ground, every section used needs a notice at each end to inform the public that we'll be coming through, and

anyone living near a section needs to be door knocked and given a letter. The key thing is that we're giving them notice that we're coming, not asking their permission! There are some sections that we use on restricted byways and bridleways or footpaths that do need the landowner's permission, so another job for the day was to visit them and get the all-important signature. Various teams set out in all directions to do the work, and we finished up at the finish venue to check it out and sort out the plans, and to catch the 6 nations on TV.

Only one major problem was encountered - a very large fallen tree across the byway at Colesbourne, and an effort by the local farmer to block the track and prevent us from using it. I'm happy to talk to people and try to work out ways to keep them happy, but if you decide to fight us, I'm up for it! They are receiving visits from the Police and Highways department as we speak.... Unfortunately, the lane has now been officially closed as the badger protection league claim there's an active set under the roadway.... it'll need all sorts of official investigations before they find that being in the cull area, there aren't any live badgers there, but it's a no go for this year. That's a shame as even though it's the easiest section I use, it's lovely to drive with the overhanging trees making it like a tunnel.

The following day and it's the Clouds, and for once we breeze through scrutineering, mods to the handbrake cable routing and seat height have greatly improved things in that area, and we're off. The three Duttoneers of myself with Ben Falconer, Phil and Tom Aubrey in the Yellow Melos, and Ed Wells and Dood Pierce in the red Melow are running together about 30th on the road. Tin Pan Alley is a great starter and is starting to get challenging, but then it's a new one in a field at Waterley Bottoms. It's a guaranteed 4 for all competitors but the very best as you needed to get out of a huge rut to get higher, and most didn't even bother trying. Mustard is next, and yet again I go the same score as always. I come round the left-hand corner and someone on the video in the crowd says, 'he's going well, he'll clean it', but sadly the spectator's confidence was unfounded, and we lose grip around the step and come to an abrupt halt... One day, but I think I need to make some adjustments to spring and damping rates.

The restart on Ladder was really tough and we fail to get away but position ourselves wrongly in hindsight. Ham Mill has a welcome challenge with a restart, but it's no problem, and we move on to our best climb of the day with a 1 on Bryans. It takes a lot of work on and off the throttle (I can't just engage 2nd and plough like some) and proves to be the

highlight of the day. The biggest disappointment comes next as we puncture around the 12 marker on Juniper and come to a halt not far later with the tyre gone. Others were getting 1s or cleans there, so bang goes any chance of a result. Merves restart is very difficult as usual, but Climperwell and Bull Banks are a success, so then it's Cowcombe Woods. Station lane is being marshalled by the Falcon team who did the maintenance day yesterday, but I don't get as far as dad who's on the restart line - it's the usual very deep ruts and we do well to get to a 4 I think, same place as most class 7s. Jerrys is a success, and we nearly get out of the next one, but the final hill, replacing Talbot's Terror this year, is unfortunately impossible to turn into and virtually everyone gets an 11.

Come the finish and it's not a great score, but all the Duttoneers have finished, and we're amazed to find we've won the Team award. Usually one of us at least doesn't finish, and even if we do, there are much more competitive teams out there, but it seems today we were one of very few teams to finish so win the pot.... until the finals come out and some corrections to other scores see us pipped for the title by a few points. Never mind, we'll be back as a team on the Land's End, so fingers crossed.

North Devon MC Exmoor Trial by Keith Sanders

It was a cold start with temperatures not far above freezing and had been snowing on the previous day, but then what do you expect on Exmoor in February! We arrived at the new (to me) Start Venue at the Cattle Market near Blackmoor Gate which worked very well.

After the formalities were completed and Bacon Butties consumed it was off to the first three Sections at Porte Farm which were literally a few minutes down the road. We were pretty much thrown in at the deep end and only 10 cars leaving with Clean Sheets.

The Restart area on the 2nd Section stopped all of Class 6 and pretty much split all of the other Classes down the middle. Bob Bullard did a great job going clean on the first two Sections but

unfortunately picked up a big 9 on the third. A good Restart from Ray Ferguson and John Early in their pair of Lieges (is thee a better phrase? Maybe a Brace of Liege's?) to get away on a Restart that stopped half of the Class 8 entrants.

I'm sure Norton Selwood would rather have left here with lots of points than having to retire on the first Section with a broken Torsion Bar leaving his Beetle resting on the rear offside bump stop! Luckily it wasn't far to limp back to the Trailer.

From here it was a pleasant drive to Loxhore Cott. A pleasant lane but with firm ground conditions it didn't cause any dramas.

From here we travelled to Becotts Lane and Stoodleigh Stream, neither of which I was familiar with. Again, no dramas for anyone and all going Clean except Simon Groves who picked up 12 for some strange reason!

High Bray can be a killer Section but today was as tame as I've seen it in the last 20 years. It transpires that the Council had carried out repairs testing some new machinery. While it's now lost its competitive "bite" I'm sure that after a few heavy Winters it will come back to its old form.

At South Molton there was a 30-minute Rest Halt near the Filling Station. I spent 29 minutes generally mulling around and chatting, then just as I was about to drive away, I realised the car was low on offside rear which on further inspection was a snapped Coil-over shock absorber. Sudden activity ensued with help from Mike Warnes and Dave Haizelden, and words of encouragement from others (translation = taking the p*ss!) and 20 minutes later we were moving again. Unfortunately, the self-induced delay meant that we slipped from being near the front of the Cars to

being towards the rear, and this was not a good place to be for the Holdridge Sections!

Holdridge Hell lived up to its name. There was a big muddy mess at the bottom and the climb was mostly on an uphill curve with big Oak Trees acting as magnets to draw you in, and at the ridge was a steep scramble over slippery tree roots. This caught many competitors as you had to be very brave against the Oak Trees and carry momentum to summit the crest, without hitting a big Tree! What a great climb from Tim Hellings who nailed it from the bottom and managed to miss the big oak tree on the corner and romped up over the top! The only cleans here were from Steve Hill (in the amazing Model A), Ray Ferguson, Duncan Stephens, Paul Merson and Arnie Martin.

Just along the track was Holdridge Hill and while there was a preferential start line for the lower Classes it didn't offer any advantage as it was the sharp left turn to the steep part of the Climb that caught all of the field except Duncan, Paul, Arnie and Roger Teagle.

Floyd's Bank had deviation for 7&8 which I've not seen before. It basically made the top turn tighter for them, but of course they still managed to get around it. Dean Partington had an encounter with the Bank at the top causing a hairy moment and windscreen damaged but seemed more upset by picking up one point!

Cross Track had a tricky bank just after the start which threw cars to the right. Dave Haizelden was unlucky to clip the 12 marker. I consciously kept tight left and took a little more speed so that when the back hopped to the right I had just passed the 12 marker. Ashley Clark was next and at the top pulled up behind us. Next Alan Sellwood, who was Marshalling, came running up asking if he could have the 12 marker back

please! It was wrapped around the rear suspension wishbone!

The final hill was a Beggars Roost. Again, like High Bray it was a hill to fear in the past but is now less rough and has plenty of grip so the whole field was able to finish on a high.

Thank you to Chris Barham and his motley crew at NDMC for putting on a great event. He had worked hard and succeeded in making this Trial "production car friendly" and this will hopefully encourage more such entries going forward.

The Exmoor Trial 2025 in a Suzuki X90 by Brian Hampson

When you're retired, there's normally only one 5.30 in the day and that's when it's almost time for a drink! So, although it was a bit of a shock to the system, Sunday started well, as I happened to wake up at 5.20am and switch the alarm clock off, allowing my wife to continue her slumbers uninterrupted.

A short drive across Exmouth to pick up Dave Turner, my well experienced navigator and out across Woodbury Common to the M5 at Exeter. A quick refuel at Morrisons in Tiverton, which seemed to be the nearest fuel to the Blackmoor Gate start that was open at that time of the morning. We passed Jack Selwood towing one of the family Beetle fleet with a Range Rover on the A361, just before we turned off to the much slower windy road towards Lynton and duly arrived at the Exmoor Farmers Market with a nice big car park.

Into the scrutineering line behind the white Scimitar of Dave Haizelden & Dee Champion which had the hood up as it was very cold. Colin & Jane Headley were a couple of cars behind doing what I understand was only their second trial ever in their recently acquired X90, whilst the only other Class 90 competitor, Neal & Nettie Vile were a few cars ahead of us. There seemed to

be less cars (32) entered than we expected, with no Class 1, just one in Classes 2 and 3, four in Class 4, three in Classes 5 and 90, the balance of 23 (around 70%) being made up of Classes 6, 7 and 8. Maybe that's the way trialling is headed at the moment, with entrants generally finding the sections rougher and tougher in the lower Classes, although the organisers work to level the field with Restarts, deviations and tyre pressure limits for the higher Classes.

The bikes and outfits, however, were 39 strong and raring to go! After a bacon bap and a cup of tea, we were glad of our heater and roof as we set off to the old start venue of Porte Farm, for the first three sections. Porte Farm 1 is a straightforward short climb once you get around the tricky hairpin left of the slippery start line, but unfortunately this was the end of the road for Norton Selwood & Tilly Hoggart in their Class 4 Beetle with a broken torsion bar.

Fortunately, the restart for Class 90 had been cancelled on Porte Farm 2, leaving it just for Classes 6,7 & 8, as it was certainly causing problems to all the class 6 Beetles, plus some of the Classes 7 & 8. The lower Classes also struggled, with only a handful going clean. Any of the bikes having a restart suffered a similar fate.

Porte Farm 3 with a 90 degree right turn off a slippery start line saw plenty of us utilising the left-hand bank to maintain forward motion up the section and cost many of the cars a 9 or 10. Simon &

Deborah Eddy called it a day with their VW Buggy after this Section.

Loxhore Cott was a straightforward climb in rather pleasant scenery and only troubled a couple of the bikes. The bikes then went on to a couple of non-car Sections – the one called Gordons Goyle looked interesting along a very wet riverbed! Becotts Lane is another scenic climb up a rutted track which was no problem to any of the cars but did cost quite a few bikes some points.

Then it was into the Stoodleigh Woods and the Stoodleigh Stream Section where the X90s had the same restart as Classes 6, 7 & 8. Jo from Barbrook was on the restart line, set on a hairpin right which has caught a lot of people in the past, but not this year! The solo bikes then had a Section to themselves, Georges Bank, with a very mixed success rate.

Stoodleigh Steep was next up with Anne & David Robinson officiating. The lower Restart for Classes 5,6,7 & 90 caused a few fails across the Classes, but fortunately we managed to get away, despite now suspecting a slow puncture in the rear.

Running tubeless tyres at very low pressures, we sometimes get muck between the rim and the bead of the tyre. This will occasionally sort itself out when it's been blown up hard and driven on the road – but that would have to wait until we were out of the woods!

Clockhay Climb was a short distance further on in the woods with Nigel Cowling on the start line. A straightforward climb that all the cars and all but one bike cleaned. By this time the sun was out, but it was still pretty cold to be marshalling. The solo bikes then had another Section, Walscott, to themselves which cost over half the competitors some additional points.

High Bray normally has a fair-sized queue due to all the fails having to come back down and has been the scene of much mechanical carnage in the past. However, this year, there was obviously a different issue as nothing was moving and the queue was very lengthy. There had been some 'rumour' about the Section having been 'graded'. Once things started to move, it was very quick to the start line and the Section was quite an 'anticlimax' – instead of the usual high tally of points being lost, it was smoother than some of the tarmacked roads in Devonshire! However, the restart for Classes B1,2,3, C, X & 8 caught a few of the bikes out.

But following lunch at the petrol station & shop in South Molton High Street, things suddenly got quite serious in the Holdridge Woods. Holdridge Hell was the name of the Section and yes it was true! Only eight of the cars managed to get over the tree root at the Class 8 Restart, including Steve Hill in his Ford Model A, Ray Ferguson in his Liege and Colin Headley in his X90. We collected our first points of the day here, but more were to come!

Holdridge Hill was another challenging Section and was only cleaned by three of the bikes and four of the Class 8 cars, who had also gone on to clean just about every other Section on the trial - well done you guys & girls

After a Special Test at Bentwitchen which saw less than half a second separate the top two bikes and less than a second separate the top three Class 8 cars, it was a climb over the moor where the snow was still in the hedgerows out of the sunshine, past the family of snowman & snow children and on to an old favourite, Floyds Bank.

Slippery as ever and with the tight right at the top causing some tyre smoke! I watched Neal Vile in his X90 do a great job with what looked like a

Exmoor Trial

by **Duncan
Stephens**

on **Floyd's
Gully**



Tim Hellings &
Nick Farmer,
Class 4
VW Beetle

Dave Haizelden &
Dee Champion,
Class 5
Reliant Scimitar



Keith Sanders &
Mick Warnes,
Class 5
Reliant Scimitar

'Scandinavian Flick' to line himself up as he got to the top corner. Some good climbs here from Phil Parker in his Class 3 Escort (who had been having trouble all day with the supercharger drive belt coming off), Jack Selwood and Tim Hellings in their Class 4 Beetles and Keith Sanders in his Scimitar.

Another solo's only section, Floyds Gully, caught quite a few of the bikes out. Cross Lane has a very bumpy piece just after the start line and caught a number of experienced competitors (particularly on four wheels) for a double-digit addition to their points tally.

Beggars Roost in daylight looks very different from the usual visit in middle of the night on the Land's End Trial and the Restart for the bikes obviously caused some problems, although all the cars came through clean.

The finish at the Old Station House Inn is a great location, as it's just across the road from the start, has a large bar and serves food all day.

From the results, (on two wheels), Class wins in A for Steve Kingstone on his

Bantam, B1 for Derek Walter on his Serow, & best Novice Andy Sherring on his Honda, B2 & Overall win for Neil O'Connor on his KTM, B3 for John Luckett on his Scorpa, C for Phil Sanders on his Beta, X for Richard Peaker on his KTM, (on three wheels), D1 for Andy Beveridge & Bob Smallacombe on their KTM and D2 Steve Urell & Julie Williams on their Aprilla.

In the cars, Class wins in 2 for Steve Hill in his Ford A, 3 for Phil Parker in his Escort, 4 for Tim Helling in his Beetle, 5 for Keith Sanders in his Scimitar, 6 for Andrew Rippon in his Beetle, 7 for Ray Ferguson in his Liege, 8 & Overall win for Duncan Stephens in his Fugitive and 90, yours truly in his X90.

Overall, a great trial, well organised with excellent route directions and signage, some very challenging sections and finished in daylight – what more could we ask?

Our huge thanks to Chris Barham and his team of helpers.

A sunny day out in the Cotswolds by Simon Fillan

Back in early March, I rode the Falcon March Hare trial, with Mark Wills and George Godkin. They stayed at the finish on the Saturday night. I drove 2 hours up in the morning. At 05.30am, when I arrived at the trailer park at Renishaws, the Security Guard didn't know anything about parking for a motorsport event. So, my local knowledge came into play, as I knew there was lots of parking, up on Minchinhampton Common, I parked my van in a lay-by, with a couple of travellers' vans for company.

I met George and Mark at the Amberley Inn, for the cold and boring ride to the start. The first part of the ride to the start, I knew we'll, as back in 1987, I commuted into Swindon from Amberley, via Cirencester. I remember driving along here, on the day of Michael Fish's hurricane, a very interesting drive with the very strong winds. The rest of the ride up to the start was mostly up the fosse way, a nice road on a big road bike, but freezing cold and boring on a small off-road bike. The start at Porky's Diner was very welcome, giving us a chance to warm up, on coffee and gigantic bacon baps.

It was only a short 10-minute ride, to the first section Saintbury. The section was a dry easy climbing lane, with a restart.

All the restarts on this trial used narrow boxes, some less than 2 foot wide, some crescent shaped, with the requirement to get your back axle in the box, which on a bike is a pain, as the back axle is not in your direct sight. On Saintbury's restart, the marshal didn't seem happy where I had stopped, as he came over to check my rear wheel was in the box, he marked me as clear so OK.

George, Mark and I rode the trial with Phil sanders down from Sheffield, which was very enjoyable, with Phil's sense of humour. The second section, New Kinton, was in a beautiful setting, a lovely short section, with a flat start, a steep climb up a grassy bank, a couple of turns, ending just before somebody's back garden. We all cleared the section. A short 5-mile ride through the delightful Cotswolds and we reached Section 3 Barton, a very easy flat section with a restart, which we all cleared.

After another 5 miles we arrived at the first observed test Lower Guiting Ford. We had a short wait for the test to open. The early start caught up with me, as despite talking to the car competitor's waiting, I couldn't work out the requirements of the test, even the marshals were unsure. What we were supposed to do, was start astride line A in neutral, roll down the track to stop astride line B, and then using the engine, ride to stop astride line C. I did the whole test in neutral, never mind.

We then had a 28-mile ride through lanes and tracks, to the next section Postlip, Section 4. By this time the countryside had a lot of people about, all seemed friendly. This is a part of the Cotswolds I know from riding the old Sphinx LDT trial, last run nearly 10 years ago, by the Cheltenham Home Guard MCC. When we reached the section, there was a wait for it to open; the section was straight forward with an offset triangular restart box. We all cleaned it.

After a short ride we arrived at Section 5 Bumblebee, an easy climb up a dry slightly rutted track with a restart, which we all cleaned.

A seven-mile ride took us to Sections 6 to 9 at Fry's Quarry, I remember this Quarry from the Sphinx Trial, in the wet very slippery, but not today in the dry. The 5 sections were similar, all on chalk covered by grass, involving steep climbs and turns with no restarts for bikes; all 5 sections were more challenging than the rest of the trial apart from section 11. I wasn't happy, as I mucked up Fry's Quarry 1, for a score of 9 points; Phil failed Fry's Quarry 5, for 7 points; Mark and George cleaned all 5 sections.

After the sections, whilst going down to join the farm track, we had a conversation with a walker, who was insistent that we were illegally riding, after talking to him and showing him the information sheet posted to the gate post, we parted amicably.

The 10-mile ride to Section 11 Bagendon Downs, involved riding through the side of Cheltenham before heading back into the countryside. After checking into the time control, we stopped to get some fuel, food and strip off some of the clothes we had on. The day had turned out to be dry, with sunny skies, and hot for March, not good trailing weather, as the sections were too dry and not challenging enough. I am old school when it comes to off roading, I like riding off road bikes in the winter half of the year and to me the summer, is for road bikes, this day was turning out like a summer's day.

Bagendon Downs turned out to be a challenge for the bikes, apart from Phil who was the only person riding class C, so missed the deviation and cleaned the section. The section comprised starting on a rising track with a deviation off to the right, on a short flat track with a left turn across some muddy ruts then up a

bank, to the original track. I ended up being the only bike who cleaned the deviation on the section, because I kept up on the far left of the deviation only dropping into the mud nearly clipping a marker, I ended up with a cut on my face from a branch hanging down, which I rode through, having no intention of putting my foot down. Both George and Mark scored 9 points as they didn't get up the bank.

We had a short 4-mile ride to Section 12 Burcombe Lane, which if I remember, was in the middle of a nice long green lane. The section comprised starting on the flat through some ruts up a steep climb, with a restart, a nice blast on a bike. We all cleaned it.

On the 6-mile run to Honneycombe Special Test 2, I was leading the group and managed to take a wrong turn in Duntisbourne Abbots, down a splendid lane with a 100-yard ford. We retraced our course, and ending up using Phil's phone to find the correct route, as the route didn't seem that clear to us.

The special test comprised starting astride line A, down a track to stop astride line B, which was to the right of the track directly in front of an un-fenced field entrance just after line B; we then had to turn sharp left and right onto the original track, down the track to stop

astride line C. I proceed to muck the test up, by after stopping astride line B, following the tracks into the open gated field, 100 yards into the field, I realised I had gone wrong, when I saw the marshal waving to me from the track, I spun around went back to the gate, down the track to line C, this caused great merriment for the marshal. Not my day for special tests! The others all performed the test correctly.

After a gentle 2-mile ride, we reached Jacks Green, Section 13. Section 13 was a long section in a wood along and up a track, with no restart, a nice straightforward section. We all cleaned it, no problem.

Section 14 Gentle Juniper was only 3 miles away, another easy climb up a track, and this time with a restart. We all cleared the section.

All that remained for us was the short ride down into Stroud and back to the finish at The Amberley Inn at Minchinhampton.

Phil got the best bike score, followed by Mark, George and Myself. It was great riding around with, Mark George and Phil. Thanks to the organisers for a very enjoyable event and the reason for a gentle ride around the Cotswolds.

MARCH HARE TRIAL by Simon Lewis, passenger for Nick Deacon, Class 90

Honeybourne Airfield on a clear, sunny spring morning. Quite an eclectic mix of machinery lined up around us, from a Morris Minor and a Ford KA to Lieges and Mk1 Escorts. I was in the passenger seat of Nick Deacon's ultra successful X-90 for this event having marshalled on it last year and driven my own X-90 the year before.

We enjoyed a very large full English breakfast in the cafe before setting off at Number 4 but due to the unusual way the running order was arranged, in odds and evens, we were not actually fourth car on the road... exactly how the numbering worked seemed to be known only unto organiser Dave Middleditch, who likes to mix things up a bit!

The end result was that we were running with some very high numbered cars towards the end of the events and never quite worked out how! We also pondered on the odd and even number

PDQ MOT

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EX4 8DP
01392 460777

8.30am - 5pm MON-FRI
9am - 1pm SAT



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CAR SERVICING

Unit 3
107 Summerway
Exeter
EX4 8DP
01392 460055

8.30am - 5pm MON-FRI



runners seemingly having a different road millage... But that's of no matter, it was just one of numerous unusual aspects to this particular trial.

The route itself was picturesque, took in a lot of green lanes that looped 'The Long Way Round' and some drivers, including Nick weren't over keen on this. Nick is in it for the competition rather than the scenery. I didn't mind it and found the meanderings interesting but then I wasn't driving, just reading the occasionally confusing route book which required some concentration especially for someone who doesn't cope too well with 'left' and 'right' due to a form of dyslexia.

Thanks to the nice weather we found the majority of the sections were pretty grippy and straight forward (although that could just have been Nick who is daunted by nothing). Looking at the scores later it was interesting that every section saw some failures and no single class seemed to have any obvious advantage anywhere along the route. The spread of scores was very broad and I'd say that speaks volumes for the way things were laid out and I doff my cap for that.

The trickiest portion of the route was Fry's Quarry high above Cheltenham where several tight, steep, tricky little sections were clustered together, and this was where the results really seemed to be settled for most people.

However, for us it was the special tests which made the difference, and this was another Dave Middleditch innovation in that everyone did the Line A - Line B - Line C thing without engaging forward gear, just rolling under gravity. The reversing was OK under power, but it did seem to take an age to get moving again after that. Nick wasn't keen but Dave insisted it was fairer than trying to compete against a pokey, nimble class 8 with a heavy old

X-90, for instance and given the results I think he was right. There was a theoretical 10mph maximum average that we had to aim at but it quickly became obvious the averages anyone was clocking were miles below that anyway so it was simply the fastest time that would matter.

The most dramatic single section was New Kinton which was $\frac{3}{4}$ of a prewar section that is now blocked off, so it was and up-and-reverse-back climb in a spot that looked like something from WIND IN THE WILLOWS, between two ponds and among the trees and the bull rushes. This was short, sharp and muddy, but surprisingly grippy.

But the most difficult actual bit of the route, the only one where we got stopped, wasn't even a section, but a link road across the fields behind Sudeley Castle to the short Humblebee section. This had ruts either side of a very high crown, so the diff grounded out and when we scabbled back out and tried to put wheels on the top of the ruts the rear end slewed round and left us at forty-five degrees with two opposing wheels in one rut and no way forward. Eventually another car arrived, and the crew helped us push us out.

Otherwise, the car ran smoothly all day, and we wound up 2nd overall, missing a win by 3 seconds on one of the special tests. There were a few issues with arriving ahead of the marshals on some sections even though we were running quite late from early in the day. This even happened on the final hill, a new one called Gentle Juniper where we were directed into a holding area while awaiting the marshals to arrive despite being 55 mins behind the official schedule at this point. But that wasn't much of an inconvenience really.

We got back to the finish at the Amberley Inn on the edge of Minchinhampton Common and pulled

up on the wide verges as there was little car parking. This caused a bit of NIMBY aggro later, but we had already gone by then. All in all, an enjoyable event and rather like a mini MCC style route where

Launceston Trial 2025 by Chris Barham

2024 had been a rest year for me, I rarely got out on my bike and seemed to spend all my time with a clip board in my hands! Apart from Clerk of Course on our 2 club trials, I got involved in Targa Rallies, Sprint Racing, Autocrosses and other various motorsport activities.

So, in 2025 my plan was back on 2 wheels in the mud! But the plan failed almost immediately with the Chairman's Trial being cancelled and I was back in a car doing a Production car Auto Test on that day!

So, I was well pleased to be back on the bike for the Launceston Trial, my little old BSA is due a rebuild and a tad smokey at times. When it stops smoking, I know the oils run out!

Arriving at Lew Woods the challenge of the day was get up to the wood yard, Nigel and his crew were ready to help some of the big vehicles receive a tow up from a Land Rover but with plenty of wheel spinning my van and trailer made it.

The first section for us was a bike only climb with a tricky ending so a 2 started the days score sheet! Then to the proper first section of the day was a gentle break in one and caused me no problems. Riding with Stephen Kingstone the 2 little BSAs smoked around happily, Steve had an excuse for his smoke as his was a 2 stroke. I was just pleasing Greta!

the sword of Damocles hangs over your head all day lest you fail a single section!

I can't really remember section by section, but highlights had to be seeing Norton dive out the way on one section as I found a much easier route than the one the club had marked out. Sorry.

The first of the bike only sections which had a tricky 180 at the start with a slight bank appearing in the curve. I reckoned that was the best line until it gave way, and I remembered how to do the splits as the front wheel slid away. Many, okay most of the sections, had ruts and roots which with a low powered bike you just had to plod through, sometimes successfully and sometimes a dab was needed and that's it, game over. I was really chuffed to clean a few real awkward ones; Stephen was suffering by now with a 3-speed gearbox which refused to say in first and kept jumping out of gear! The little Bantam hadn't the poke for second gear climbs and sadly his score sheet results showed this. He'll be back on that bike soon with modifications and probably show me up then!

I was aching well come the welcome lunch break but for some reason I rode much better afterwards! Even cleaning the last bike only section with what looked like, to the on lookers, some riding skill. Won't last, I can tell you.

The bike, and the rider, survived the first competitive day out for what seemed ages and its onwards to the Torbay Trial next. The summer break then kicks in and that much needed rebuild will be done, maybe with a few extras thrown in for good measure.

You'll have to wait until The Taw and Torridge to see if my plans work out.

Torbay 2025 that nearly didn't happen!!! by Dave Haizelden

Late summer 2024, Keith was sending out the landowner letters for permissions and was informed of the quadruple new cost at Ashcombe, after a quick discussion we decided to get out and search all the old sections.

After a 4-week search nothing was found so we took the step to cancel the 2025 trial.

First Thursday of the month is the Torbay club night where we mentioned the problem we had in putting on the trial, Steve Hill of class 2 Model A fame suddenly announced he had a friend with some land.

That weekend with trials cars in hand a visit was planned, and we were well pleased with what was there and the landowner Stuart was very encouraging. Roll forward to the new year and the wet weather, the hills were proving challenging with the first section unclimbable and the second not reachable, Stuart asked us what was needed and duly put his digger in action and carved out a new turning circle and excavated a 200-metre track for the second hill. Hare Hill and Yonder Hill was born.

On visiting Lyndon at our special test, he calmly mentioned he had a friend

who had bought a farm down the road and would welcome the trial on his land and is planning to add tracks for next year 2026, someone was looking down on us. Shuttamoor Bank was born.

So, we were on, and the rain never stopped, and the hills were very challenging for the Deere Special and the saloons were going to struggle, Kingswell lane was cancelled due to the deep clay and Penhale was in a poor state and Birchanger we decided to put the old codger working party to build a channel to keep the cars on track.

Preferential start lines and scoring relief was deployed to try and even up the scores.

Come the week of the trial not a drop of rain and the hill's dried out rapidly, markers were hastily moved, and Stuart came to the rescue with 1500 litres of water.

Massive thank you to all who made it happen entrants, marshals and landowners.

Tough day for class 8 but a score of 6 was achievable. Class 1 took the overall honours much to my pleasure, well done James and Mike.

Very special for me was my grandson on his first event aged 2 and a bit and Aaron driving the green Golf to 2nd overall.

Torbay Trial 16.03.2025 by Peter Browne

The Torbay Trial is one of my favourites partly because it is my local event, with the start only a few miles from where I live, but also because the course is a good balance, with sections this year on mud, grass, rocks and in woods, and of varying difficulty.

I had entered on my 650 Triumph Metisse in class A, as had my brother Neil, not because the machines are remotely suitable but simply because we have a long connection with them and still love riding the bikes.

The day started very cold with ice still on the lanes as we rode to the start, but the sun was shining, and the prospects of a nice day were good.

The formalities at the start were dealt with and by 08.10 we were on our way to the first section, Hare Hill, which was a new section on a farm on the opposite side of the road to Kingswell and which shared the same super sticky and slippery mud. The section was climb up a steepening muddy track. I started too slowly and span to a halt at the 4 board only to watch my brother carry more speed and clean the section. Not a good start.

Still on the same farm was the second new section, Yonder Hill, which had a deviation for the bikes. This involved a route off a track, around a tree and then rejoin the track where it rose steeply, and at which point I became a victim of the super slippery mud.

Section 3 was a return to a regularly used section on the opposite side of the road, Upper Kingswell, which is a farm track with tractor ruts on either side which drops and then gently rises, and all on the super slippery mud. I kept out of the ruts and carried enough speed to get to the ends board at last.

Next was the observed test at Heckland but there was a bit of road work to get there, via a superb, solo bike only non-observed section at Bridford Mills, which got the Metisse crossed up several times on the still damp grass. The sun was out however, and it was a pleasure to be out in the lanes.

The Heckland test was a short circular route in farmyard. Starting from line A, around some bales then through some cones and then some more bales, stopping astride line D. The bikes were allowed a second attempt if required, with the best time to count and it was too much fun to resist a second go.

The route then took us to the third new section, Shuttamoor Bank. This was a climb in a grassy field, with a turn around a post, which was not too

difficult although I suspect it would have been different if the grass had been damp.

The next section was Tipley and this was reached via another bike only non-observed section below Trenchford Reservoir, called Waterworks, which was previously a MCC section.

This was followed by another piece of offroad going, dropping through a nice woodland track above Bovey Tracy. There was a 30-minute break at Bovey Tracy to refuel and have a sandwich and then we headed for Tipley.

The hill is a rocky climb which was in good condition, having received some recent repairs and on which Class A had the first of its three restarts. I was relieved to find the restart had more grip than I expected, and the bike got away cleanly.

A short distance away was Narracombe, which had the second-class A restart. It is a gently rising lane which tends not to be a problem for the bikes.

Then it was into Ilsington village and down the track to Simms and Penhale. The first to be tackled was Penhale, which is a fairly open climb through the woods beside Simms and which was dry enough to have some grip, although there were exposed tree roots which caused some problems.

Simms was next and featured the third restart for class A. The hill is well known as a steep climb over slippery and rough rock slabs but a clever deviation immediately after the restart obliged you to cross the rocks on the right-hand side, which I would normally try to avoid. Fortunately, my machine was less bothered about this than I was.

The sections were coming thick and fast now and a little further into the woods was Birchanger Bank, which was in

woodland and involved a steepish start followed by a gentle rising turn to the left. Fortunately, the ground was dry enough for there to be grip for the climb. The last section in the woods was a solo bike only climb called Penhale Path. The start was on a steep rising turn, followed by a narrow wiggle through trees with a left turn at the top. I found myself wishing I had narrower handlebars and lower gearing but somehow the bike managed it.

We then left the woods at Simms and headed for Nicks Nip, five miles away.

The section starts in a farmyard and exits to the left, shortly followed by a tight right turn and a straight climb up a steep hill. I have struggled with grip here previously but this time I found myself at the top and out of the section fairly quickly, but that was when the problems started.

I turned across the camber of the hill and hit a bump, which jolted the handlebars, partly unseating me and sending the bike and I straight back down the field, scattering marshals in all direction as we went. I just about regained control by the bottom of the hill and commended the marshals there on their speed and one of them said "we knew we had to get out of your way because I have old British bikes, so I knew you had no brakes".

Having narrowly survived Nicks Nip, we headed for Gale Gorse about half a mile away. The section was a turn and then a steady climb between gorse bushes with enough grip that it proved not to be a problem.

The last two sections, Coombehead Creek and Copse involved another 10 miles of road work, ending with a farm track that is probably the muddiest track known to man. I was hoping that with the dry conditions it might be a bit less muddy this year, but it was not to be.

Coombehead Copse was the first of the two to be tackled. The section curved to the left in a field, with the gradient steadily increasing and finishing steeply around a group of trees. Not for the first time, I wished I had lower gearing, but the engine managed to keep turning even though I probably deserved for it to stall.

A short distance away was Coombehead Creek, which had a deviation for solo bikes that involves a U turn off the farm lane and then a turn and rise through some trees, and which I comprehensively messed up. My Metisse has a long wheelbase and in trying to make the widest U turn that I could I made a poor job of crossing some ruts and the bike and I bit the dust. I had not forgotten how heavy the bike was, but I was reminded again when trying to right it, despite having assistance.

All that was left was a few miles returning to the finish in the sunshine, sign off at 13.35 and head for home with enough time to wash the bike and riding kit all before tea.

As I was hosing the mud from the Coombehead Creek incident from my jacket, my wife appeared and instantly assessed the situation, greeting me with a "did you drop the bike again then", I could have done without the again.

Thanks to the Torbay Club for another excellent event, a great selection of sections with something for all abilities, great route marking and route card and they even got the weather right.

Torbay Trial 2025 ***by Chris Barham***

This trial was definitely make or break for the little BSA C15, having smoked and rattled, but completed the Launceston trial this was the last outing before the summer break for the bike. Oil topped up and spare oil loaded up I headed off for firstly the ACTC Awards night and then onto Kenniford for the trial. To say it was a chilly night would be an understatement, and I awoke to a van covered in ice! I crawled through Cullumpton to the services and purchased some de icer so I could make my way to the start!

Hot coffee and a bacon roll we were ready to go. I left the start in a haze of blue and onto the first section. A new one with a slippery climb, and what did I do? Have a silly dab just passed the restart! Oh well that's the clean sheet out the window so off to the next section. Yonder Hill had a wicked deviation and watching a few others a line was picked, keep tight and left before the climb out. I kept left but definitely not tight as I rode across the hill and abandoned ship in the brambles! Right in front of Keith and Dave as well!

Upper Kingswell was next and thankfully not Kingswell Lane or the bike only section through the trees! A clean at last and confidence back. A quick blast then around the farmyard and bales for the timed test. Section 4 was nice and easy though I reckoned as the grass was going to get churned up the cars would have fun. Tipley was as dry as I've ever seen it despite some evidence of watering on the restart it was straight forward. The same for Narracombe, a few more cleans under my belt. If only I hadn't fluffed up the first 2 sections!

We were then onto the Simms complex. A bit of waiting at Penhill as Dave Hewett had a moment and pulled his

Hamstring near the top, a real painful injury but with the help of a few of us he was made comfortable and later I heard with the aid of some painkillers made it home. Hope he had a speedy recovery!

Penhill was again dry and even with the tricky exposed roots another clean. Back around the woods to the base of Simms and the deviation on the side. A bit tricky but offered plenty of grip and Simms is wide enough to take a sweeping line off the bank and up the hill. I had a slight brain fog moment and a little ride around the countryside before remembering where the next sections were and found Penhale Path first, Zara and Abbie were marshalling and right at the top I took my eye off the line, yelled Hi to Abbie and rode into a tree! I won't say she laughed but Karma was mentioned as I put her off on the Exmoor Trial and she drove into the brambles on a section.

What goes around comes around as they say! Onto Birchanger and another clean. The dry ground conditions were definitely making these normally tricky sections easier. Section 11 and Nicks Nip. Always a steep one with a new start line this year. Finding grip and keeping the front wheel down is the challenge here quickly followed by can I descend the hill under control? Peter Browne was after me and he performed an amazing 180 at the top and shot back down under what looked like panic mode engaged! I went down a tad slower and headed off to Gales Gorse which again was dry with loads of grip.

Coombehead now for the last 2 and we entered again from the top, last time I rode this it was a foot deep mud and hard work, now it was dry rutd and holes and again a difficult trip to the start of the sections. C'head Copse and creek were both really dry and had so much grip the climbs were cleaned! Not easy on either with awkward turns but no deep mud which was a change.

It was a short ride back to the finish then, the bike was still running. I hadn't had to top up the oil, the exhaust note was a little bit noisier as the silencer decided it didn't want to stay attached to the pipe even after being re attached twice! And the side stand spring is holidaying in South Devon somewhere.

All in all, a good day's sport and the team did a marvellous job putting on a great trial in just as difficult conditions

being so dry as one where it's so wet! Not sure about the provisional results though where I was awarded 77 on one section. Gave a few more laughs to the event.

Now to rebuild the engine over the summer and do a few more tweaks to the old girl. She's over 60 yrs old now and needs a bit of TLC at times!

MCC LANDS' END TRIAL **2025 by Roger Bricknell,** **Suzuki X90**

This was my first Lands' End since 2017 and my first hurdle was rejoining the club and navigating the entry system to gain our place in the trial. The system has changed, that was obvious, but as with all technology it seems to be in a state of continual evolution. Eventually after three hours on the day of opening, my entry was in, with driver, passenger and car details all seemingly correct.

Till a few days later an email arrived asking me to re-submit some details to a different format/platform, this proved a bridge too far so the backstop suggestion of a phone call to Phil Tucker was tried, and he calmly said "Yes all ok"

Enough of my ramblings on this, what about the immense logistical task of organising three separate routes, one with three class-based variations, using the same Main Controls spread over 200+ miles. Full marks for attempting this and pulling it off, with minimum disruption to our time schedules in the Main Trial. It also involved getting enough marshals in all the right places at the right times to allow it all to happen. Our first interaction was the Bridgewater Rugby Club car park in the

dark and wet night but scrutineering and parking up was efficiently and cheerfully actioned by the hi-viz team. The lighting system went out at about 10pm, but soon came back on, essential for the safe movement of cars and pedestrians in a tight area.

At last, we were off and made our way to the Handbrake Test on a hill in the Quantocks, before encountering thick mist and rain on the run to Felons Oak. This was my first section in my new mount, Jonathan Toulmin's X90, and I was able to blast off the restart with no problem. However, this did cause a number of failures, so can never be taken lightly. I was trying out the new tyre inflation system in the dark in a hurry, but it worked well, and we were soon off. We came across the unfortunate Robert Borlase whose Volvo 340 was well alight under the bonnet and donated our fire extinguisher but heard later that the fire spread and the car burnt right out. Lesson, always carry a fire extinguisher in your car, if only to help someone else.

On then to Porlock Hill, Lynton Hill to Barbrook coffee halt, before a clean climb of Beggars Roost. We then followed the time-honoured route across Exmoor to Riverton, but the approach to the section was through a forest, which was new to me, instead of under the motorway type bridge I expected. By now I was becoming more confident

Duncan
Stephens &
Sally Deacon,
Class 8
UVA Fugitive



Paul Merson &
Stuart Bartlett,
Class 8 DP Wasp



Julian Robinson &
Zoe Henry
Class 4
VW Beetle

March Hare

by Mike
Jones

On New
Kineton



Chris Barham
Class A
on Deer Run

Launceston Trial

by Vince
Feeney



Mark Courtney
Class B2
on Deer Run



Steve Urell &
Julie Williams
Class D2

on Deer Run's
Sister

Torbay Trial

by Duncan Stephens

On Coombehead Creek



Roger Hancock &
Ian Cundy,
Class 8
VW Buggy

Aaron Haizelden
& Jodie Martin,
Class 1
VW Golf

Nick & Ben
Symons,
Class 7,
Singer Chamois



Lands End

by Vince Feeney

On Crackington



John Wheeler &
Natasha
Potashnik,
Class 7
Dellow Mk 2

Jack & Norton
Selwood,,
Class 4
VW Beetle



Sascha & Enno
Neudorfer
(from Hannover),
Class 4
VW Special

with the car and felt I did not need to drop the tyres below 14psi here. The X90 coped well here, and the next challenge was a fairly level Time Test. How would the car perform especially at the stop line. Actually, I was impressed how easily it coped and felt I could have gained a couple of seconds if I was bolder.

It seemed a long run to Sutcombe, here the start line was well before the ford, and a restart for all classes just before the rough bit to the finish. Julia bought some cake for me at the village stall while I reset the tyres, and we were on our way to Darracott holding control in a lay-by off the A39. A dozen or so cars queuing here soon doubled, but this was the only real delay of the trial. The marshal at the foot of Darracott suggested the hill was running well apart from two Citroens which failed and had to be pulled. Possibly some judicious planning would allow two cars on the hill, reducing the delay and getting close to one car per minute. However, we were about on time at the next Time Control, so the C of C was pretty clever in his schedules.

Classes 6,7 and 8 attempted the notorious Cutcliffe Lane. Cutcliffe had a profound effect on the results for 6,7 and 8 losing many golds here. Karen Warren's VW being the only Class 6 to succeed, with seven Class 7s making the summit. Class 8 suffered the extra burden of a re-start, and just four cars remained in the Gold Medal position here. Classes 1-5, and 90 were asked to attempt Wargery Woods and a tight hairpin just after the restart box caused me a sudden rush of wheelspin, however I had enough in hand to suppress it and trickle to the top. We were then part of a long convoy following a selfish horsebox driver for twelve miles along the A39 to Bude and a chance to top up with E5 petrol. We pulled into Widemouth Bay Route Check and continued to Crackington which

seemed a lot easier than I remembered of old. Perhaps the slurry team were less active than in the past.

The lunch halt hours break at Wilsey Down was next, followed by a time Test on the upper reaches of Ruses Mill. Despite this being a public tarmac road, it seemed quite slippery and again, I used caution for the final stop line. The hill had more bends and was narrower than I remembered. We then moved to Warleggan, and for the first time I did not have to attempt the restart. Only three or four Class 6 and 7 failed here, but for me this hill was one of the highlights of the trial, as I was able to attack with gusto and much screaming from Julia.

Our route took us around Bodmin, and towards Wadebridge. Eddys Branch Line sections had been affected by the overnight rain and were proving to be a problem due to the soft deep mud. The two sections here remained for 6,7 and 8, but we of lesser ability were excused and soon on our way to the Perranporth Route Check, before shortly arriving at Bluehills.

There was no real delay, but we were able to look down on BH 1 whilst queuing and saw at least two cars fail to make the level left hand turn and ending up in the bushes. This short but tricky hill produced a number of failures, and the 6,7 and 8 restart was no easy ride. A new metal post has appeared on the opposite bank at the top of the ramp, preventing cars from running wide. The real sting in the tail was BH2, and crews were spotted lowering tyre pressures even further before the start of this section. Again, I was disappointed by the rationale of the restart here. Heavy rain created a muddy slick on the final steep climb, and as a result only a very small number of cleans was possible. Ian Cundy was the only Class 1,2 to clean here using the advantage of a more favourable restart line before the left turn. His climb in a FWD car was a

stirring sight and brought a great cheer from the large crowd present. Class 3 and upwards were all made to attempt the restart on the steepest part of the final climb and only a handful of cars struggled to climb successfully, including Calvin Moores' class 7 MG J2, and four more in class 8. All other class 7 and 8 cars lost their Golds here and could only hope for silver at best. So, this affected all classes 3,4,5 and 90, who maintained their Gold status here as there were absolutely no cleans on this hill. My view is that this restart is unnecessary and counterproductive to the enjoyment of the crews and spectators alike. I believe that the spectacle of more cars making the final summit of this the most iconic setting of any trials hill, would increase the pleasure all round. In those conditions on the day, a continuous clean climb would still be a remarkable achievement.

Lands' End Trial by Suzie Prevett

The day of the 101st Motor Cycling Club Lands' End LDT 2025 had arrived, and the weather forecast was looking somewhat dismal to say the least. However, looking back to the Exeter '25 and Edinburgh '24 where it had been nice and dry, I didn't feel like we could really complain too much! With the bikes all packed up and ready to go we set off to our usual very bike-friendly, adult only campsite, Resparva House Touring Park, near Newquay. There we would meet up with our friends and teammates, for which this Lands' End Trial would be the first for a couple of them (Rod and Pete), having listened to us go on about it. Ha ha! What had they let themselves in for?!?

Everyone was busying themselves getting bikes and kit ready, with last minute checks to ensure there would be no scrutineering issues. Sadly, on trying to start my bike I found that the electric

A short run to the finish at The Inn for all Seasons and we enjoyed a welcome drink and a chance to catch up with old buddies. Our trial was the most pleasant experience, the X90 giving no trouble and a real joy to drive, resulting in a Gold, all being well. An early indication of the results indicate Class Wins to Ian Cundy- Golf, Jack Selwood- Beetle, Karen Warren- Beetle, Calvin Moores- MG J2 and Brian Hampson- Suzuki and the overall winner of the Field Trophy looks like Paul Bartleman- Escort.

Many, many grateful thanks to those who gave their time and stamina to marshal on this trial, not forgetting the MCC stalwarts on the organising team, course openers and closers, results team etc, etc who made this event happen providing a challenging enjoyable trial for so many people.

start was as dead as a Dodo, and the dash wouldn't come on until the bike was running. Bugger! Was it the battery? The bike had started on the button the previous day, having not been started for a few weeks, so it was unlikely to be a battery drain...but it was a bit late in the day for problem-solving. I didn't relish the thought of a trial without an electric start, however at least my bike does have a kickstart option. Small mercies, although I'm utter shite at kickstarting.

At about 2pm, led by Andy, Team Chicken Legs (Andy, Kelvin and Pete with Chicken Wing man Rod) and I took the 'traditional route' up to Bridgewater (normally one of the start point options is Bodmin just up the road), and the forecast certainly lived up to expectations! Mo and Steve got a lift with Mo's husband Rob.

The plus side was, having done this initial journey I realised two things; my normal glove set up (very thick gloves over very thin gloves, removed only for sections) won't work as the supposedly waterproof over gloves were totally

sodden, despite bar muffs, and also, my bike issue wasn't a battery issue. Therefore, I switched to just a pair of thinner Adventure Spec windproof gloves over some freebie plastic petrol station gloves, because the air temperature was ok, so manageable. I also sucked up the prospect of a trial with kickstart only.

At 8.27pm I signed out at the gazebo and then set off with Mo and Steve to start the trial. We were off! It felt good to get going rather than waiting in anticipation, and I led the way using my preferred set-up of Tulip style roadbook that Kelvin had created for me using Rally Navigator software and using my Bluetooth controller to reset the partial distances. He'd also put in all of the key information from the official route card, including the QQ (Quiet) zones, observed sections (OS), speed tests (OT), fuel stops etc. It worked great!

First up was Felon's Oak (OS1), which was good and warmed me up, with a nice long lane to ride along after the main section was completed. The familiar big tree root that has caught me out in the past (most notably on my first LE where it ended up with me on the floor) seemed to be missing, and the restart went well, so it was a clean for me, and also the rest of the team.

The Barbrook stop for refuelling, tea and cake was up next after a 29-mile ride, and always one I very much look forward to. It was lovely and warm in the little hall overlooking the fuel station and it gave us an opportunity to catch up with Team Chicken Legs and a few other familiar faces. This is a time control, so we had to get our control cards stamped on entry, and also on exit after a compulsory 30 min stop. No hardship there as they had a fabulous range of cake options. I could have eaten a lot more as it all looked so good, but being a creature of habit when it comes to sweet things, I went for the ginger cake. It did not disappoint. Thank you to

whoever is responsible for such a great spread!!

A very short ride on from Barbrook is the long-standing Beggars Roost section (OS2), manned primarily by the North Devon Motor Club, to which we are members. It was nice to see Chris Barham's familiar face at the entrance to the section, who kindly made sure that my rear number board was as vertical as possible. Thanks Chris! It wasn't a long wait until it was my turn up the section, and I managed to pick a good spot in the restart box, resulting in a slightly slippery but steady restart, and a cleaned section. Whoop, Whoop!

It was 21 miles to the next section 'Riverton' (OS3), and it seemed to take a very long time. The tiredness was starting to set in a little, but once we got to the lovely long dirt track up to the section, it woke me up a bit. It was definitely on the muddy side, and I decided to go in the right-hand track despite watching lots of people go left. I probably should go with the majority, but I didn't actually realise it was the restart I was seeing to begin with...I thought they were all messing up and that there must be a really challenging bit on the left! Doh!! As I set off, I got to it and realised it was in fact the restart box and so stopped in the middle of it. "Earth to Suzie" I laughed at myself inside my helmet. With a bit of luck, I managed to restart well, and was already on the right side for the sharp left hander that fortunately wasn't as deep in mud as one other year. It was a long, long section, and just before the last corner I balanced the bike as I squiggled about looking for which way to go and then saw marshal up on corner and also the end board to the right, so headed off in that direction for a nice clean finish. Another one in the bag!

The first speed test (OT1) came next, just a stone's throw from Riverton. It appeared quite straight forward as it was a straight line from start to finish, and

you had to set off from line 'A' when the red light went out. I was glad I wasn't 'going for it' as it was quite a muddy and a slippery stop on line 'B', but I got there with a good firm stop astride the line, and then finishing astride line 'C'. Done, just probably a little slow I'm reckoning, however unless you're a contender for the top spots, which I'll never be, then it really doesn't matter.

The next road stint was quite lengthy to say the least, being 30 miles to OS4, Sutcombe. The river after the start of the section was flowing well, and the restart came a little lower than normal, which was a welcome surprise. It was still a tad slippery, but I managed well and cleaned it successfully once again, plus my tired brain managed to remember to stop after the section end. Yey! Also, because we hadn't lost any time and were actually running a bit early, we had plenty of time to stop for cake at the wonderful makeshift 'garage cafe' in the village at the top of the section, with some very jolly ladies serving, plus they had a toilet! The lemon cake was great, although it was a huge piece and I ate it far too fast, giving myself immediate indigestion. Idiot! Ha ha! We left just as team Chicken Legs arrived and headed off to the next fuel stop.

We arrived after three miles at Bradworthy Wicketts garage for a fuel top up and chat with the attendant chap who was telling me about how he normally does the trial in his trials car and used to do it on a bike prior to that. This year though he was serving fuel for us all, and had dragged the family in to help, much to their delight, I'm sure! Thanks to all of you, very much appreciated.

Not too long later was Darracott (OS5). It's one of those sections that I've never failed, however almost failed a restart once due to very poor positioning of my bike, but just about managed to pull it off. This year thankfully, no restart! It's a

lovely long section again, somewhat bouncy, with some tightish bends snaking all the way up the hill, but I made it through nice and clean. Tick! Another one done and dusted meaning a clean sheet so far.

That clean streak was about to come to a swift end with a thud at Cutcliffe Lane (OS6A). It's one of those super steep sections, which can be quite slippery at times, but one I've never failed before. This time it was very different. It almost felt like a totally different lane to me. I headed up the right and got a few metres from the top when it all went wrong. I was bouncing left and right and then somehow ended up the right bank, followed by being swiftly deposited on the floor with my bike on top of me. Well done, Suzie! Three marshals came to my rescue and lifted us up. Myself and two others each tried to kickstart my little Scorpa but it wasn't having any of it. We just couldn't get it going so the only option was a bump start back down the hill and out the failure exit. I then proceeded to get totally lost, having somehow taken a wrong turn and venturing off in the wrong direction about a mile out in to the countryside. Despite a very tired brain, I eventually realised I was going wrong and backtracked, finding the bridge that I had only just missed. Eventually Mo arrived, who had unfortunately also failed what I feel was the most challenging section of the trial, and then Steve who'd conquered it. Well done, Steve! I think there were a good few people who came a cropper on that one this year from what I heard.

Next up was another control point where control cards needed to be stamped. It was about 20 miles away in a large car park above Widemouth Bay, however this year we weren't greeted by the coming of dawn or a moonlight water backdrop as in previous years. Despite that, the rain had taken a rest and several of the other competitors decided to have a rest or cat nap, waiting for

other riders to go ahead to cut through the clay type mud that Crackington normally had to offer. A wise choice probably, but we decided not to stick around after the marshal said we were free to continue.

So...Crackington (OS7). This section for some reason always fills me with dread. I think because normally it's bouncy, super muddy and often lined with a good few spectators just waiting for you to fall off in the mud...although volunteering a wonderful cheer if you do, ha ha! My trepidation was wound up a notch this year as a dreaded restart had been added to the mix. I'd not done one before on this section I don't think. Anyway, it all started well, and I got myself into the restart box to the right, avoiding the large tree root. Unfortunately, due to some very delayed brain processing, I managed to situate myself slap bang in the middle of the box, so I then had my wheel pretty much up against one of the steps. Doh! Needless to say, it ended badly with another episode of hitting the deck, and another help up by the very lovely marshals. Having a lack of electric start and unable to kickstart the bike as the kickstart lever kept hitting the foot-peg, I bumped it back down to the start and then rode straight back up the hill, through the restart and right into the middle of the thick mud near the top of the section. I managed to keep it going, then headed over to the left before managing to finally make my escape out of the top. Yey! Failed but I tried...I would say I tried my hardest, but I really didn't think about where I was putting my bike on the restart box...must try harder next year! However, that's what the challenge is...darkness, fatigue, mud, slippery rock and nerves...and trying to overcome them all to make it through successfully.

Continuing on we came across a fuel station at a Morrisons, so took the opportunity to on-board some fuel just in case. Another competitor and friend

Nick Williams (13), who was just ahead of us, had the same idea so we followed him in and had a quick chat. With the small fuel capacity of all our bikes, we were taking every opportunity to get fuel.

Wisley Down, which was another time control, but also signified 'breakfast time', couldn't have come sooner as I was seriously flagging! My concentration was waning, and I was tired after coming off and having to be helped up on two consecutive lanes. We stopped to check in and get our cards stamped. It was almost two hours we'd have there as we were running well ahead of schedule (we obviously hadn't taken enough wrong turns). That meant there was plenty of time for an egg buttie, a couple of cups of tea, and a much-needed toilet stop. We also caught up with the others from Chicken Legs, as well as a couple of others, although I think I probably looked quite dishevelled and zoned out. Andy took the opportunity to have a good sleep being king of povernaps, plus he'd had very little sleep in the lead up to the trial so was running on fumes, and Steve got his head down on the table for a little while. Mo and I stayed awake chatting to the others and drinking tea, before we all headed out early to get the bikes ready and check everything was looking ok now dawn had broken. Also, I needed a help with kickstarting the bike by one of us holding the foot peg up and the other kickstarting it. Unfortunately, the kickstart lever hits the foot peg before the end of its stroke, which is a bit frustrating to say the least, so we'll have to rig up a little hook in the future in case of a similar scenario of needing to regularly use the kickstart function.

Our scheduled departure time was soon upon us, so we got our cards stamped and set off just down the road to a fuel station that was due to open at 7.30am. We got there at 7.26am and the place looked very closed and not like it'd be

opening soon, but at 7.30am on the dot the chap came out and opened the gates. We fuelled up again, albeit a very small top up, but it was quite a long stint to the next refuelling at Perranporth so it would mean we could just about make it. Unfortunately, at this point for some reason my tablet stopped charging, and the controller stopped functioning. Presumably there was something wrong with the electrics after all the rain it'd had to endure, so it was a case of manually scrolling the tulip roadbook from then on and hope the 96% charge would last to the end of the trial...just another few hours to go!

Another nine miles or so and we got to the second speed test (OT2) at Ruses Mill. It felt like it was a bit higher up the switchback hill than last year, and I took it very slowly as it felt quite steep and slippery, but I managed fine. So far, I've never managed to fail a speed test, but I have come close once or twice when it's been a bit slippery, however nice to keep the clean streak going.

It was a bit of a trek again to OS8, the infamous 'Warleggan' with its slabby restart. It had sadly been cancelled at last minute last year due to a medical emergency, so I couldn't remember it at all, other than that there were some rock slabs at some point! This section had a slightly longer wait, and the orientation of the start meant it wasn't possible to see what was going on further up the section, so it'd be a case of "wait and see". As I started up the section I was feeling comfortable and took the tight right-hand bend nice and steadily before getting a little further and then the restart box came in to view. I went as slow as possible without losing momentum to give my brain time to work out what I was seeing...rock slabs galore! I decided to go top right of the box, with the front wheel out the top of box, then somehow managed a good, smooth restart, so I was very happy! I'd had visions of another 'hit the deck'

scenario so was pleasantly surprised how well it went.

Next up...the mud-fest that is Eddy's branch line, and this year was split in two for a double challenge (OS9 and OS10). We were held at the top for a while, and Kelvin appeared with the rest of his team. It was a slippery entrance route as usual, down around the edge of a field, and I must admit my feet did a bit of steadying in places, ha ha. My excuse is that I was saving my tidy, controlled mud sliding for the actual section!

The first part had a more inviting start than last year, and after Steve had a little look, he reckoned going left was preferable. I went left and I made it through well, and then very slowly and tentatively around the sharp left-hand corner but managed to keep a little momentum, over the bridge, then to the end for a cleaned section. Success! Right, keep focus, part two is a mud pit, and the start marshal on the previous section had warned me it was exceedingly muddy. I headed off on this second part, which can lull you into a false sense of security with its nice, even track. I was on the right side, but last minute decided to switch to the left side and with a bit of squirming around managed to get me and the bike cleanly through the section. I was well chuffed, and I got a bit of a cheer! It felt good...I failed it within the first few metres last year but had cleaned it the year before where many failed, and I'd really wanted to conquer it again, so mission accomplished!

The last real road mile slog of the trial was next, which would get us to the Texaco at Perranporth and penultimate control point, and then we'd have the last few lanes all in quite close succession. When we arrived, surely all now running on fumes, it was a very welcome fuel top up. Then we went around to the control and got our cards

out for another stamp. A quick loo stop, then we were off again! I was starting to feel the butterflies a little knowing what was to come in about six miles time, but I tried not to think about it too much.

Before all that though, in just three miles it was time for Lambriggan (OS11), which was a fun little section this year, starting off down a bank, through a little river, with a very trialsy deviation bit down into a stream and out again up the bank, before heading up the rest of the section. I did good to, managing to keep momentum on the deviation just about, but was worried I'd gone too slow at one point, however managed to keep it going for a nice, cleaned section once again. Ok, bring on the finale!!

Blue Hills...the gem of the Land's End trial and owned by the MCC. As per usual, for me it was a real butterflies in the stomach moment as we came around the corner and the hill came into view. I could see the usual big crowds hadn't arrived yet thank goodness as we were running ahead of time. That suited me well, and although it'd likely mean less photos, I was much happier with less onlookers for my attempt. Also, the sun came out, which was just a perfect end to what had been a rather challenging trial. As we made our way down to the start point of Blue Hills 1 (OS12) the competitor in front of me went straight on to the section, so I had a very short wait. Again, this suited me well as it meant less time to get flustered, and then I was off! I rode around slow and steady to the restart and decided bottom left was a good option. I pulled off a good restart, then emerged out the top to a sharp right and stopped over the end line as instructed. Yay, clean and done! Just one left!!

All that was left now was a final ride to the finish trying not to splash people with water as there were lots of spectators making their way in and LOTS of puddles! However, there were

also lots of smiles and waves, and it does make you feel good, especially knowing the tough part was done and the end was nigh. We came upon a horse rider on the next dirt track, so I held everyone back until she'd exited the track and then continued on. It was the second horse rider we'd met on the trial; the last one had been coming towards us and was very grateful of us all stopping and turning our engines off. We'd had a little chat, and the horse passed by happily. Always good to have a happy horse!

Annoyingly my tablet ran out of juice just two miles before the end, so Mo and Steve took over with the nav to get us to the finish line...thanks guys! I was so glad to finish, it'd been a challenging one! I was utterly done, and my brain was struggling to function. We went inside at the 'Inn for All Seasons' (Redruth) to get our final control card stamp, our finishers certificates and a warm, happy "well done" from the finish marshals. Thank you! It had definitely been a toughie, but we all made it through. Mission complete.

It was great to receive the results a couple of weeks later, as we found out that 'Team Coddwomplers' came an amazing 2nd place in the bike teams, with Steve scooping up 'The Field Trophy', making this the 3rd 'award' in a row he'd won for being the best bike! Pete managed a silver. I, Mo and Andy earned a bronze each, with Kelvin and Rod coming in as 'finishers', meaning 'Team Chicken Legs' earned a very respectable 4th place in the Bike teams. Well done everyone!!

Thanks to all of the organisers, marshals, volunteers, spectators, fuel attendants, cake bakers, tea servers and everyone else in between! Your time and support of the event is much appreciated so us crazy lot can go on a mini adventure, getting soaked and muddy just for fun. Until next year....

The Lands' End Virgin or Do you want your mud back?

By Myke Pocock

I have been competing on The Edinburgh Trial for most years since 2003 and listened with envy of the exploits of competitors on The Lands' End. With some persuasion from Derek Reynolds that I must do it at least once, delicate negotiations with é indoors were convened. Once the outline agreement had been passed it was then time to find a victim to act as my passenger. As my usual navigator declined my attempt at persuasion it was time to use the Classic Trials Facebook page and that resulted in three offers. The first was Peter Volkner who ticked more boxes than I was expecting having not only competed by navigating on several occasions in a Marlin, was a Skoda trialer and lived not that many miles from the finish venue so knew the area like the back of his hand. I couldn't have asked for more.

My next priority was to MOT Baldrick my Estelle. My previous tester having retired, I needed to find another that would be sympathetic to this rather grubby old car, something that some testing garages would no doubt turn their noses up to. Fortunately, one of my neighbors is also a petrol head and knew of a garage that agreed to test my car, which passed with no advisories fortunately. Mind you with a week to go to the test I decided to check that the handbrake worked properly as I felt it was a bit weak on one side. Despite screwing the adjuster up for ages nothing worked so I decided to remove the brake drum only to find that a simple C clip had come adrift from the end of the brake cable outer. A quick reshape, fit and then adjust failed to cure the issue as the clip sprung out again. My box of clips failed to deliver the correct size and with just a few days to go where was I going to get one? Amazon

of course! Order one day and deliver the next.

Having passed the MOT it was all go, or was it? What's that strange noise when I depressed the clutch peddle then. A loose clutch pressure plate possibly. That was discounted by checking the fixing bolts through the clutch lever opening in the bell housing and unfortunately all were nice and tight meaning an engine out job. The friction plate was worn down on one face and as it is rather like a paddle clutch on that face, one of the pads had broken up. Damn! Could I remember who made it up for me? Could I hell as like! A quick shuffy on Google found me a company in Leeds so I sent the plate off, getting there on a Wednesday and rebuilt and back to me by the following Monday. Some service.

I decided that I would travel down on the preceding Thursday to the trial, stay over close to the finish, collect Peter and drive up to the start venue. Fortunately for me the MCC had made the decision that they would cancel the usual separate starting points, meaning canceling a significant mileage to travel before arriving at the actual trial start point. Through the Classic Trials Facebook page Mark Gregg, who many will know as the former hard-working Clerk of the Course for The Edinburgh Trial for a number of years and who has stamped his character on that trial, posted a request for a lift from the trial finish area to the start. I was very happy to assist, and we were treated to trials' ICE (in car entertainment) on the nearly 120-mile journey to the Bridgwater Rugby Club start venue. The weather was atrocious on the journey meaning, of course, copious quantities of the sticky stuff on the sections. Time to go through Scrutineering and get our Control Card punched, a new initiative I gather by the MCC. I met up with another of my club members, Derek Reynolds, who was entered in his

Suzuki X90 and then met with Dave Miller from Silloth, who lives some 20 miles or so from my hometown and was entered in a Rickman Ranger. I was surprised to meet Mark Milne who was acting as passenger for Emma Wall. With a start time of 00:31 we had time to chill and chat, no point to try and get some shut eye as my nervous energy doesn't allow such things.

Our first challenge was the handbrake test some 11 miles from the start. Test it may have been but challenge it wasn't, appearing to be on a very gentle hill. Fail that and blushes all round. Some further 14 miles on was to be our first competitive test but getting there proved to be scary. Just after the handbrake test our dipped beam decided to take early retirement, somewhat scary when driving along narrow track roads with no white markings. Our first check was the relevant fuse. The Skoda fuses are normally situated on the lower bulkhead below the steering column, not conducive to access in the dark. However, I had re positioned my new fuse block on the top of the dashboard and in addition had installed small LED warning lights covering all fuses. Light out, the fuse failed. I saw this many years ago when I viewed a televised report on a trial by Tony Mason who asked Neil Bray what the lights were on the dashboard of his Skoda Estelle. We changed the fuse, no success, linked across the fuse box in desperation with no success then resorted to fitting a new bulb. Still no luck so I had to drive on main beam until daylight, not the best experience when the thick mist came down and no road markings to guide me. Apologies to anyone who I was following. Our first challenge at last was Felons Oak which I marked down as short, steep and rocky with a small Restart box. My mind must have been on the previous scary miles in that I attempted to pull away from the Restart with the hydraulic handbrake on. Realizing this I let go but had I failed?

Fortunately, the results said not but it must have been touch and go!

Off now to the Barbrook Village Hall for a welcome 30 minute compulsory stop and some sustenance. Here again we handed our Control card to the official for stamping on exit. Arriving at Beggars Roost a Morris 1000 was having trouble at the start line meaning we had to reverse out of the way for him to reverse back and it was then that Peter discovered his mobile phone was missing. We back tracked to where we had parked up, walked up and down and checked in the rest halt with no success, only finding the offending item in the car when we got to the start line again. Once again, a rough, muddy but shorter section with a bigger restart box ticked off with little drama. Until daylight my main concern was blinding anyone with my main beam but occasionally dipped worked for a short while then failed again. Subsequent investigations a few days later pointed to a failure of the dipped beam relay.

My intention, being a newbie to the event, was to describe all the sections briefly on the Route Book and also to film them on my GoPro. The first worked sporadically, the second failed after the first section as the SD card was full. 'Stupid boy'. Some of a certain age will recognize the quote.

Riverton was our next challenge within a forest which was very rocky to a tight hairpin and then long, uphill and very muddy. Cleaned seems a strange description when you saw the amount of mud on the car! It was then on to the first Observed Test at Yollacombe, designed not to challenge the tired brain cells as a simple cross the B line, reverse behind the B line and then stop astride the C line with the start controlled by a red light. Very snazzy. Sutcombe was more of the same from the point of view of the amount of South West quality mud in evidence. Down

through a river then uphill and fairly rough with a pleasing clean again. Memory deserts me as the Route Book mentioned refreshments in a house after the end of the section, but I missed it.

When we arrived at the Woolley Holding Control there must have been around 40 vehicles lined up with the marshal trying his best to keep everyone updated. Word eventually came through that the Eddys Branch Line 1 and 2 sections had been canceled as it was taking too long to get competitors through. After some time, we were off again to Darracott with a clean. The section was long with plenty of 90 left and rights, surprisingly dry and for once not that rough. Cutcliffe Lane followed after 10 miles which was long, rough and with many hairpins that I really enjoyed, probably my favorite hill of the day as I marked it as 'superb' on the Route Book.

Arriving at the next challenge, Wargery Wood we joined the queue which had a 4x4 pick up and car trailer in front that was there to recover a vehicle but had misunderstood the request to come in from the end of the section. This caused a wait of 20 minutes or so, time to chat to 4 Belgian guys on their bikes who were having a superb day. They reported that the ACU wouldn't accept their request for membership, meaning they had to join their own national motorcycle club at over one hundred euros each. Ouch! Eventually we were off on a short, rough section with a sharp hairpin that had a concrete step on it. A short Restart box was cleaned with little problem.

After a quick visit to the Widemouth Bay Route Check to get our Control Card stamped, we then had Crackington to attempt. After crossing a stream to the start, we set off on a shortish section with no Restart for us fortunately. After the Restart box it was pure liquid mud

with Peter advising me to go for it but it was also rough to the end needing a drop of the clutch a few times to maintain momentum. We then had a very welcome 1-hour Time Control that enabled us to take on a superbly cooked breakfast and cuppa.

The second Observed Test, a carbon copy of the first followed before our next challenge of the day, Warleggan. We had to wait whilst a surprisingly standard looking BMW was reversed after failing low down in the section and parked up on a bend. Long and rough, marked in the Route Book by me as 'rocks, steps'. An understatement to say the least. It was by far the roughest of the day with steps, slabs, rocks and who knows what else under the mud and probably the roughest section I have ever done. Perhaps it was this section that put three substantial dents in the rim of one wheel and one in the other. The car lost power twice causing me to stop and wait for it to pick up before setting off again. The commentary from the back seat said 'That was a monster. I've never seen it so rough'. A failure unfortunately. The loss of power is an issue that I have had for some time and is likely to be a fault with the motorbike carbs I have fitted. Something that I am addressing eventually as it is gutting not to clean a section that I could if it didn't happen.

Off now to the icing on the Lands' End cake, Blue Hills 1 and 2. I have watched videos of these two over the years but that doesn't do justice to seeing the hills for the first time when you come out into the open after the very tight access track. Blue Hills 1 isn't visible straight away but 2 is, or rather the uphill track to it is! Blimey are we going up there. As you drop down the access track it doesn't look as steep and then 1 comes into view. Peter was able to give me instructions and my plan, as everyone else probably, was to get as much traction of the 180 degree bend to

attack the steep, rough paved final bit. Result? Spun to a halt on it but tried. Not the only one either.

Off to 2 and with not much of a wait we set off on a very rough surface with loads of loose rocks of varying sizes. With Peter's encouragement of 'Keep it going, keep it going' I was expecting to get further up, not even making the A boards as everyone else in my class did. Never mind the winch of doom awaited with instructions to let the tow do the work but the snatch of the tow rope was so savage that it ripped my tow point right out of the chassis leg. The efficient marshals quickly attached the tow rope round a cross member and had me out in no time. As we passed the deviation with the Restart, I saw that there were severe ruts from spinning wheels that I reckon I wouldn't have had any chance to clear anyway. After a brief stop at the top, we were then off to the Finish to sign off.

The 2025 Land's End Trial by Dave Middleditch

Dear Lord, please forgive me, for I have sinned..... it was Good Friday after all, so not sure if the big man was watching or had more pressing issues to catch up on. At the top of Whiteway hill (Crooked Mustard's tarmac sister) my lights went out, back on, then out. Side lights still on but basically pitch black in front. I'm starting last on the Land's End, so it's already 10 o'clock. I make it down to Dursley and stop in the town centre to investigate. The fuse that blew on the Exeter is OK, so can't be that... the relays seem to be clicking.... time passes, and it's getting late, so I decide to get going and hope it can be fixed at scrutineering. I get in behind a car on the A38 and use his lights to get to the M5, then follow a lorry all the way to Bristol, but he turns off (and I nearly

A superb and challenging trial. The organization was top notch. Very many thanks to my victim, Peter Volkner, who helped with an experienced insight into the sections, to all the many marshals particularly those standing out all night for many hours and to the organizers that take hours to organize all the visible things and all the hidden stuff we never see but are critical to make up a successful event. Another event to add to my 'done' list. With a total mileage including the travel down and back home, travel to the start from my accommodation and the actual trial mileage amounting to around 1250 I doubt my Director of Finance will sanction another go. That means no returning of the copious quantity of mud deposited on my driveway.

follow him), so get in behind another one. At Bridgwater I catch up with Ben Giles, so he guides me to the Rugby club. Fortunately, with only 5 minutes until scrutineering closes, I manage to find the fault - a spade connector has fried. 2 minutes later and it's all fixed and we're clear to start.

About 3 miles out of Bridgwater, everything dies. Neville in the course closing Panda is right behind me and stops (he's used to this).

It felt like a coil gong, but a quick check and we've got spark. 5 minutes later and we realise we're out of fuel.... didn't have time to fill up at Bridgwater, but the fuel gauge was on full..... aah, hang on, I've driven 150 miles since then, the gauge has clearly got a fault... We pour in the spare 5 litres from a jerry can, then head back a mile to the fuel station. Well done, Neville, some would have driven on.



Niels Roeykens,
(from Wijnegem)
Class B
Hercules K125 BW



Ben Uglow,
Class S
Honda C90



Lands End

***by
Vince
Feeney***

On Crackinton

John Young &
John R. Hind,

Class D
Yamaha Special

The trial starts in disaster, as the engine is not right under load.

We stall just past the restart on Felons...! Some adjustments and cleaning of the rotor and cap makes a decent improvement, but it's still not pulling like it used to... From then on there are some really good challenging restarts on Riverton and Crackington, a very rough and cut up Cutcliffe (all the bikes and 70 or 80 class 6,7 and 8s had ripped it up proper), but things went pretty well. We ended up stuck behind the pack of Class 0s, so had to wait a bit but it was fine. The rain only spotted and was never enough for the roof to come up.

Just after Bradworthy we came across Joe Byrne in his Midget. They did the Exeter as their first ever trial, and in the bar after got talking to Roger Ashby. When they said they were from Northampton, he said 'well, you must know Dave Middleditch?'... Joe said, yes, but because he provided me with a marquee for my wedding 16 years ago!

Joe's Alternator and battery seemed caput, so I got my spare out, and my jumper pack to start him. We made it to the Warleggan hold control, but another hour of tinkering and it just wouldn't charge. Turns out my spare alternator was also knackered, must have been from living in the boot for the last year. Unfortunately, he had to retire that, but we did get a Beetle going that had pulled sediment up from the tank and blocked a jet. What do you have that can clean out a carb jet..... let me think.... I know, I stripped a spare wire, separated out the strands, and one strand fitted perfectly. It was great to see them back running later in the trial.

My stand in Navigator was Jack Highwood (Stuart's son), and he's put in a huge commitment to drive down from Kent to Bridgwater. Turns out he's a knowledgeable chap on all things

nature, so I learned a lot about Chiffchaffs and the amazing valleys of north Cornwall where the cold air glides over the top and pushes the warm air down leading to microclimates that give rise to a huge variety of plants that oughtn't to be there. As a cow and sheep farmer, he also knew the breeds of everything we passed, so it kept the journey interesting.

Having visited Eddy's Branch Line while on holiday when I 'ran' the LE, it is great to see it being used. I turned up that day to meet Dave Craddock and Simon Eddy in flip flops and shorts, only to find we had to wade through 50 years of bramble and nettle to get up the track. You wouldn't believe it looking at it now. I looked at the map and it goes all the way to Launceston. I came up with the name and it's stuck!

By now, my self and fellow Duttoneers Phil and Tom Aubrey were a long way behind the rest of the main trial, and with the Payne's Marlin really low on fuel, we cut to the nearest petrol station and then on to Blue Hills. BH1 was on form again and we watched several fails but stand in Duttoneer Henry Hoggard cleared it on very flat tyres, so we went down to 6psi. Standing above the section for 20 minutes was great, but our turn came and with a lot of bouncing from Jack and a bit of luck, the car inched its way up and out like last year, but more within the allowed time limit! The engine was just on the limit of stalling out, so we were lucky in the end.

BH2 was another matter, and I tried higher pressures to allow some wheelspin as last year it has dragged the engine down, but to no avail, we lurched forward but span up on some rocks and that was that. No medal, but an absolutely brilliant trial and some great climbs to celebrate, some improvements to make to get the others next year!

Lands' End by Simon Oates

The Liege was going to be driven by someone else, but they decided to do other things over Easter. This resulted with me entering the trial (I'd said no more MCC trials after the 2025 Exeter and my dismal performance on that day) and wondering why I did it! An opportunity of a new wing man was taken up by Paul Price from Gloucester who is an owner of two Lieges and is also a well-known Sporting Trials competitor. Paul had driven down to Egloskerry on Friday, had a gourmet lunch (stew) lovingly prepared by my wife Alison and got ready for the start of our 24-hour trial. Waterproofs were called for, even with the roof up and we departed north to Rob Haworth's farm near Bude for an 8.30pm start with Rob and Elizabeth's Liege leading the way with John and Natasha Early sandwiched in the middle with their car. The rain was persistent, and we trundled towards the start at Bridgwater. Probably the most dangerous part of the trial was when we followed the M5 from Tiverton to Bridgwater where the three of us had dropped to 42 mph on the motorway and I was tail end Charlie. John Early's car had developed an intermittent engine fault and wouldn't go any faster and every time a lorry went past it provided a lovely cold shower in the cars. This wasn't the time I wanted my rear fog light to fail and luckily it didn't.

Bridgwater reached, topped up with fuel and through scrutineering at the Rugby Club, we mingled as we waited for the official start 4 hours and 40 minutes behind the first bike. Whilst surveying the cars in the car park I spotted the closing car of Rex Ward, a nice little white Suzuki Jimny with black door handles. Out with the microfiber cloth to dry the doors and black gaffer tape to cover the door handles both sides to slow them down and give the last cars a bit more time if they broke down.

Knowing Rex, he'd recycle the tape on something else! Competitors had been issued with a lanyard and a too big control card that had to be cut down to fit comfortably which had to be pierced / stamped at control points initially at the start. The rain had eased a little as we approached the handbrake test (control card stamped) at **Walfords Gibbet** which caused no issues but a few miles further and higher we ran into a bank of thick fog which slowed progress for a few miles to eventually clear and on to **Felons Oak** (1) with hardly any queue! The section had been smoothed with tarmac? which took the shock out of last year's section and reduced the challenge.

Left through Luxborough (why?) and a car on fire with attendant fire engine before Wheddon Cross. Onward on the coast road to Lynton and into Barbrook for a splash and dash in the garage, control card stamp and cup of tea before moving on to **Beggars Roost** (2). By now the rain was intermittent and John Early's car had a spark plug change as it was still struggling and barely got to the restart. Once exited, we followed the route of lovely driving roads (even better in daylight) through Simonsbath and towards Barnstable and peeled off the A39 to **Riverton** (3) for a rough initial part of the section and a restart which was completed. Unfortunately, John and Natasha Early decided their car was too erratic to continue and retired to make their way back to Rotherham. We made the executive decision to remove the hood as daylight broke which inevitably caused a few short sharp showers which we ignored. Just in time for the first **Observed Test (OT1)** at Yollocombe where I nearly missed the turning off the main road.

More great driving roads interspersed with L, R and SO markers to aid the vehicles on to **Sutcombe** (4). I was half expecting the river to be badly flooded, but it was only a foot deep where we

cleared the section and restart before parking up for a wonderful bacon butty and cup of tea. I've heard that 117 vehicles didn't stop at the top on the stop line! The next stop was at Wicketts Garage in Bradworthy for another splash and dash and a packet of mini eggs for John on the pumps (his favourites). Off to the A39 again and **Wooley Holding Control** before moving on to Darracott. A very long wait which was beginning to take its toll on Paul, so I explained that this was probably the least I had queued on an MCC trial for many years (and there weren't many later either!) With no restarts on the hill, the delays were unexpected. It was at this point that Paul pulled his favourite folder from the floor and found the heat from the exhaust had burnt through one side – sorry Paul! It seems his woolly, thick socks that were worn to keep his feet warm were doing the opposite ie insulating his feet from the exhaust and keeping them cool.

As I write this, I have just ordered more heat insulation in an attempt to get the heat away from the passenger foot well. Once the section was completed, all bikes and car classes 6, 7 & 8 were diverted to **Cutcliffe Lane (6A)** with a restart only for class 8 cars. A bit rough but easier without a restart. Once out of the top we made our way through Bude where we saw the nationally famous kilt wearing litter picker doing his thing with a supermarket trolley nearly full of litter (what's this country becoming with so much litter?). Route check and stamp at **Widemouth Bay** and along the coast through Millook and Dizzard to **Crackington (7)** and a sneaky little restart. The unusual local climatic conditions had appeared again at Easter with a clay slide onto the track that entertained the crowds, and another bag of Mini Eggs was sent flying through the air for Nigel Cowling at the restart.

Breakfast Stop at the **Wilsey Down Hotel** was welcome and two large Cornish Breakfasts were consumed and another stamp to prove we were there. A bit of a queue at **Ruses Mill (OT2)** due to all classes using a single lane and zig zag hill for completely separate tests (why can't they be the same to save on marshals). From here in gorgeous weather, we toured Bodmin Moor through Minions and on to **Warleggan (8)** for a restart for 6, 7 & 8. We seemed to hit it correctly and fly up through the section. Great country roads on through Bodmin and towards Wadebridge for **Eddy's Branch Line (9 & 10)**. Last year there had been over a two-hour queue, but this year there was none, and it had been made into two sections with our restart cancelled on section 10. Both were cleared with ease, so we continued following the excellent route books instructions with a glorious, spirited drive through the lanes to **Perranporth Holding Control** for another stamp in the control card.

We were allowed to leave when we wanted and continued towards Blue Hills for the final, possibly hardest two hills. There were about 40 cars in front and both hills were in action and taking scalps along the way. Classes O and R were again mixed in with the main trial which slows down the later cars but no matter we had to do what we could to clear the two restarts. The route book showed all the positions of the restarts on the two hills which I can't say I agree with. Part of the fun of trialling is expecting the unexpected on a section! Paul and I had agreed to count down from three and for him to bounce on zero as I let the clutch out on the first restart. It seemed that the timing was good, but Paul later said that my steering was pointing to the left and the car bogged down in the mud in the bottom left and we barely moved. I turned the steering left and right and gunned it which didn't work so dropped the revs to nearly stalling and giving as

much bounce down on my spinning rear wheel as I could. A miracle happened and the car suddenly found traction and powered out of the section and then stopped on the line at the end with marshals attending both sides.

Relief swept over us with just **Blue Hills 2 (13)** left to do. With virtually no waiting we were attacking the section and turned left into the restart to see two deep holes that previous restarts had dug. I tried to get to the right of them, but the car slid sideways into them – bugger. Into 1st gear and out with the clutch where the car just drove up without any hiccups. Shocked that it was so easy, I forgot to stop astride the finish line and quickly reversed back over it. There were no marshals on the line which would have reminded me to stop if they were there. Not the best way to muck up a trial but such is life! We stopped to watch a few more finish the section with Rob & Elizabeth Haworth flying the hill in their Liege before we carried on to the finish at the **Inn for all Seasons** where we signed off and handed our control card and numbers in.



Simon & Stephen Moir on the Lands End

Lands' End Trial by Derek Reynolds

Easter this year was as late as I remember but I still look forward to this as my favourite is The Lands' End Trial. Whether the weather has improved or not spring always brings new optimistic thoughts that this year all sections will be cleaned! In the past I have cleaned

All this resulted with a Silver Medal and me kicking myself about not stopping on BH 2 as we had done the fastest Special Test time and thrown away the overall winner's place. Otherwise, the planets all lined up for a thoroughly enjoyable trial which followed the previous two excellent trials. Well done MCC for the improvements which provide more great memories for us all to cherish of the trials. There were a lot of marshals out in variable weather for long stints at their stations – what heroes, thank you for all your time and effort, you are much appreciated. Thanks also go to all the Motor Clubs, landowners and everyone involved in organising and running the trial including the tea and cake ladies (& gents).

all the sections but not all on the same trial or the same day as Eric may say. A new M.O.T. along with a complete service and the removal of some dings acquired at the Exeter the X90 appeared to be ready for the annual trip to Cornwall. However, when the service mechanic told me the clutch would need replacing soon, I wondered how much welly I could put down without being relayed back to Northumberland.

In an effort to get a little more grip I looked around for a new set of rear tyres on the internet (as Tiptley on the Exeter had taken a chunk out of a perfectly good tyre) as well as approaching several local tyre fitters. The type of tyre we use is now limited as I like an 80 profile and most are van tyres with harder casings, not so easy to drop pressures for when tackling a section. I finally took a chance on some new tyres spotted on the net which were about the same pattern as Hancock and looked to comply with the 8mm rule. Once delivered it was out with the drill bit and micrometre to check the tread. They passed the test, were fitted, and the car was good to go.

My navigator, Alan Bee, lives an hour south of me in very rural Durham and we usually meet up nearer the M1 for our journey south. As he did not fancy leaving on Friday morning and driving straight to the start we set off on Thursday and drove to Bedworth just north of Coventry to stay the night. This gave us plenty of time the next day, so I had planned to visit the Coventry Motor Museum which was easy to find with parking nearby. There was a huge range of exhibits starting with the early bicycles through to the land speed record holding Thrust jet engined cars. Between we saw many motorcycles, surely some competed in M.C.C. events, and lots of locally made cars from this manufacturing area. Well worth a visit. Not far away we also visited the adjacent cathedrals highlighting the destruction and rebirth of the city. Again, well worth a visit.

We picked up our car and started out for Bridgewater with plenty of time in hand and found a pub on the outskirts to have our evening meal before lying up in a lorry car park for a couple of hours rest before setting off for the start. Arriving at the start there was the usual jockeying for scrutineering and parking, but we cleared and parked up and signed on. Must say I prefer the face-to-face banter

of signing on rather than the internet, don't know how I would cope with an AI version. Met up with Myke Pocock and Chris Veevers, fellow members of Fell Side. I told Myke for years to put the Lands' End on his bucket list and at last he listened and was about to do his first Lands' End. Chatted to Bron and David Spraggett (in class R with their Dolly) and hopefully arranged to meet up at the end for a meal. Every year there are familiar faces but this year some seemed missing with a lot of new ones appearing which is good for the club as there was a good turn out this year.

Start at 00-32 and off to the handbrake test. The Fell Side once contemplated a handbrake test at scrutineering by putting up a steepish ramp using a trailer borrowed from a local farmer! The test was O. K. and off Felons Oak for our first section with a restart. Always enjoy getting off a restart and cleaning. So off - up stop with rear wheels in box, flag drops, wheels spin. FAIL! Backed off, took a run and got out. So much for super dooper tyres! There is nothing more depressing than failing a first hill, but I could rise above it, after all I am used to it. Will put front wheels in next time, have already put that in my "section memory jogger", which I forget to bring this year.

Next up Barbook. Topped up with petrol and looked in vain for a parking spot. Never seen it so busy with parking restrictions this year Alan had taken our card to control but we had to communicate by phone as I was way out on the fringe of the village so missed my coffee and booty this year. Beggars Roost was well marshalled on the main approach road as there was plenty of two-way traffic. Another competitor returned down as we approached, never a good sign as too many times I have never got off the gravel start here and there was a restart too. All went well however and we cleaned and cleared. Lifts the spirits a bit.

Most of the field cleaned Riverton with a few exceptions, who knows what their problems were, unless they write about it. Sutcombe is always fun but can be tricky depending on how the hill has been eroded over the last year. All O.K. and with a restart and the benefit of coffee and my booty at the top. Somehow, somewhere my heavy-duty tow strap had come loose and was trailing on the ground. I enquired from the tea ladies if they had some string. One of the ladies picked up a carving knife and promptly cut a piece from the awning rope. Job done! Most grateful.

Enjoyed a good romp up Darracott which was cleared by the majority, and it appears some that failed were also non finishers. Wargery Wood caught me out after the restart as I cut across to the right too soon and grounded on the corner, backed off, got out top with swearing kept to minimum. Made another note for next year. Made another note to read it.

Crackington another great hill to clear and we did as we had no restart but a bunch of class seven with later numbers looked to have been caught out, restart perhaps. The trial was moving along, and we poured into Wilsley Down Market, and I chose to have a quick nap whilst Alan checked into control. After restarting Warleggan was ok, but Myke sadly lost his bronze here. A route change meant we bypassed Eddys Branch sections and headed off for the finale.

The weather had been good so Bluehills 1 might be dry? Coming out of the lane to crest the hill and view the panorama down the valley to the sea with crowds is always a wonderful sight. And then there is the double challenge to face that some make it look easy. Into the pit for Bluehills 1, took it easy, no water in usual place, but a muddy patch to grease the wheels before that polished stone. which is exactly what happened. Another fail. Sometimes think someone must polish it weekly.: Last chance to clear 2 this year and we had a good go charging up to the restart. really felt it was tough until I looked at the latest videos of competitors cruising up gently! Could not get off restart and had to take escape route which I preferred as I have bounced off the wall in taking a run at it before now.

I had hoped to see Old Number One as we left but was told it had left earlier. So kept moving and signed off. Many thanks to all those who gave their time to this event to make it such a memorable event. We headed off north to our usual rendezvous at Bodmin where we met up with other trialists to share commiserations, achievements and exaggerations, as usual.

Set off in the morning and made it back with one pit stop in eight hours, traffic light and no hold ups. Next stop the Edinburgh in September.

Nigel's Flora Trials and Tribulations, Sunday 4th May 2025 by Simon Oates

The Pendennis Motorcycle Clubs Flora trial is steeped in the myth and history of Cornwall. With an entry of 118 bikes and only 15 cars, it sure was interesting as bikes, chairs, quads and a single 70's

throwback of 3 wheeled quad with golden glitter ball helmeted rider with the biggest smile in Cornwall attacked the course. 15 brilliant sections for the cars and 25 for the bikes plus 2 timed sections for fine tuning the results. A few holdups, but the entertainment watching it all unfold was worth every penny spent on entering! Nigel Cowling was driving the Liege, and I was holding on for dear life in the passenger seat. I'd put extra

heat shielding under the passenger seat since the Lands' End Trial but soon realised that more was needed. Nigel tackled the first three sections with trepidation but gave his all and left them all with a clean sheet (we thought we'd dropped 1 point on 3rd section) and a massive smile. He couldn't have done better, and I think he surprised himself considering he hadn't driven it in a trial for two years.

The clean sheet continued to lunchtime with some memorable sections and brilliant driving. Back to the Star Inn at Vogue for a bacon butty and cup of tea. On seeing some tasty fried onions, we decided to have a Burger and onions instead (not a Mega Burger that was soooo tempting). Suitably refreshed, we made our way to the next sections that were reorganised in a different order to keep everyone moving.

Another clear and on to three sections in Fraser's Wood just up the road. I decided not to blow the tyres up (7psi) as it was only 400 yds up the lane. Big mistake as we were lead back through Ponsanooth, on to the A38 and couldn't safely do more than 30 mph until we made the bluebell laden woods. Two years ago, I told Nigel to carry on when we went into a bush which ended up with a broken windscreen. This time he drove like a pro and cleared all three sections.

Two more sections were cleared on the route and only two left to do, still with a clean sheet! Blackdowns has previously been used on the Lands' End and is now far too difficult for the MCC? We had a restart and had watched 4wd quads failing the hill. When we got to the Restart, we probably stopped too high and failed to clear the hill despite intense bouncing and swearing and dropped 6 points. Once we had reversed down, it was clear Nigel was not in a good place, but I thought I had given my all.

Onward through and around Helston, we drove on through Four Lanes and on to Lanner Green for the final section. Two massive steep hills up and one down, what could possibly go wrong? The intension was to keep to the left on the last steep hill. Nigel scaled the first hill, successfully went down the second and turned the corner (unlike 2 years ago) and attacked the last hill with vigour, maybe too much vigour as he forgot to stay left and attacked the 2-marker pole on the right and took it out leaving us stranded with all wheels in the air. My leg cramped up as I tried to push the non-existent brake pedal and we waited to be pulled up and out, what a way to drop 3 more points.

Considering how many times Nigel has driven the car, he did fantastically well and only dropped 9 points, all on the last two hills. We can only dream of what could have been! Back to the Star Inn at Vogue for a thoroughly deserved pint and tasty carvery. Thank you to all involved with this gem of a trial, the atmosphere and sections are some of the best around and will always be one of my favourite trials of the season, shame more cars don't do it, but then it might spoil the whole experience.

Jeremy Clarkson told me that "it is probably the best trial in the world" and we all respect his views don't we!

Crackington Table 2025 up to Yorkshire Dales

		Exeter	Bodmin Heights	Clee Hills	Cotswold Clouds	Exmoor	March Here	Torbay	Lands End	Yorkshire Dales	Taw & Torridge	Edinburgh	Kyle	Tamar	Mechanics	Exmoor Clouds	Allen	Camel Classic	Best 9	Total
Karen	Warren	8.0	9.3	10.6	11.0	9.6	9.5	10.4	8.0	10.5										86.9
Paul	Merson	5.0	2.0	10.0	9.0	10.0	9.8	7.0	5.0	5.8										63.6
Paul	Jones	3.0		8.6	6.0	6.6	7.5	7.4	R	9.5										48.6
Nick	Deacon		10.4		10.7		10.3	9.6												41.0
John	Early	3.0		10.7	7.0	9.4			R	9.9										40.0
Duncan	Stephens		11.0			11.0	8.8	9.0												39.8
Ray	Ferguson			6.7	8.0	10.4		9.6		4.9										39.6
Simon	Oates	3.0	10.7	9.7					5.0	10.9										39.3
David	Haizelden		10.0		10.1	9.3		8.0												37.4
Dean	Partington	5.0		11.0		6.0	6.8	1.0		6.8										36.6
Steve	Hill	1.0		8.9		10.1		10.2	5.0											35.2
Dan	Staines		7.6		8.5		9.5	9.5		R										35.1
Richard	Hayward	8.0			10.7		10.5		5.0											34.2
Keith	Farrance			9.5	8.7		8.3			9.3										35.8
Julian	Lack	1.0		9.0				8.0	5.0	10.8										33.8
Jack	Selwood	5.0				9.4		10.5	8.0											32.9
Sam	Holmes			10.2	10.7					10.3										31.2
David	Golightly			10.9	8.6					10.3										29.8
Brian	Hampson					10.3		10.6	8.0											28.9
Mark	Hobbs			8.0	6.0		10.8			3.8										28.6
Mike	Wills	8.0			7.0		7.5		5.0	R										27.5
David	Sargeant			9.2	9.7					8.3										27.2
Stuart	Highwood	8.0	9.6	9.5																27.1
David	Middleditch	5.0			4.0		8.0		1.0	8.9										26.9
John	Ramsden		1.0	4.0	4.0	5.0		4.0		8.8										26.8
Michael	Leete			8.7			7.7			7.9										24.3
Nigel	Dell	3.0	5.7		1.0	7.4		5.6	1.0											23.7
Andrew	Rippon		10.3			10.6														20.9
James	Shallcross		10.1					10.4												20.5
Henry	Hoggart		7.7					7.6	5.0											20.3
Robert	Holden		R		9.7			10.3												20.0
Roger	Teagle		7.0	6.0		7.0														20.0
Gregory	Warren		10.4		8.7															19.1
Ben	Ballardie	3.0			7.7			8.3												19.0
Aaron	Haizelden				9.0			9.4												18.4
Keith	Sanders					10.3		8.0												18.3
Neal	Vile					8.3		8.6												16.9
Simon	Groves		8.0			8.0														16.0
Richard	Kinver	8.0							8.0											16.0
Norton	Selwood		9.3			R		6.5												15.8
Ryan	Eamer		5.0		5.0				5.0											15.0
Paul	Watson		5.6		8.0															13.6
Adrian	Tucker-Peake			8.0	R				5.0											13.0
Nicola	Butcher	8.0			R				5.0											13.0
Andrew	Martin		3.0			9.0														12.0
Roger	Ashby	5.0		6.9																11.9
Stuart	Holton	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0		4.8	1.0	1.0											11.8
Philip	Aubrey				2.0		8.7		1.0											11.7
Tim	Hellings					10.4														10.4
Jon	Moores	5.0							5.0											10.0
Charles	Knifton			5.0						4.8										9.8
John	Cavendish				9.7															9.7
Bob	Tozer				R		8.5													8.5
Thomas	Jones				8.0															8.0
Simon	Woodall			8.0																8.0
Gary	Browning				8.0															8.0
Calvin	Moores		R						8.0											8.0
John	Bell									8.0										8.0
Alex	Gray				7.0															7.0
Abbie	Jeffery					4.0														4.0
David	Foreshew		4.0		R															4.0
John	Charles									3.9										3.9
Stewart	Green		1.0		1.0															2.0
Simon	Willey	R						R												0.0
Graham	Williams			R																0.0

Wheelspin Table 2025 up to Yorkshire Dales

		Exeter	Bodmin Heights	Clee Hills	Cotswold Clouds	Exmoor	March Hare	Torbay	Lands End	Yorkshire Dales	Taw & Torridge	Edinburgh	Kyle	Tamar	Mechanics	Exmoor Clouds	Allen	Camel Classic	Best 9	Total
Paul	Merson	5		9	5	9			5	4										37
Richard	Hayward	8			8		10		5											31
Dean	Partington	5		10		3				5										23
Julian	Lack	1		6					5	10										22
Duncan	Stephens		10			10														20
Jack	Selwood	5				2		4	8											19
David	Haizelden		9					8												17
Karen	Warren	8							8											16
Richard	Kinver	8							8											16
Simon	Groves		8			7														15
Brian	Hampson							7	8											15
David	Middleditch	5					8			1	1									15
Nick	Deacon						9	5												14
Mark	Hobbs			5			8													13
Nicola	Butcher	8							5											13
Mike	Wills	8							5											13
Adrian	Tucker-Peake			8					5											13
Roger	Teagle		6	2		5														13
Simon	Oates	3							5	3										11
James	Shallcross							10												10
Sam	Holmes			4	6															10
Jon	Moores	5							5											10
Aaron	Haizelden							9												9
Keith	Sanders					1		8												9
Ryan	Eamer		4						5											9
Steve	Hill	1						3	5											9
Robert	Holden							8												8
Andrew	Martin					8														8
Stuart	Highwood	8																		8
Simon	Woodall			8																8
Paul	Watson				8															8
Gary	Browning				8															8
Calvin	Moores								8											8
John	Ramsden									8										8
John	Bell									8										8
David	Golightly			7																7
Ray	Ferguson					6														6
Roger	Ashby	5																		5
Henry	Hoggart								5											5
John	Early	3								2										5
David	Sargeant				4															4
Tim	Hellings					4														4
Nigel	Dell	3							1											4
Paul	Jones	3																		3
Ben	Ballardie	3																		3
Dan	Staines							2												2
Andrew	Rippon		2																	2
Stuart	Holton	1							1											2
David	Foreshew		1																	1
Philip	Aubrey								1											1

Pouncy League OVERALL 2025 up to Yorkshire Dales

		Exeter	Clee Hills	Exmoor	March Hare	Torbay	Lands End	Yorkshire Dales	Taw & Torridge	Edinburgh	Tamar	Tarka	Exmoor Clouds	Neil Westcott	Camel Classic	Best 9	Total	Events Scored
John	Reeves	10	15	10		11		11									57	5
Simon	Fillan	10	6	13	12	9	6										56	6
Mark	Wills	10	7		14		10	8									49	5
Phil	Sanders	10		4	15	3	3	3									38	6
Derek	Walter	10		12		1	3										26	4
Neil	O'Connor			15		10											25	2
Kelvin	Prevett	10		7			1										18	3
Richard	Maddem					15											15	1
Chris	Barham			8		5											13	2
Peter	Browne	6				4	3										13	3
Neil	Browne	10															10	1
Mark	Bowden			8		2											10	2
Rick	Lees	6															6	1
Suzanna	Prevett	3					3										6	2
Andy	Beveridge						3										3	1

Pouncy and Red Rose Bowl Leagues CLASS 2025

		Exeter	Clee Hills	Exmoor	March Hare	Torbay	Lands End	Yorkshire Dales	Taw & Torridge	Edinburgh	Tamar	Tarka	Exmoor Clouds	Neil Westcott	Camel Classic	Best 9	Total	Events Scored
Pouncy League																		
Simon	Fillan	10.0	5.8	9.0	9.7	8.0	6.0	5.7									54.2	7
Phil	Sanders	10.0		10.2	10.1	10.1	3.0	10.3									53.7	6
Mark	Wills	10.0	10.3		10.6		10.0	9.9									50.8	5
John	Reeves	10.0	10.8	8.0		10.0	R	9.7									48.5	5
Derek	Walter	10.0		10.7		9.5	3.0										33.2	4
Neil	O'Connor			11.0		9.0											20.0	2
Mark	Bowden			9.5		10.1											19.6	2
Kelvin	Prevett	10.0		6.0			1.0										17.0	3
Neil	Browne	10.0				6.5	R										16.5	2
Chris	Barham			8.0		8.5											16.5	2
Peter	Browne	6.0				7.5	3.0										16.5	3
Suzanna	Prevett	3.0		8.5			3.0										14.5	3
Richard	Maddem					11.0											11.0	1
Keith	Sams							7.8									7.8	1
Rick	Lees	6.0															6.0	1
Andy	Beveridge						3.0										3.0	1
Danny	Gosling					R	R										0.0	0
Red Rose Bowl																		
Andy	Beveridge	1.0		10.1		10.1											21.2	3
Martin	Keswick			7.4		8.3											15.7	2
Richard	Maddem			9.4													9.4	1
Geoffrey	Westcott			8.4			1.0										9.4	2

Navigators Table 2025 up to Yorkshire Dales

		Exeter	Bodmin Heights	Clee Hills	Cotswold Clouds	Exmoor	March Hare	Torbay	Lands End	Yorkshire Dales	Taw & Torridge	Edinburgh	Kyrle	Tamar	Mechanics	Exmoor Clouds	Allen	Camel Classic	Best 9	Total	Events Scored
Alice	Warren Carter	8.0	9.3		11.0	9.6		10.4	8.0											56.3	6
Natasha	Early	3.0		10.7	7.0	9.4				9.9										40.0	5
Emma	Harvey			8.6	6.0	6.6	7.5	7.4												36.1	5
Kieran	Bartlett	5.0		11.0		6.0	6.8			6.8										35.6	5
Ella-Jade	Tozer-Cox		7.6		8.5		9.5	9.5												35.1	4
Carla	Smith			10.9	8.6					10.3										29.8	3
Dee	Champion		10.0		10.1	9.3														29.4	3
Jack	Highwood	8.0	9.6	9.5					1.0											28.1	4
Matthew	Cleave	3.0	5.7		1.0	7.4		5.6	1.0											23.7	6
Lorraine	Rippon		10.3			10.6														20.9	2
Mike	Greenwood		10.1					10.4												20.5	2
Stephen	Branfield		7.0			7.0														14.0	2
Richard	Gibson	5.0			8.0															13.0	2
Joe	Martin		3.0			9.0														12.0	2
Marianne	Holton	1.0	1.0	1.0	2.0		4.8	1.0	1.0											11.8	7
Tom	Aubrey				2.0		8.7		1.0											11.7	3
Tilly	Hoggart							10.5												10.5	1
Zara	Crane									10.5										10.5	1
Sid	Middleditch	5.0																		5.0	1
Ruben	Foreshew		4.0																	4.0	1
Robin	Charles									3.9										3.9	1
Melanie	Oliver		1.0																	1.0	1



Photo by Dave Middleditch

2025 EVENTS

2025 Draft Dates	Event		ACTC Cars Champ 2025	ACTC Invite	Car and M/C Mail List	Car/Bike Class 0?	Pouncy League 2025	Red Rose 2025
Fri 3 Jan	Exeter	MCC	Bonus Round	No	No	Yes-Both	Bonus Round	Bonus Round
Sat 4 Jan	Exeter	MCC		No	No	Yes-Both		
Sun 12 Jan	Bodmin Heights	Camel Vale	Round 1	Yes	Yes	No		
Sun 19 Jan	Clee Hills	MMMC	Round 2	Yes	Yes	Yes-Cars	Round 1	Round 1
Sun 2 Feb	Cotswold Clouds	Stroud	Round 3	Yes	Yes	No		
Sun 9 Feb	Exmoor	North Devon	Round 4	Yes	Yes	No	Round 2	Round 2
Sat 22 Feb	Exmoor Fringe	VSCC						
Sun 23 Feb	Chairmans	Holsworthy	Round 5	Yes	Yes	No	Round 3	Round 3
Sat 1 March	Derbyshire	VSCC						
Sun 2 March	March Hare	Falcon	Round 6	Yes	Yes	Yes	Round 4	Round 4
Sun 2 March	Launceston	L&NMC		Yes	No	No		
Sat 15 March	Herefordshire	VSCC						
Sat 15 March	Awards Evening							
Sun 16 March	Torbay	Torbay	Round 7	Yes	Yes	No	Round 5	Round 5
Sun 16 March	Herefordshire	VSCC						
Sun 23 March	Single Venue Classic	Stroud		Yes	Yes	No		
Sat 12 April	Scottish	VSCC						
Fri 18 April	Lands End	MCC	Bonus Round	No	No	Yes-Both	Bonus Round	Bonus Round
Sat 19 April	Lands End	MCC		No	No	Yes-Both		
Sun 20 April	Presidents	Camel Vale		Yes	Yes	No		
Tues 22 April	ACTC Meeting							
Sun 11 May	Yorkshire Dales	Ilkley	Round 8	Yes	Yes	Yes Both	Round 6	Round 6
Tues 26 Aug	ACTC AGM							
Sun 14 Sept	Taw & Torridge	Holsworthy	Round 9	Yes	Yes	No	Round 7	Round 7
Sat 27 Sept	Edinburgh	MCC	Bonus Round	No	No	Yes-Both	Bonus Round	Bonus Round
Sun 5 Oct	Kyrle	Ross & District	Round 10	Yes	Yes	No		
Sat 11 Oct	Welsh	VSCC						
Sun 12 Oct	Welsh	VSCC						
Sun 12 Oct	Tamar	L&NMC	Round 11	Yes	Yes	No	Round 8	Round 8
Sun 26 Oct	Tarka	North Devon		Yes	Yes	No	Round 9	Round 9
Sun 26 Oct	Mechanics	Stroud	Round 12	Yes	Yes	No		
Sun 2 Nov	Exmoor Clouds	Minehead	Round 13	Yes	Yes	No	Round 10	Round 10
Sat 8 Nov	Lakeland	VSCC						
Sat 15 Nov	Cotswold	VSCC						
Sun 30 Nov	Allen	BMC&LCC	Round 14	Yes	Yes	No		
Sun 30 Nov	Neil Westcott	Exmoor		Yes	Yes	Yes-Bikes	Round 11	Round 11
Sun 7 Dec	Camel Classic	Camel Vale	Round 15	Yes	Yes	No	Round 12	Round 12

