

EXETER TRIAL 2023 [AND 90 YEARS OF SIMMS HILL!]

Suzie Prevett

Well, that was a challenge and a half; I really enjoyed it!! My first Exeter LDT, and I dare say it won't be my last!

I was absolutely shattered and felt like I'd been in an industrial washing machine my body ached that much, but ecstatic - I got through all of the sections, even if I did hit the deck twice. In terms of the fatigue, I felt it most on reaching Crealy at circa 5am in the morning, especially once I'd consumed my full English breakfast and the lovely warmth of the room worked its magic. The next dilemma was, do I try to sleep for half an hour or push through?! Hmm, I went with the latter option as I felt a 'power nap' (not something I'm great at anyway), would turn in to my not wanting to move afterwards, and on hitting the cool outside air I was glad of my choice.

I ended up with a few bike issues on the trial... some due to A LOT of water (I think I should have fitted a snorkel). This resulted in a few random engine cut-outs, sadly several on the beautiful Fingle Hill section, and others due to a faulty battery charging system, but it's all part of the challenge. I did clean Simms which I'm amazed about and I was totally elated when I got to the top and was greeted by a very smiley marshal!

On that note, I must say a huge thank you to all of the amazing marshals who stood out in the wind and torrential rain, and especially to those who came to help me out when I had a heavy tumble on Clinton (or was that Norman's

Hump?)... I will endeavour to stay on the right side next time I think.... whether I'll remain upright is another thing!

Thanks to riders 52 and 90 who stopped when I was having a bit of bike bother. Much appreciated and it speaks volumes for the ethos of the event.

Also, it wouldn't be the same without the great times with Andrew Craig, Michael Green and Kelvin Prevett who all actively encouraged me to take part. I have to say that I watched them all ascending Simms Hill in January 2022, and at that time it really didn't appeal. I then entered the Land's End Trial that year and was amazed at how enjoyable it was, so I thought 'Why Not?!'.

It was great to see my good friends Mo Rapley and Rob Williams, with team mate and lovely bloke Steve Plain at Haynes, Crealy and finally at The Passage House Hotel for their first ever MCC event. It was also great to see Nick Williams again, as well as some riding with Phil Sanders, who picked up his MCC Triple award; an amazing achievement for anyone who's wondering!!

Overall, despite the biblical rainfall and a couple of tumbles, it was a fantastic event, very well run, lovely people, great atmosphere and definitely one to consider if you're up for a challenge! ■



**Suzie Prevett found the way up Woosten Steep –
we won't mention one or two of the other sections
this time** Andrew Trenoweth