

December 2023 Newsletter

Blooming heck, December has started with a chill, all of a sudden we have to accept it's Winter, mind you I was "up North" in Derbyshire last weekend and they had a proper frost now that was chilly, I'll put up with being a woosie southerner if we don't have weather like that. Last night we had a committee meeting down at the Fox & Grapes, Lifton, a good turn out of members including Nick Symons who has dipped his toes in to being a committee member, well done Nick.

All the usual matters of committee business were chewed over, such as dates of events for next year and the purchase of a new Gazebo complete with club branding for use at shows etc, somewhere to hide from the rain or sun depending on time of year.

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Simon Oates as always keeps us posted on recent events he has completed so here is his account of the Tamar Trial.

The 76th Tamar Trial Sunday 22nd October 2023

Liam Hartley arrived just after 8am and was raring to do his Duracell bunny bouncing for the day (he just bounces forever!). He had ridden his motorbike down and his 'waterproofs' were soaked through after he hit one of those tropical showers! Off to scrutineering at Proper Ansome Cafe and a start at 9.17. A great turnout of 46 bikes and chairs along with 36 cars. A dry start and off to **Petherwin Old Hill (1)** and a restart for 6, 7 & 8, catching a couple of class 8's. Next on to the first timed **Special Test 1** at Lewannick Down. 'Front wheel on Line A. Forward with all wheels through Line B. Reverse with all wheels back behind Line B. Forward, straight through Line C and stop astride Line D. I half watched Bob Blackman in his Arkley do it in front of me. It shouldn't be hard to do unless you're me where I failed to register the Line B and only used Line C – Failure of test 1 and a bollocking from Liam (well it was worse than that really!) Bowing my head in shame, we made our way over the moors which were looking at their best in the Autumn sun to **Warleggan (2)** and 14psi and a restart which we managed to clear to our relief. On through St Neot and **Wild Boar Lane (3)** for another high restart on the slab of slate which dropped 3 points (all class 7 were caught out here and half of class 8). Once at the top we toured on to **Watermain Lane (4)** where we were greeted by Anna Robinson at the start with David Robinson on the restart, hanging like tinsel on a Christmas tree in the hedge!! We saw his flag drop (or was it rise?) and cleared the section. A short lane dash on to **Lestitha Well (5)** which had a few interesting crevices in the lane down to the start. A tricky deviation in the middle of the section made sure everyone was awake and a restart for class 8 that caught a few out. The bikes went on to **Ladye Park (6)** with a best score for bikes of 3 and not one managed a clear (sneaky little organisers). The cars moved on to the second **Special Test 2** at Waylands which we managed to complete without incident! (only one B line in the middle). Out of the test and through Pensilva, Callington and right towards Harrowbarrow. Right just before the village to **Barrett's Mill (7)** with a restart for all classes which everyone cleared apart from a few unfortunate bikes. We then drove on to **Tank's Terror (8)** which was cleared by 5 bikes and only **1 car**, driven by the legend known as Dean Partington. We managed a 2 and were well chuffed with that (steep grass, muddy and tiered bank with a twist). Time Control and

refreshments were just up the road at the Tamar Valley Donkey Park where we were held for 30 minutes. Once we'd chatted to the donkeys, we were off to Horse Bridge and the woods we had first used last year for four brand new sections. **The Twister (9)** and **The Quarry (10)** were twisty and slippery and a true challenge. Next was **The Slates (11)** with a restart for class 7 & 8, followed by **The Firs (12)**. All tight and testing amongst the trees and overgrowth. 17 points dropped here which shows how tough it was although Dean Partington with Duncan Stephens as wing man only dropped 1 point on the four sections. Both Keith Sanders and Matt Facey's class 5 cars also did the impossible and only dropped 6 points each within the wood sections – fantastic driving. Conditions dictated that the early cars had a distinct advantage on the day but that's trialling! A few later cars had trouble finding their way out of the woods where maybe some of the many arrows had been knocked down with all the slipping and sliding! Out of the woods and across Horse Bridge and right towards **Lee Quarry (13)** with restarts for classes 7 & 8. A truly tough section with only two class 8 cars clearing the section, all the rest of the cars spinning like a top and failing any further upward motion. A mile further up the road was **Angel Steps (14)** which was levelled out a bit with a digger last year and we feared could have ruined the hill. Fear not, it's still a formidable challenge especially on 14 psi for us. We were stuck in a cloud of tyre smoke for over a minute making miniscule progress off the top restart (couldn't see the markers or marshal) and made it to the 3. Liam was well on form with some up and personal bouncing to infinity and beyond. Disappointed, we drove on to **Lew Wood 1 (15)** to drop a further 3 points on tree roots off the lower restart. Liam was not happy!! Further on through the woods to **Lew Woods 2 (16)** where we managed to clear the section. The bikes had a bike only section at **Harts (17)** which only 3 bikes cleared. On to Lifton and **Park Impossible (18)** where we were meant to be on 12 psi, but when I asked the starting marshal he said there were no tyre pressure limits. It's a tough section to finish on at the best of times and we got away off the restart but were stopped by the hill just before the 2. Not a normal place to stop the cars! I have to mention here that Phil Thomas ably assisted by Keelan Hancock in 'Fathers Dutton Melos' were the only car to clear the section. They also had cleared everything from Angel Steps which truly took some magical skills. Off back to the finish at the **Frog and Bucket** in South Petherwin and signing off. Unbelievably we managed to come second in Class 7 and dropped 35 points, 6 behind class 7 winner Phil Thomas (29 points). Overall winner was the **red hot** Jack Selwood ably assisted by Abbie Jeffery in their Class 8 DP Ford special. Class 8 dominated the top 4 positions with a stunning 5th for Keith Sanders in his Class 5 Reliant Scimitar (it really does have 4 wheels Dell Boy!). The bikes had a 3-way tie on 17 points with John Reeves pipping Kevin Miller and Tristan Barnicoat. Steve Urell and Julie Williams (did she have a stuffed donkey in her pocket after lunch??) had a fantastic trial for 6th overall and a win on 3 wheels. A truly fantastic trial with a great mix of new and old sections, giving a rest to sections used in previous years. The weather made the route between sections fantastic and showed Cornwall at its best. Route instructions were clear and concise, marshals were legends and land owners so much appreciated.

The biggest **THANK YOU** must go to SimonR, NigelC, AndrewR and JanC plus all their behind the scenes team for organising my **Favourite Trial of 2023** so far despite my poor showing. This is what club trials are all about with sections that are capable of stopping all classes with tyre pressures, deviations, roots, restarts, other sneaky means etc. It's rare to see a clear round on this trial, maybe that's why it's called a trial and long may it continue.

John Hadwick. I received a sad telephone call on the 3rd of November from Polly Hadwick to give Vivien and I the news that John Hadwick had sadly passed away. John had spent the last ten years battling with cancer, despite being constantly in pain he never complained, whenever I asked him how he was the reply would be "I'm alright John".

We first met John and Polly on a Lands end trial in the early to mid 2000's, ending up sharing dig's with them and several other competitors in a couple of over crowded hotel rooms (I use the term Hotel loosely) near Zennor. From then on we always kept in touch, John was a very clever engineer working on everything from trials and race cars to reboring the engines for the local Council dustcarts, John and I would occasionally go off to an event together spectating, we would be walking around the pits and he would stop me and say "fancy that they're using Vauxhall steering gear on that" such was his knowledge, meanwhile all I could do was admire the carburettor set up and nod.

The photo below was at the top of Bluehills on the 2007 Lands end Trial. Left to Right Rosemarie and Ray Goodright, John, Mike & Pat Gomm, far right J.T. the two ladies in the foreground are Polly and Viv T. Happy Days ☺



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Calendar of Events

10th of December The Ron Beer Sporting Trial which is a round of the ASWMC to be held at Ashleigh , Lifton , Devon. Once again we are needing marshals so if you are able to help Mike Wevill would love to hear from you, tel 01566 784451. Have a day out watching those strange (to some) little sporting trials cars in action with their passengers acrobatics putting their weight where needed.

(1) and was a straight forward climb to break us in and maybe a false bit of confidence. On to **Bitton Lane (2)** for a yellow restart on 12psi for ourselves. All cleared and no problems yet. 7 miles on to **Fairy Hill Observed Test 1** for a downhill right slippery bend to all wheels through the B boards, Reverse all through again and a short blast to astride the C boards in 19.5 seconds, not too tardy! A couple of hundred yards on was **Fairy Hill (3)** where classes 6 & 7 (10psi) had a restart on the bottom muddy corner. Class 8 could drive through our restart and have their own higher up the hill (I thought it looked easier than ours). The previous cars and drizzle had not improved the traction at the restart. We fought as best we could and struggled to move forward for a 5. Impressive to see Paul Watson in his Imp cleared the section and he wasn't that far in front of us. As we left the section I could see more room wider on the restart that might have helped me. A mile along the roads we came to **Big Uplands (4) (Byeway Open to All Traffic)** a long rough, slippery and stoney track with a restart for classes 6, 7 & 8 around a sharp left bend. No problem and cleared fairly easily. 7.5 miles on to **Guys Hill (5) (BOAT)** with a notoriously hard restart on 10psi. Restart for classes 6, 7 & 8. There were 6 clears in 1 – 5, only Dean Vowden cleared in class 6, 4 out of 18 class 7 cleared and 6 class 8 failed. Luckily we snuck off the line to infinity and beyond! On for a further 10 miles to **Travers Hill (6) (BOAT)** which was a track on the side of a steep wooded hill overlooking **Blagdon Lake** Slippery and rough to the top with a restart for classes 7 & 8. We stopped at the top of the line and nearly slipped back over a root, but got away with it. Most cleared the section. Lunch was at the **Chew Valley Lake picnic area**. The sausage and chips were tasty and consumed in no time at all. We turned right out of the picnic area and on to the next section **Burledge 1 (7) (BOAT)** where the section was split in two with a restart on **Burledge 2**. 5 miles on we went into **Fry's Bottom Wood** and past **Fry's Bottom 1 (8)** on the left that was only for Class 8 and only cleared by 5 cars. The rain was now starting to change the ground conditions for the worse. **Observed Test 2** which was a quick blat from the 'A' boards into a box over the 'B' board with all wheels, reverse all wheels over again and astride line 'C', 15 seconds flat was good enough for me. It's always fun if you get it right even with 40 bhp! Up the track to **Fry's Bottom 2 (9)** which was a zig zag through the muddy undergrowth to a restart on a sharp muddy corner and around a tree. Fairly technical and good fun. 100 m further on, we came to **Fry's Bottom 3 (10)**. While we were waiting Andrew & Lisa Dams arrived in their Peugeot 106, beaming from ear to ear. It appeared the restart marshal had jumped out and stopped him for the restart even though he didn't have one. He then pulled away, went around the tree and cleared the section. Wow some achievement☺. The section was a wiggly weaving woodland track to a restart for Classes 6 & 7 on a bank with little grip and a sharp right up a clay bank. So little grip after the restart and no chance of turning up the hill for a clear. Further into the woods we went on to, you've guessed it, **Fry's Bottom 4 (11)** which was a nasty little climb through tree roots after a sharp right turn in wet clay. Class 8 had not done the previous section and had a restart around the roots on this one. None of the class 8 cleared the section but Thomas Jones in his Ford Snipe Special managed a 1. The last wet section **John Walker (12)** was a further 13 miles away and we put the hood up on the car enroute to reduce the precipitation in the car. The rain nearly stopped before attacking the long narrow, stony, rough and slippery section which was preceded



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Tailpiece

So here we are at the tail end of another year, our committee has worked hard throughout the year to put on events which we hope appeal to our members, we know we don't always get it completely right but in general I think we do ok, doing our best to cater for all aspects of motorsport be it on 2,3 or 4 wheels and also putting on events to include our youngest members, always good to see them enjoying themselves, the smiles tell it all.

The next newsletter will be at the start of 2024 and an opportunity where we will be able to do it all again, so on behalf of the committee it's Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

Keep the contributions coming, billjan299@gmail.com