

## April 2024 Newsletter

It might be April but the weather gods still think it's November so if nothing else it's stay in the dry and start the newsletter. It has to be said that your editor is a very worried man, it's four days to go before the Lands End trial and as far as I can see the car is ready, that's just not normal at the lead up to any event there's always the last minute prep, maybe I'm just failing to spot the obvious.

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### *Club AGM Thursday 7<sup>th</sup> March*

The Fox and Grapes kindly gave us the use of their hall for our AGM, the meeting was quite well attended as AGM's go, our Chairman Simon Riddle went through all the usual procedures and once again all the officer vacancies were filled, we even got two new committee members, Adrian Booth after a short spell away has rejoined and new man Andy Beveridge has joined as our new Motorcycle representative so we have a pretty full house, at a time when some clubs are struggling we are extremely lucky to have such a large and active committee. The Treasurer's report confirmed we we're still solvent, although as the treasurer was on holiday on a nice sunny foreign getaway we're not sure how long for. Andy and Lorraine Rippon reported that club Regalia was doing well and it was noted our Beany hats can often be spotted on various other club events.

Following the AGM we had our usual committee meeting, Andrew and Lorraine Rippon were thanked for procuring the new club gazebo which looks very smart with the club logo emblazoned upon it, and somewhere to stand at signing on when the Cornish liquid sunshine is doing its best to thwart our efforts. The club has committed itself in attending the 40<sup>th</sup> Launceston Steam Rally again this year, if anyone is able to spare a day and help out on the stand we would be very grateful, that way we can create a rota rather than putting too much pressure on a few committee members to run it.

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### ***From our Chairman***

I'm led to believe it's supposed to be spring?! I think it has rained every minute of daylight today, hopefully it's the clouds getting rid of it all ahead of the 100th Lands End Trial over the Easter weekend. Plenty of club and committee members will be involved either officiating or competing, good luck to all. The clubs 'official' section is Crackington but we will also have members present at various other points - look out for the maroon beanies!

Early in the month we held the popular Launceston Trial in Lew and Eastcott Woods, a strong entry

and challenging ground conditions for all but luckily overhead was dry in the main. A good mixture of newcomers, juniors, seasoned trailers and some long distance entrants. The catering wagon did a roaring trade boosted by a gathering of a group riding by, by chance on bicycles who seized the opportunity to refuel too! It seemed the day was very well received and we managed to get all packed away in daylight. Also, the club gazebo was present and looked very smart. Thanks to all that helped make the event a success and well done to all those that gained an award.

The AGM followed, nothing too major to report, the majority continuing in post with Andy Beveridge and Adrian Booth welcomed and both joining/rejoining the committee with Andy also taking over the role of motorcycle secretary. With that in mind, we are seriously looking into running a multi venue classic trial for motorcycles covering a small amount of road mileage, if we can drum up the interest and a suitable date.

All for now.  
Simon R

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### ***Launceston Trial Sunday 3<sup>rd</sup> March***

Once again we thank the Newman family for their kind permission for the club to hold the trial in what can be best described as a huge expanse of woods and tracks which are a "triallers" delight. We had entry of some 64 vehicles the owners of which all competing to see who could collect the most mud, and in the case of the bikers maybe even stay upright. (several failed in this).

### ***Motorcycle Awards***

Alan and Patrick Keat won the Newman Cup,

Matt Tilley won the Cycle Bowl

William

Pixley won a Class award, James Stephens 1<sup>st</sup> class award, Stephen James won a 1<sup>st</sup> Class award, Simon Tilley 2<sup>nd</sup> class award, John Jago 3<sup>rd</sup> class award. Callum Torres Novice award, Zak Ruby won the Junior class. Oliver Jay Trial Bike class.

### ***Car Awards***

Dean Vowden & Paul Jones won The Fulford Cup,

John Moores & Alan Ede won the Class award, Roger Ashby & Sian Davis also won a Class Award, Ryan Tonkin/ Claire & Charlie Tonkin won a 1<sup>st</sup> Class award, Dave Ball & Ed Wagner won a Class award, Dan Keat & Mitchell Keat won a 1<sup>st</sup> Class award.



Photos of Launceston Trial Woodyard Mayhem





Showing off the new Club Gazebo

Once again Mr Oates has been out and about.

## **Torbay Trial**    *Sunday 17<sup>th</sup> March 2024*

The night before the trial, I trekked up to Cullompton for the ACTC evening bash celebrating 40 years of their championship and presentations to those lucky enough to have done well throughout the 2023 year. A cracking evening's company and entertainment with our club unlucky not to win the best Trial of the year (Tamar Trial). It was deservedly won by Minehead with the Exmoor Clouds which I had thoroughly enjoyed at the beginning of September 2023. The biggest win of the night was **Jack Selwood** (the little whippersnapper) **2023 ACTC champion** and youngest ever to date, who deservedly scraped through on the last trial of the season, but boy wasn't it tight! I was also lucky enough to be called to the front to unexpectedly receive the Dellow Trophy and the Bennett Engineering Cup. Both times I sped to the front in case they realised their mistake and gave them to someone else. It then dawned on me that I had legitimately won them both after all! As I went to sit down there was also a box on my seat with a lovely glass bowl from ASWMC for 2<sup>nd</sup> place in Classic Trials for 2023. Wow, quite a night for me to then go back home around 1.00am and up again around 6.00am to feed the dog and take him for a walk

before loading the car on a trailer and off to Exbourne for 7.30am with Steve Moir as wingman for the day's entertainment.

We unloaded down the road from the start as it was very congested at the Exeter Court Hotel and queued for the scrutineering which we passed with no issues. We had been advised the previous day about a few amendments to the route (thanks Keith) and modified the instructions. As we parked up, John Cox parked next to us in his fresh to trialling purple Lotus Elan. Nicely prepared and ably navigated by Dee Champion again. Unfortunately the duo only managed a 3 on the first section before having to retire for the day. The first 3 sections in the woods at the top of Telegraph Hill were tough with several big rocks hidden until we hit them. All the cars (except JohnC) seemed to survive the initial baptism of fire and worked their way onward to the two **Coombehead** sections. Approached through a slurry of mud which no one seemed keen to get out and do tyre pressures, we had 4 or 5 cars at a time let through to the start where it was safe to put your feet outside the car! We watched Joe & Paige Browning fire up **Coombehead Creek** to the restart and off to clear the section. Clearly a Blue Baja Bug with a Subaru engine in the back with clanking metal weights is the way to go☺☺ Challenge on and off we went to do the same but not quite with the same style that they managed (definitely no clanking metal). The next section was mud and ruts, so just put your foot to the metal (glass fibre really) and go for it, dropping a point on the Baja.

On to **Nicks Nip** and **Gale Gorse** where I dropped a further 3 points when I hit a hole that stopped us on a sixpence. Off towards Ilsington where we watched the Baja attempt **Penhale Climb** to a 6 which resulted with 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> gear being lost. So so disappointed for them as they were romping clear of the rest of class 7 and had to retire back to Stroud. My attempt at the hill was pathetic at best with the weight in the back virtually making it impossible to follow the course and ending with a 7. Simms followed and I planned to ease off the restart, find the grip and off up the hill. I should have powered off the line to then 'feel' the grip, but only managed a 6 after making the wrong choice. Over the top of the hill and down to **Tiple** where we had another restart off the Red Boards. A good position helped us clear the restart and drive on to **Narracombe** for another clear. From the top we drove on towards Bovey Tracey where we found a garage with sandwiches, drink and maybe a few mini eggs!

Refreshed, we followed the route through a couple of byways (have been sections in the past) and into **Heckland Farm** for the special timed test through and around some wrapped bales. Last years ACTC champion, Jack Selwood & Abbie Jeffery managed the fastest time of the course with 19.47 sec with me way behind on 22.72. Once completed we travelled over the hill towards Fingle Glen to **Kingswell Lane** and a queue of class 8 cars waiting to be the next victim. Less than half of the class 8 cars managed to clear the lane so I decided to put my tyre pressures up to 30psi in an attempt to gain ground clearance. It worked a bit but not enough to clear the last marker, so we reversed back down the yellow clay ruts to howls of laughter, so I reminded them all that they now had to have a go – Ha Ha. Matt Facey in his Class 3 praying mantis BMW was the only one to get through the brickworks clay. Tyre pressures were dropped for the penultimate section and cleared with a restart. Up into the farm yard where we were met with 6 – 8 inches of slurry and mud between some of the cattle sheds.

A special little section had been crafted at the end of one shed out of a spoil heap of soily clay. If it was completed successfully you exited under the arm of a swing shovel. We didn't

quite make the exit but grabbed 3 points to finish with and another Class 7 win. Considering the weather conditions we have had, it's amazing how well the trial went. A few hold ups, but only to be expected. The smiles on everyone's faces told the story of what a great day's trialling we had all had. There were a few mileage irregularities but generally the instructions were great. Another year there is little chance we will encounter the same conditions again but great memories of this year will last a long time. As Max Boyce would say – "I was there".

As soon as I got home the pressure washer was on overtime getting all the clay out of places I didn't know existed before it all set like concrete. It took the best part of an hour including washing off the drive. Since the trial I have removed all the weight from the back of the car to regain more direct steering in the car. I had taken about 15Kg out after lending the car out on the Launceston Trial as I thought it might help on the Torbay Trial but there were still places that I couldn't control the cars direction properly. Any suggestions anyone?

Simon Oates

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## New Regalia

I mentioned earlier regalia sales, and that since Andrew and Lorraine had taken it on it has certainly increased and now we can reveal the latest brainwave from the Rippon "think tank". To be honest I think Lorraine needs to be credited with this new addition , when she puts her mind to it she can be quite creative.

Prices have not yet been finalised for either the ladies or men's garments and hopefully I can bring you the full expos'e next month, one thing is for sure this is a real first for the club, and probably any other clubs for that matter, personally I think these will sell well. Well done Lorraine.



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## Tailpiece

As we are all aware Simon Oates has made his mark on the trialling circuit with the little Liege but I'm not completely convinced his next motorsport aspirations are going quite to plan. Rumour has it he wants to have a go at Sprinting & Hillclimbing with the liege, yes joining the speedy brigade. He was told he needs to fit some sort of aerofoil to improve the car's aerodynamics and cut down wind resistance, that's sensible advice but I think he's missed the point slightly, most race cars have these units fitted to the rear of the car not the front as seen here, secondly if the device is definitely to be fitted to the front shouldn't it be on wheels rather than "skids" ?

Ok so it's early days and probably as with all plans they will be modified but perhaps someone out there with a bit of experience of the sport could have a friendly word with him, save him the embarrassment.



All for this month folks, please keep the contributions coming [billjan299@gmail.com](mailto:billjan299@gmail.com)