

Manchester 17 Fisher trial held Sunday 9th January 2011 - report

A lucky break in the weather allowed Sunday's Manchester 17 MCC Fisher trial to go ahead as planned. Riders tackled two laps of 20 sections per lap centred on the famous Hawks Nest area in the White Peak area of Derbyshire.

The trial, traditionally the first round of the Cheshire Centre championship had to be postponed because of snow to March in 2010 and the recent arctic conditions around this area near Buxton foretold a similar fate for this year. However, luck was on the club's side and the event went ahead as planned in near perfect conditions which even included some rare sunshine.

As well as being the first round of the Cheshire Centre trials championship the Manchester 17 Fisher trial was also the first round of 2011 Edgar Series. Now in its 3rd year the Edgar trophy and prize money is awarded to the rider with the best overall performance in the four road trials run by the Manchester 17 during the year.

For a centre trial the entry list was what you would expect for a National. A high class entry of 98 riders tackled three routes - hard route, 50/50 route and clubman route. This was the first time the trial had been run with three routes and the new 50/50 route proved unexpectedly the most popular choice.

On all three routes the winner's score was way ahead of the rest of the entry. In the experts class Dan Thorpe stamped his authority with a loss of only 6 marks on the hard route. An exceptional ride made up of six separate steadying dabs. However second place was a very closely fought battle with three riders all tying on 19 marks lost Chris Pearson, Craig Robinson and Dan Farrer, the tie between Chris and Craig having to be decided on most ones.

In the new 50/50 class the run-away winner was Northamptonshire visitor Richard Allen with Katy Sunter finishing second just ahead of John Cowley and Buxton's 'Factory' Kev Hipwell.

The clubman's route again had an emphatic winner: - Rob Bowyer on his pre 65 Triumph Twin. This bike must be the most unwieldy and hard to ride bike around, just think what he could achieve on a modern bike. Second was now trials convert ex motocross World champion Jamie Dobb who has made a really good transition from super speed to super slow, Jamie being followed closely by Steve Robinson and Paul Millhouse.

As with all Manchester 17 trials, organisation is very much a cooperative group effort with lots of people involved of which seven were section markers. This led to a variety of sections of varying severity. For spectator appeal section thirteen observed by the redoubtable Jeff Robinson had to take first prize - a section for only the brave, a flat-out climb with no run up and much pain if failed. No cleans were recorded on the easier route with all except for Tony Cowley's two settling for three, or in the majority of cases five. However it did prove a very popular spot for photography and spectators. Overheard from a spectator not involved in trials was "they must all be complexly mad". However the hard route made the easier route look sort of easy - the impossible happened with a double clean from winner Dan Thorpe, nearly matched with a one and clean from Dan Farrer and two ones from 2nd place man Chris Pearson.

So the sun came out, there were very few retirements, no one was injured, the trial finished before it went dark, nobody suffered severe frost bite and the new 50/50 route, actually a new requirement for 2011 for Cheshire championship rounds proved the most popular route..