

Manchester 17 Fisher Trial held Sunday 11th January - report

Road trials must be getting more popular because 120 riders turned up for the Manchester 17 Cheshire Centre Fisher Trial on Sunday, only a few years ago you were considered fortunate to attract 50 riders for such a road event. Being Manchester 17's first trial of the year it traditionally incorporates round one of the Cheshire Centre Trials championship, this year was no exception but in addition this year it also incorporates round 1 of 4 of the newly inaugurated Edgar Trials Series for Manchester 17 Road trials.

Held around the village of Quanford Near Buxton, England highest village and incorporating the famous Hawks Nest sections, Sunday's trial consisted of two laps of 20 sections of rock, rock in mud, rocks in streams, rocks up hills but in all cases, all sections having the 'must have feature' of rocks. As would be expected from being held around England's highest village the weather was both cold, wet and windy but fortunately the ice and snow of the previous two weeks was thawing making for some interesting sections with no grip followed by grip.

As the sections were set out the previous day when the ground was frozen solid the section marking team expected higher scores but this was not to be, as double cleans were recorded on both the harder and the easier routes, Dan Thorpe being the winner with zero on the hard route followed closely by Yorkshire near neighbour Dan Farrer on two and rising Buxton teenage superstar Craig Robinson on five.

On the easier route Factory Kev Hipwell on his immaculate 'Gas Gas special 225 Buzz box' was Mr Zero followed by Paddy Edwards on six followed by a tie decided by most cleans between Midlander Paul Jepson and local 'oldie' John Hulme on seven.

Much controversy seems to have been caused by the new ruling of no penalty for being stationary. The new ruling [being applied at this trial] was the most talked about topic at the event with strong opinions both for and against but probably most opinions originating from the style of riding each competitor feels comfortable with! However one thing was generally agreed upon and that was the new rules lead to an increasing in queuing which is never popular. Further discussion then took place as to whether the zero scores were due to the thawing conditions or the use of the new marking system.

There was no particular section extracting marks more than others, so it was really down to the successful riders being the ones making the fewest mistakes, though section 19 would certainly get the vote for the most interesting for spectators with its icy run up causing some spectacular crashes especially for the clubmen.

So all in all a successful day with an entry more usual for a National than a centre trial and even though the winners scores were zero there were plenty of riders with high scores so hopefully the majority were happy.

However most important a special thanks to the twenty observers whom gamely agreed to observe, not the most popular activity in early January at a high altitude..

Hard route results 1 - 15

DAN THORPE 0
DAN FARRER 2
CRAIG ROBINSON 5
JACK THOMPSON 9
RICHARD TIMPERLEY 10
JOSH WOODS 15
MIKE ROBERTS 16
MILES JONES 17
GAVIN BLACK 20
MARK REYNOLDS 26

JASON TURNER 28
GRANT MORRIS 35
PHIL HOUGHTON 38
MICK BOAM 40
DARREN WASLEY 43

Easier route results 1 - 15

FACTORY KEV 0
PADDY EDWARDS 6
PAUL JEPSON 7
JOHN HULME 7
PETE RUSCOE 8
STEVE MARTIN 10
SCOTT DOMMETT 11
KATY SUNTER 12
DAVE KNAGGS 13
JOHN PETREK 14
ANDY HIPWELL 15
STEVE HITCHCOCK 16
DAVE THORPE 17
LEE BLACK 18
PATRICK PLANT 18