

The First of the Manchester 17 Evening Trials series took place late Saturday afternoon July 31st. Set out in the expectation of heavy rain, which failed to materialise, except for some light drizzle, the sections consequently took far fewer marks from the entry than was expected.

In the wet, the slippery limestone outcrops of the Gautries Farm venue at Sparrowpit, Peak Forest, Derbyshire is a fearsome place with grip at a premium. In this case no rain meant the majority of sections were quite tame.

With a choice of three routes Expert, Clubman and 50/50 the majority of the riders choose the 50/50 route.

On the expert route local boy Mark Reynolds won on two marks lost from current Cheshire Centre champion Mark Atkinson on five. Rising Youth A star Hannah Styles followed on fourteen marks lost.

On the 50/50 route an absolutely flawless performance by over 40 rider Andy Hipwell saw him win this class on zero followed by an irresolvable tie between Andy Shaw and old Henry Rosenthal on five. Following was Adrian Bellis who threw away his chance of second place by losing his way round section seven, which was an up and down over a combination of tree routes and semi slippery limestone. In fact section seven was where the majority of marks were lost on all routes.

The easy route saw a steady ride from Tony Pratt riding with riding number 13 which obviously wasn't unlucky for him, giving him a winning ride on four followed by a rejuvenated Ken Roberts on nine. Ken was really pleased as he has been having a torrid time of late with plenty of crashes and a subsequent loss of confidence. Following Ken was Stoke-on-Trent's Mark Oakley on twelve and local builder Nick Stott on fourteen getting the better of tie with more cleans than Richard Palfreyman.

To summarize the trial was easier than expected, with no retirements, no missed sections and no drama!