

# The MG Motor Club's Kimber Trial

*Report by Peter Jones*

The Kimber Classic Trial is run in the West Country in early May for the intense enjoyment of 40 or so entries (Four Vintage, 14 MMM, 7 T-Types, 3 MGBs, 5 Midgets, a YB and a Dellow). Quite why so few of the more modern cars enter is a mystery, but the most important thing is that there is a Vintage Class and a Vintage Team.

This year the organisers thoughtfully arranged for a brush-wood clearer to go before us (it was some sort of Vauxhall device) and the three 18/80s of Peter Hague, Peter Mace and Peter Jones formed a team and set off first with great hopes of a successful day with the conditions being dry to the point of rock hard. Being first away is not always an advantage as you tend to get all the new sappy grass, before it has been skidded off for the later classes, as well as all the most rutted conditions, before they have been bludgeoned smooth.

Everything went swimmingly before lunch, cadence braking to avoid damaged transmissions with all the grip under wheel. Clean sheets for the Vintage Team despite some devilish detours put in by the marshals to make it a bit of a challenge. Quite a few of the MMM and a couple of T-Types came to grief on Sugg Lane, famed MCC Classic hill, and others had problems in various ways on the Windmill Hill timed test, reversing back UP a stiff, loose gradient.

Lunch was at a hostelry that sold a most pleasing pint and, at due time we peered out to find it pouring with rain. It was this, rather than the beer, that caused some consternation at Hellís Ladder. (Later cars had a relatively clear run at a fast drying hill) but for Peter Hague and I things proved a bit ricky. That is to say we failed. Another small error that both I and Peter Mace made was forgetting to stop at the end of Alhamís Splash special test! Hill 11, Chester Blade, caught most out because of a very slippery detour. Possibly the best hill of the day was the last one 'Gerald's Folly' which twisted and turned up a steep field, up round trees and back down again only to leap skyward once more for the finish. Alas the very slippery grass (and my missing a gate) meant that the Vintage entry was unable to perform to the standard of many others but we did have a whale of a time trying. Peter Mace and I scored an 8 whereas the seemingly unstoppable Peter Hague stormed his way to a well deserved 3.

Bill Bennett J2, Julian White TC, Brian Osborne MGB and Alan Scott Midget all scored a magnificent 0 over the whole trial, even the YB only came to grief on the last hill at no. 6, (the worst score overall was 34 in a MMM) so the Quick Sixes with 26, 20 and 15 did tolerably well.

One would hardly have expected to win the Team Prize but then, it's not the winning but the taking part that counts.