

(Results from Triple - Issue 46 - January 1990)

testing trial

THE SOCIABLE TESTING TRIAL

Pictures and story by Alan Foster

The Club's latest event in the calendar celebrated its third birthday on 10th September in conditions that at first felt like the beginning of winter. But the early spits of rain did little to reduce traction on the now familiar downland site at Mere, conveniently beside the A303. An excellent 10 starters on 3 wheels set the scene for an enjoyable day when over 80 drivers and riders can mingle, swap experiences and jokes and improve their understanding of the other's sport.

Seven sets of bollards were laid out on the slopes, all based on the variety of Special Tests we meet three times a year on the Club's reliability trials. To underline the fact that this is a trial and not an autotest, penalties for hitting markers or simply getting it wrong were made crippling this year - speed without accuracy achieved little. In one of our trials of course, an error on a special test is equivalent to a fail on an observed section, and can cost a competitor a Triple, as I know!

The organising team also had another trick up its corporate sleeve this year, in the form of an index (whatever next!), based on last year's event, to be applied to class winners in order to prevent the overall award automatically going to a solo rider. It worked. Neil Brown, ably passengered by father Arthur, not only rode their Wasp to a 50 second advantage over Peter Vaughan on the Pouncey Ajay, but also well clear of everyone else on corrected time.

Amongst the solos, competition was close, with Dave Mason, Suzuki TS, taking 3 seconds over Ian Godden, Yamaha XT, displacing the Honda XR of Maurice Arden to 3rd place this year. The best performance on standard tyres went to Ken Hopkins on his Can Am.

The tin top car class is just the place for a well driven Imp or big VW, but it would have been upset this year by the rapidly driven Escort of Andy Webb, had one 'astride' not gone wrong. He thus had to settle for splitting the Cornish Beetles of Derrick and Colin Jose in first and third places.

The ever popular open car class had a magnificent entry ranging from a GN and the elegant Riley Tourer to Midgets, Marlins and Trolls, not to mention the splendid 6 litre Allard J2X of Sue Halkyard. The man to beat, however, was Graham Greenwell, normally seen in older machinery, but this time using a 2 litre 6 cylinder Marlin to great effect. Not even the beautifully quiet 3.5 V8 model of Terry Coventry could get on even terms. Previous winner John Hornby-Smith with a mere 1172cc of Cannon was third.

Despite the opportunity for 25 or more mixed teams, only 8 entered, but that included an all ladies team, two of whom were on solos. Honours, or perhaps 'score' went to 'The Bashers', who must remain nameless, a mere half a second ahead of Ann Templeton, Richard Dawe and Stephen Jackson.

The successful organising team of John Hayes and Teresa, John and Jenny West, Dick Peachey, Alan Low, Pat Worsfold and others, ably managed by John Aley will be back same time, same place next year. Our thanks to them. If you were not there this year as competitor or marshal, it is a 'must' for 1990.