

Tullynasoo Mountain Trial Sat 22nd Feb 2014 CoC S Gracey

By Clive Gracey

A new site found by Gracey Snr which was not hard to do as it is on his doorstep, being within half a mile of the family home. Simon had spent the previous Saturday setting up 5 sections which due to the nature of the landscape were spread over a large area at a guess some 20 acres, plenty of fuel was going to be needed.

The weather has been as with the mainland terrible, rain and more rain however the forecast for Sat was good and we escaped dry!

12 drivers made the journey down to The Mourne, parking was courtesy of neighbouring farmer William McCready as the road up to the site is single track with no room to park.

Signing on and scrutineering finished off we all set up the Drumlee Road

Sign posts had been set up to guide drivers to the Hills most had no difficulty finding the way however some had! The distance between Hills was really not a big problem what was a problem was a lack of passengers which as we self marshal slowed the whole event down so much so that only 3 rounds were possible.

Missing on the day were John Keatley and Gerard Currid both off to compete in an event to commemorate Paddy Hopkirk's 1964 win of The Monte Carlo rally, this was being held at the Titanic Centre in Belfast. However driving for the first time in a couple of years was the Club Chairman, how would he perform at the wheel of the family's Crossle, and would his result affect another competitor we would have to wait and see.

At the end of lap 1 scores were low, Andrew McKinney and Uncle Mervyn were on 1 lost, John McKinney and Brian Edgar driving his new Hamilton shared 3's with Gracey Snr. In Class B Geoff McKay was leading on 16. Where was current Class A Champion Trevor Aston well he was on 6 ahead of his Thursday Club Chairman who had lost 10. It pays to walk the Hill before making a climb and it's no good blaming your passenger when you go the wrong way-that 10 should have been a 1!

Harry Barr broke his steering, however Brian Edgar had a replacement part in his van which Harry got, fitted and rejoined the fray. This was the only mechanical difficulty encountered during the event.

Lap 2 and John McKinney had the bit between his teeth for 1 lost and a total of 4 to father Mervyn's 5, Brian Edgar was on 7 as was Andrew McKinney and Chairman Gracey shared 8's with Champion Aston.

What about the Hills well Hill 1 ended in a very wet climb only cleaned once by the best drivers and that on the first lap. Hill 2 cleaned all day by the top men however the Chairman turned to early at the 6 marker and ran it down, 'not used to the Crossle lock'' was the excuse, Car number 3 just went the wrong way and blaming Reece Armstrong simply will not do. Hill 3 a nice trickle which if done correctly got you a clear, Gracey Snr made the error of trickling too slowly on his first attempt and lifted a 2, he did not repeat this mistake. Hill 4 had a difficult start at least it had on round's 2 and 3 followed by a tight middle section and a very difficult finish this climb was only cleaned on lap 1 by Brian Edgar, by round 2 John McKinney had got it as did Andrew McKinney on the final lap. Hill 5 a tight start and a steep climb to the finish, slow careful 1st gear stuff any attempt at blasting ended in tears.

The size of the site plus passenger problems led CoC Simon Gracey to curtail the event to 3 rounds and this was the correct decision, Simon had made numerous changes during the trial and he was rewarded for his work by a clear winner emerging from a low scoring event. In Class B Geoff McKay came out on top with 55 lost to Harry Barr's 84, Michael McBratney who has rebuilt his Sherpa and now has it going well only just failed to get Harry with 89.

In Class A John McKinney had the time of his life coming home on 8 lost and a clear lead over number 2 Brian Edgar on 11, Andrew McKinney got home on 14 with Uncle Mervyn on 16 followed by Trevor Aston on 20 and The Chairman on 22, so that was that the Chairman had enjoyed his day at the wheel in company with Brian Edgar and Peter Flack and Alan Flack is just the passenger he needed. John McKinney had a superb drive, 8 in the conditions prevailing took some doing when the conditions on Hills 1 and 4 on the last lap are taken in to consideration.

Class A 1 st John McKinney	8
2 nd Brian Edgar	11
3 rd Andrew McKinney	14
Class B 1st Geoff McKay	55
2 nd Harry Barr	84
3 rd Michael McBratney	89

