

## Simms Farm Trial Sat 26<sup>th</sup> April CoC T McKinney

By Clive Gracey

This site between Poyntzpass and Mounthorris was found a few years ago by Peter Flack, if wet it can be really tough but on Saturday it was bone dry so CoC Tom McKinney had no option other than to go 'tight' and tight it was. 5 Hills had been laid out, all had variations on past set ups with the exception of Hill 5 which was new to all.

Ten cars arrived to do battle, among the absentees Simon Gracey asleep as he is doing a night shift rota at work, Gerard Currid possibly on Rally duty somewhere and John Keatley who has really missed this season with a back problem, also missing was David Webster off to the Costa del Sol possibly on secret business. Reece Armstrong was driving the CoC's car and having just on the previous Tuesday gained his driving license surprised everybody with a super performance and the win in Class C. Class C has been Gerard's territory this season but next if Reece gets the Concord things could be different.

Andrew McKinney was in that lovely position of being unbeatable for the Clubs Class A Championship so would enjoy a stress free afternoon, in Class B Harry Barr would nearly need to breakdown and Geoff McKay to win for Geoff to take the Class B win so there was pressure in that camp.

Dry, sun shining and calm, perfect weather indeed and a sort of 'end of term' feeling in the paddock as CoC Tom McKinney gave instruction as to tyre pressures-7lbs, the Chairman to check as has been happening, number of laps - 4 and finally the venue in Tandragee where the results would be given.

Hill 1 a steep grassy climb, tight with a step at the 3 post which caught many out.

Hill 2 close to the fields hedge, starting down beside a small stream and going ever upwards but oh so tight-the 9 here caught out the unwary.

Hill 3 a new version of an old hill with a steep rough section around the 4 mark only cleaned by 4 cars in the first lap.

Hill 4 in its normal position but much tighter than in the past.

Hill 5 a new climb with few clears in the 1<sup>st</sup> 2 laps.

Ground conditions were against the CoC, any sort of reasonable 4x4 could have driven over most of the site with the exception of Hills 3 and 5 so tight and twisty it had to be, the CoC had done a good job given the conditions.

By the end of lap 1 Brian Edgar this time using his Hamilton was in pole on 3 lost to Trevor Astons 7 and Mervyn McKinney's 9. In Class B Harry Barr was on 14 to Geoff McKay's 18, Reece Armstrong led C on 24.

Round 2 saw no real change to this Brian still had the lead on a total of 10 lost to Mervyn's 15 and in B Harry was on 21 with Geoff on 24.

Round 3 saw changes, Brian still held the lead but Mervyn McKinney had closed the gap to 1 point, Harry and Geoff still were separated by 3. What of Champion Andrew McKinney well just cruising along on 27 lost in 6<sup>th</sup> place, no pressure there. Master Armstrong had competing in his 1<sup>st</sup> event driven brilliantly and was by the end of round 3 on 68 and holding 9<sup>th</sup> position overall.

Round 4 and Mervyn McKinney did what he can do brilliantly when the opportunity presents itself-a lap on only 1 lost, this when Brian lost 3 gave Mervyn the win, his 3<sup>rd</sup> this season, more than any other Class A competitor.

In Class B Harry Barr won by a comfortable 19 points from Geoff McKay who had an 8 on Hill 2 when his normal trickle came to an abrupt halt and he compounded this error with 5 on Hill 4.

So that was that, Reece Armstrong had on his first ever trial driven well finishing on 91 and in overall 9<sup>th</sup> position but importantly 1<sup>st</sup> in Class C so well done him, like Peter Flack if he drives more often he will be a winner.

Anything odd to report well no all was sweetness and light, 'stress free day boss 'said Trevor, well yes it was – had the Costa's played a part?

Class A 1 <sup>st</sup>	Mervyn McKinney	19 lost
2 <sup>nd</sup>	Brian Edgar	20
3 <sup>rd</sup>	John McKinney	23

	4 <sup>th</sup>	Trevor Aston	24
Class B	1 <sup>st</sup>	Harry Barr	27
	2 <sup>nd</sup>	Geoff McKay	46
	3 <sup>rd</sup>	Michael Mc Bratney	84
Class C	1 <sup>st</sup>	Reece Armstrong	91