

Simms Farm Trial Sat 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015 CoC Tom McKinney

By Clive Gracey

Clerk of Course Tom McKinney was worried about this event it would be the Championship decider for the Club and the venue given the recent weather would be oh so dry, help was at hand in the shape of Trevor Aston and his chain saw, bushes were cut new track discovered and at section 2 wet ground in fact very wet ground was found. Going in to this the last round of the STCC's Championship the situation was-Simon Gracey had a lead of 1 point over Brian Edgar with Andrew McKinney next in third place, Harry Barr had Class B sown up with a safe lead. Having a 1 point lead against Brian Edgar was not a relaxing position to be in and in 2 recent mid season events Simon had lost his concentration and poled 2 poor results so nothing could be taken for granted. The Gracey Crossle had recently been back at the Rory's Wood factory to have a Crossle 4 star differential fitted and at the last event at Graceys wood in Tandragee had performed well Simon coming 3<sup>rd</sup>, he needed to do better here.

Tom McKinney had set out 4 Hills to be done 5 times. Hill 1 was on the steepest slope, tight as the ground was here bone dry and ended on a sharp right turn with a very steep climb to the finish. Hill 2 again a dry start but from the 5 marker to the finish very wet and slippery. Hill 3 at the far end of the site had an easy start but a tough finish again finding slippery ground. Hill 4 was all on dry ground but had subtle built in difficulties like a 10 post which if one was at all careless could be hit-and was !.

So after receiving starting orders from the CoC and wishing him and the Chairman happy birthday (who is older-answers in a sealed envelope at the prizegiving) off all went.

Peter McKinney was over on a visit and double driving with brother John and Trevor Aston was out for the 1<sup>st</sup> time in months which was great to see.

By the end of round 1 of 5 John McKinney had the lead on zero with Simon Gracey and Harry Barr behind on 1 lost Brian Edgar had caught the 4 marker on Hill 1 pushing his score to 6, Reece Armstrong driving Tom McKinney's Concord for only the 3<sup>rd</sup> time lost 11 in this round but better things were coming his way, he had of course the lead in Class C.

Round 2 and Simon levelled his score with John to 3 lost in total. Andrew McKinney scored 2 for a total of 4 and Peter McKinney was on 8 to father Mervyns 10. Driving well considering he has this season done very little placed Trevor Aston on 7 lost and at this stage 4<sup>th</sup> place. Brian Edgar was not on form with 11 lost. In Class B Michael McBratney was close to leader Harry Barr with a score of 8 to Harrys 6 and in Class C Reece Armstrong was on 18.

Round 3 and a super 4<sup>th</sup> gear 'red button' climb on hill 2 gave Simon Gracey a clean and a 2 point advantage, Mervyn McKinney had the next best score on this Hill with a 2 as had Trevor Aston. A 10 here finished Brian Edgars chances when his Hamilton refused to answer

the tiller. John McKinney held on to second place with a score of 6 to Simons 3, in round 4 Simon slipped and John now was within 1 point of tying on 9 to Simons 8 with one round to go. In Class B Harry Barr was on 14 and in C Reece Armstrong was on 32

And so into round 5 again power played a major part with his Kintec 16 valve V Tec Honda giving Simon a 1 point advantage over John McKinney on Hill 2, Peter McKinney normally Crossle mounted slipped in to 3 place with a total of 18 to brother John's 12 and Simons 10, Andrew McKinney suffered a brain fade on Hill 2 going the wrong way collecting a 7 and ended on 20 instead on a possible 13, Trevor Aston came in on 23 to Mervyns 24 and Harry Barr won Class B on 28. Reece Armstrong won C on 38 and was in 9<sup>th</sup> place out of 14 - this on his 3<sup>rd</sup> drive!

So that was that a tough day with Simon doing the business taking the Clubs Class A Championship with a good win over John McKinney. The prospect of a tough battle with Brian Edgar had receded as Brian had struggled with his car all day. Harry Barr had won Class B by an 11 point margin and will find himself in Class A next season. Geoff McKay had a good day till his gear lever came off in his hand and Alan Mackay suffered fuel starvation problems and was forced to stop.

#### Results

1<sup>st</sup> Class A Simon Gracey -- Crossle 10

2<sup>nd</sup> John McKinney -- Kincord 12

3<sup>rd</sup> Peter McKinney -- Kincord 18

4<sup>th</sup> Andrew McKinney -- Concord 20

5<sup>th</sup> Trevor Aston -- Crossle 23

1<sup>st</sup> Class B Harry Barr -- Crossle 28

2<sup>nd</sup> Michael McBratney -- Sherpa 39

1<sup>st</sup> Class C Reece Armstrong -- Concord 38