

STCC

Ferguson's Trial – 27 December 2014

By Harry Barr

This was STCC's traditional post-Christmas trial but not at our more usual venue of Rory's Wood. However, the excellent parking facilities at Norman Fergusons (albeit a sheet of ice on the day!) is always much appreciated and again provided an excellent opportunity to carry out thorough scrutineering. Michael Henderson, ably assisted by Gerard Currid, carried out the 'Butterfield' differential tests in addition to the usual checks.

Five hills were set up on a very wet Boxing Day by CoC Harry Barr so it was no surprise that conditions were going to be wet and slippery. Tyre pressures were set by the CoC at 4,3 and 2psi for classes A, B and C respectively. The hills were all a variation on previous years with the object being to keep the gates quite wide, include at least 2 challenging climbs with safe turning and finishing points at the top hedge where there was generally a flattish carriageway. Hill 1 started with a long diagonal climb to the hedge which could be trickled at the start but was only conquered by a few after round one. The finishing climb was straight forward trickling but only cleaned by Tom McKinney. Hill 2 also started with a relatively short diagonal sprint up to a turning point and after threading between the trees, had a tricky finish at the hedge. A 3 was pretty well guaranteed if you got round the 10 mark. Amazingly, Simon Gracey cleaned this in round four when trickling was a real challenge. Hill 3 had a straightforward opening climb and although it did catch out a few, the real challenge was trying to trickle the finish. The short diagonal climb and sharp turn to the left on Hill 4 proved to be very definitive as the ground conditions deteriorated rapidly so there were lots of 10's and zeros in the early rounds. Hill 5 had a relatively easy lead-in but after descending again the right hand sweep was to prove a challenge in later rounds.

The hills were tweaked throughout the day by the CoC in an effort to give fresh footing but in the end, the conditions were clearly winning. The 'best' possible score on the day for all 20 hills was in fact 18 which proved what was possible. However everyone made mistakes so it was a case of who minimised the damage. In round 1, John McKinney got 25 in comparison to Simon Gracey's 1 and seemingly put himself right out of contention. Geoff McKay was on 22 in Class B and the lone competitor in Class C, Gerard Currid was on 41. David Webster again showed good form in the ex-Trevor Aston car recording 6 clears but still ended up on 103. Peter Frost struggled all day with a sick engine so a bit of work required before the next outing. However in the deteriorating conditions, John McKinney got his act together and had the best scores on rounds 2 and 4 and salvaged 2nd overall on 67. Brian Edgar finished in 3rd on 74 but the overall winner was Simon Gracey and father Clive

who took the win on 53 points with 8 zeros and increasing their lead at the top of the championship table.

In Class B, Michael McBratney and Geoff McKay were keeping a close eye on each other all day (literally) and it was Michael who handled the conditions better in the end and pulled away to win the class comfortably. Gerard Currid showed he is ever improving but was eventually let down by his car sticking in gear. However a Class win and not far off the Class B boys.

Everyone returned to 'Tommy's Tavern' in Sandholes where Trevor and Pamela Turkington kindly provided food, drinks and heat while the results were being compiled by the ever-efficient Andrew McKinney.

S Gracey/C Gracey	Crossle	A	53
J McKinney/L Morrow	Concord	A	67
B Edgar/P Flack	Hamilton	A	74
M McKinney/R McKinney	Kintec	A	75
A McKinney/C Millar	Concord	A	79
T McKinney/ R Armstrong	Concord	A	84
D Webster/E Peyton	Concord	A	103
M/McBratney/P McBratney	Sherpa	B	128
G McKay/A Mackey	SRB	B	147
G Currid/M Henderson	Facksimile	C	157
P Frost/M Henderson	CAP	B	164