

MANCHESTER 17 MCC DEAD EASY TRIAL SUNDAY 11 OCTOBER 2009

REPORT : Roger Townsend

Just when you thought you could rely on the weather forecasters, things went sadly awry last Sunday when Manchester 17 MCC held the last in the series for this year of the popular Dead Easy trials.

When the course plotters laid out the 10 sections it was dry and bright with a forecast of even better things to come the following day. The truth turned out to be just the opposite with strong winds and driving rain over the bleak exposed limestone outcrops and grassy banks of Haslins on the outskirts of Buxton in the Peak District, making the sections very slippery and far more of a challenge than was ever intended. A superb entry of 118 riders turned up for the event with two routes on offer, the intention being before the weather intervened of a very easy course, or a more challenging option. No doubt the all round effects of the weather was a factor in a higher than normal number of retirements but hopefully at the first event of next years series, normal service will be resumed.

Stalwart observers Hilda and Rupert Ellison probably had the most dramatic day. Out on the farthest most point of the course, their section was modified three times after it became practically unrideable and almost threatening as conditions worsened.

To prove the point that this was not a typical Dead Easy there was only one clean ride all day. Alan Critchlow kept his focus and his skill to pilot his little Gasser round the Easy Course to take best over 40 and outright win, a superb ride on the day. Other good rides on this route came from Richard Broome on his twin shock Fantic, and Mark Newman on a very tidy Cub, who both lost 5 marks.

Best overall on the Harder Route was Over 40 rider David Watson whose only marks lost were 2 on the first lap on the Ellison's notorious section 8 before it was modified. Next best was novice rider Andy Downham on 5.

Further down the field there were some high scores returned but this reflects the wide range of abilities these events attract.

The real heroes and heroines on the day were some of the youngsters, like Joseph Horne and Richard Petford on the Hard route, and Lewis Edwards, Jake Machin, the Frost brothers, Quinn Webster, Matthew Swift and Natasha Earnshaw, who kept battling away and completed the course.

Thanks to all involved in putting the event on and especially to the hardy observers for braving the elements on the day. You really were appreciated.

Well, that's it for this year as far as the Dead Easy's are concerned. This popular series will commence again in February next year. Thank you to all who have supported the series and we hope to see you again next year.

RESULTS

HARD ROUTE

NOVICE : Andy Downham 5, Will Tyler 14, Carl Critchlow 31, Mike Hammond 31,

O/40 : David Watson 2, Neil Marsh 14, Harvey Nixon 18,

T/SHOCK : Andrew Yates 16, Bert White 20, Robert Mycock 25, Arthur Austin 25,

YOUTH A : Joseph Horne 53

YOUTH B : Richard Petford 127

YOUTH C : Matthew Swift 40,

EASY ROUTE

NOVICE : Stephen Elliott 7, Martin Vennard 47,

O/40 : Alan Critchlow clean, Phil Granby 8, Nigel Rigg 21,

T/SHOCK :Richard Broome 5,

PRE 65 : Mark Newman 5,

YOUTH A : Lewis Edwards 34, Natasha Earnshaw 90,

YOUTH B : Adam Swift 6, Dan Watson 19,

YOUTH C : Jake Machin 22,

YOUTH D : James Frost 33, Jordan Frost 49,