

Cheltenham Motor Club Trial Awards

Only four competitors retained clean sheets in the Cheltenham Motor Club's Spring Trial, which took place on Saturday over a severe but sporting course in the Guiting-Winchcombe-Cleeve area.

Twenty-one competitors faced Mc Aldouse, the starter, at the Andoversford Hotel, the only nonstarter being Ralph Dee, who experienced machine trouble while travelling to the start. Promptly at 2.30 the first man departed, the rest of the competitors leaving at minute intervals.

The first observed section (Pinsdown) caused very little trouble to the majority of competitors, and few marks were lost there, but any rejoicing on the part of riders was soon dispelled when the next section was reached.

Known as Castlet, this choice obstacle proved the "Water" too of 75 per cent. of the entry, only three motor-cycles and three cars negotiating the section without losing marks. Castlet is reached via a muddy down gradient. Competitors are then required to ford a deep stream, and proceed to climb the opposite bank, composed of thick black mud.

After many riders had found the stream and subsequent mud too much for them H. Major battled his way through without stopping thus showing that it was possible. Spurred by his effort, C. Frye and Chris Stagg further demonstrated the practicability of this scheme.

That an exhaust system full of water did not help matters was evident, and many more discovered the weak spots in their ignition systems. Many motor-cyclists were still abstracting water from carburettors, magnets, and even cylinders when the first car arrived. These were moved out of the way and the "All clear" signal given.

P. G. Mills, in his Raleigh "Seven," gave one look at the water, took a deep breath, and dived straight in, and although the other side of the stream was reached with safety the mud was too much, and there the crew was stranded until help arrived.

In all, three cars managed to plough their way through the stream and bog without stopping, these drivers being Mrs. S. H. Cole, Messrs. J. Orgee and D. Lee, all of whom were piloting M.G. cars.

The route then led to Guiting Mill Hill, which was used for a stop and restart test.

This did not catch many drivers, although P. G. Mills found a little of Castlet water in his carburettor checked acceleration to a marked degree, and he thus lost three marks for exceeding the allotted 10 seconds for this test. The next hill reached was Old Swan-ey, where a brake test was held to decide the class winners in case of a tie, also at the observed section through two hairpin bends.

Few marks were lost in the observed section, but Chris Stagg was unfortunate in having to drop a foot on the bend, thus spoiling his "clean sheet."

Much excitement, and later amusement, was caused by H. F. Martin's efforts to turn the bend. He finally succeeded in turning his Morgan completely over, fortunately without even so much as scratching himself or his passenger. Relieved officials saw him depart to gain the course lower down.

Upstart-lane was in favourable condition so far as competitors were concerned, only one losing marks here, and so on to Mill-lane. The first four riders ended in failure, but after that many succeeded in crossing the rocks and leaf-mould wet feet on rocks.

Of the cars, P. G. Mills and E. W. Demer found that standard tyres do not aid wheel-grip when the going is deep leaf-mould, both receiving assistance from the large crowd present. The rest of the car entry managed the climb without mishap, and so through Wittington to the Hotel at Andoversford Hotel, where tea awaited tired competitors.

Throughout this grueling trial there were only two retirements, the unfortunate ones being E. Wigzell, who damaged his forks on Mill-lane, and H. F. Martin, whose Morgan failed to reach the finish. Everybody taking part enjoyed themselves to the full, and all officials and marshals carried out their many exacting duties with good-humoured persistence. Mr. H. P. Baughan taking the role of Western Centre steward.

Provisional results are as follow:—

Motor-cycles.—P.G.V.'s Radio Cup and warrant; H. Major (486 Norton). First-class awards: C. Frye (497 Ariel), Chris Stagg (348 Bagnani), H. Bagg (586 Dodge).

Cars.—Phoenix Cup: J. Orgee (816 M.G.). First-class: Mrs. S. H. Cole.

Novice award: F. J. Kessell (340 Lewis). H. Major, C. Frye, J. Orgee, and Mrs. S. H. Cole all returned clean sheets, the winners being decided by the signs of wear in the brake test.