

# CLASSICAL GAS

April 2004

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

## Ian Davis wins March Hare



Rain, Snow, Sunshine, Falcon had it all on Murray's March Hare. At one time it looked as if a Trojan would win. In the end it was Ian Davis in his VW Buggy, but only just as Ian's victory was decided on special test times over Elizabeth Tucker-Peake in her Peugeot 205 Gti

*Above – Ian Davis in determined style on his way to cleaning John Barber 1 at Kensworth, one of the few crews to reach the summit and the hill that decided the trial.*

*Below – Elizabeth Tucker-Peake was equal to Ian on the hills but not as fast on the special tests.*

### The Start

THERE WERE 40 CREWS ENTERED BUT WITH RICHARD DAWE (MIDGET) AND Mark Rosten-Edwards (Escort) non-starting 38 gathered at The Watling Street Café, just off Junction nine of the M1, on 7th March. This was John Parsons and Mike Pearson's last event as organisers. Next year they will be handing over to a team led by Arnold Lane so they can have a go themselves.

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Windwhistle Classic Trial—Tim Whellock and his team organised a Single Venue Classic Trial in Bovey Woods on 21st March, giving some competitors their first chance to see Normans Hump and Clinton in daylight! The winner was local man Jason Flay in his Lorcha Special. Falcon's Peter Mountain (pictured left) was the runner up in his Mk1 Dellow.

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**Norton Street Lane** Byway - Long straight climb on loose stones with the left hand rut getting deeper towards the summit, Classes 1&2 have a straight run through, 3 to 8 had a re-start.

WITH POTENTIAL PR PROBLEMS THE FIRST TWO SECTIONS WERE CANCELLED AND Joint Clerk of the Course Mike Pearson was on hand at nearby Norton Street Lane. The section was relatively easy this year, the surface has improved and the ruts were not as deep as last year and Edward Holloway was the only failure in his Sierra.

**Whitehall Lane** Byway - Tree Lined Lane with a very good surface now the council have resurfaced it and removed the fallen trees.

IT WASN'T LONG AGO THAT THIS SECTION WAS TOTALLY IMPASSABLE. THEN ALONG came the council's road gang and now it's probably smoother than the nearby M1! It's so smooth that it's not competitive as an observed section so it was run as a regularity under the eager eye of sponsor Murray MacDonald. It took a bit of mental gymnastics to work out what was required but fortunately most managed it and it didn't affect the major awards!

**Half Moon Lane** Byway - Starts with deep, muddy water. After this there was a tricky chicane with a restart for 7 & 8. The section continued through a series of bends and some quite deep ruts. Most of the marshals were from The Watling Club.

AS THE ENTRY MADE ITS WAY WEST AGAIN THE RAIN STARTED WHICH WAS TO LIVEN things up on the grassy sections at Kensworth and Ivinghoe.

There were no problems at Half Moon Lane for the lower classes but Dave Nash had laid out a tricky restart immediately after the water for 7 and 8. A chicane forced cars to the left so that it was very difficult to get going with the wheels straight. This stopped five of the class 7's and Ed Nikel in class 8. Fred Gregory had to retire here when a loose exhaust finally parted company with the car leaving Fred and Pete Stafford to spectate at Edlesbrough on the way home.

**John Barber 1 & 2** Two sections marked out on private land at Kensworth with Ian Lawson and Alan Davis in charge.

THE RAIN REALLY LIVENED UP CONDITIONS AT THE TWO KENSWORTH SECTIONS, especially for the later numbers. It wasn't that easy for the early numbers though so credit to John Wilton who cleaned both of them in his Trojan, the only person to do so. Steve Potter got up the first hill in his Trojan as did Andrew Burt and Elizabeth Tucker-Peake in class one. Peter Manning, Keith Pettit and Peter Thompson and Ian Davis were the only other competitors to reach the summit here.

In Peter's case his success put him in the lead of class three which he was to maintain throughout the day.

**Edlesborough Hill** Three sections on Private Land – The first started in the field, going through the gate and through the trees before diverting into the bomb hole with a re-start for 7 and 8. The other two were on the top of the hill using well proven routes through the bushes.

THE WEATHER WAS STILL HELPING TO TOUGHEN UP THE SECTIONS AND THERE WAS even a little snow before competitors arrived at Edlesborough. This made conditions really slippery on the hills notorious surface where all grip seems to



*Above-Ian Davis emerging from Norton Street Lane & Geoff Hodge at Half Moon Lane in his RDT, one of four Reg Taylor built cars on the event. Below-Andy Curtis and Judith Pearson on John Barber 1 and Ross Nuten at Edlesbrough.*



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completely disappear at the slightest sight of moisture!

The result was that nobody cleaned either of the first two sections. The third one was possible though and the Trojans and all the class ones except John Rowland made the most of their early numbers to get cleans while there was still some grass on the surface. In class three Simon Groves was fighting back and his clean bought him within five marks of Peter Thompson.

In Class Five Peter Manning had fallen behind Keith Pettit in the regularity on section two but honours were restored with a clean here, enough lead the class and win best Falcon at the end of the day.

### Brickhill

Three sections on Private Land. The first was a trip through the trees followed by a steep climb just after a corner on deep sand with a re-start for 7 & 8. This was followed by a tricky trip up the bracken. The third hill went up the sandy gully where the ruts were quite deep, followed by a steep gradient with a re-start for 7 & 8

THERE WAS A LUNCH BEAK AFTER THE EDLESBOROUGH SECTIONS TO GIVE THE marshals time to reposition themselves for the afternoon sections. These commenced at Brickhill with Herts VW Club in charge. Things commenced with a special test, which was to give Ian Davis his event win when he was more than four seconds quicker than Elizabeth Tucker-Peake.

Peter Morley was struggling with the engine of his ex- Fred Gregory Dutton Melos. It looked like fuel starvation and a faulty fuel pump was suspected before Peter realised the tank was dry! The rain had stopped now and the sandy surface that characterises Brickhill soon dried out giving everyone the opportunity to have a fair crack at the hills.

In class Seven Matt Robson and Jim Bounden both failed the restart on hill 10 which gave Keith Oakes the Class Seven lead.

### Ivinghoe

Special test and Section on Private land, the section was all about a steep bank at the start after the restart was cancelled.

THE WEATHER WAS GETTING BRIGHTER BY THE TIME COMPETITORS TACKLED THE second special test at Ivinghoe. Elizabeth Tucker-Peake clawed back a little time but not enough for Ian Davis to loose his lead. The fastest time here was set by Keith Pettit, just a fraction quicker than Andrew Burt in his Subaru Justy. The following observed section started with a very steep grassy bank followed by a relatively flat track before the final tricky rise with a restart to catch the unwary. This had to be cancelled after the fist few cars, as there was a danger of those who couldn't restart slipping sideways down the hill.

Even so Ivinghoe caught out quite a few competitors, including the Trojan of John Wilton, but not enough for him to loose the lead in class two. Surprisingly the bank at the start, which was a lot steeper than it looked, caught out a number of the class 7's who failed to tackle it with sufficient speed.

### Hawridge Lane

County Road - used the other way to last year with a tricky restart on tree roots for the higher classes.

THE PENULTIMATE SECTION WASN'T TO DIFFICULT WITHOUT A RESTART, ALTHOUGH it was necessary to carry a bit of momentum over the tree roots which caught out Ted Holloway and the experienced Reg Taylor in class three and Simon Benoy in his Imp.

For the re-starters in the higher classes positioning was everything and there were plenty of tree roots to catch the unwary. Andy Clarke was in charge here and sponsor Murray MacDonald was on hand to watch the action. Murray reported how the shorter wheel base cars had the most difficulty as getting the

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**Class 3 winner Peter Thompson rolling his body on the Brickhill Special test, Michael Leete in his new toy and Matt Robson before failing the two restarts that were to drop him out of contention in Class Seven. Below—Ian Davis at Ivinghoe and receiving his award from Hazel MacDonald.**



## Michael's Musings

It was another excellent March Hare Trial. There is something special about driving on the road between the competitive bits as these events are about much more than the sections. Many thanks to JP, Mike, Dave and the entire team for a fantastic day.

I drove my Dellow which behaved much better than at Brickhill on The Southern Auto's where I put its problems down to excessive under-bonnet temperature. Mike Hayward and I got the full open car experience with rain, wind and snow to tackle as well as the hills!

I was quite astonished that it got round in one piece as the more I look at it the more jobs I can see to be done. We were lucky as the brake pedal went to the floor when I was driving it round the village the following weekend. I have yet to find the reason as I have been too busy preparing the Beetle for The Lands End.

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(Murray's March Hare, Continued from page 3)

front wheels just over the line still bought the rear ones into the "root zone". All credit then to the Buggy's of Ian Davis and Andy Curtis and to Clive Booth for getting away OK.

### Hill Farm

County Road - Tree Lined Track that had been used on the March Hare back in the 50's

THE LAST SECTION WASN'T A PROBLEM AND EVERYONE CLEANED IT OK, A NICE way to end the day.

### The Finish

BACK AT THE A5 TRUCK STOP DOT PARSONS AND FRANCIS WEBLEY SOON produced the results and Ian Davis was presented with his trophy. It was a close thing and decided on special test one where Ian was six seconds faster than Elizabeth Tucker-Peake.

Class three was decided by Peter Thompson as Simon Groves could not claw back the 11 lost on John Barber 1. Keith Pettit won the Spridget battle in class five. Colin Sumner had a good run in his Morgan but was another to suffer on John Barber 1, dropping him out of contention.

In Class Seven there was a day long battle between Keith Oakes (Dutton Phaeton) and Jim Bounden (Marlin). This was decided in Keith's favour only after Jim failed the restart on the second Brickhill section while Keith stormed to the summit.

Ian Davis had established an early dominance in class 8 after he was the only competitor to clean John Barber 1, a climb that will never be forgotten by those of us to witness it! This section was also to decide the class win when Andy Curtis got to the ten marker while Clive Booth lost twelve. Andy held onto these two marks all day to win the class.

### Looking Back

FIRST TO SAY THAT IT WAS FANTASTIC THAT THE BATTLE FOR OVERALL VICTORY took place between two of Classic Triallings's oldest and well known families. Ian being a third generation of the Davis family and Elizabeth's father-in-law was of course John T-P.

Marlins were the most popular car with five taking part. There were also five Dellow's and derivatives there-off with three of them bearing the handiwork of Reg Taylor. Reg himself was driving his RDT Anglia so Reg takes the car builder award. His partner in crime Geoff Jackson was marshalling at Edlesborough with Christine running the control.

In conclusion it was another excellent March Hare Trial. These events take a tremendous amount of organisation but judging by the happy smiles of the competitors at the finish it was all worthwhile.

Overall Winner	Ian Davis (VW Buggy)	18=
Best Falcon	Peter Manning (Midget)	29
Best Novice	Christopher Clarke (Golf)	42
Class 0	Graham Skeggs (Ford Fiesta)	68
Class 1	Elizabeth Tucker-Peake (Peugeot 205)	18=
Class 2	John Wilton (Trojan)	28
Class 3	Peter Thompson (Opel Manta)	24
2nd in Class 3	Simon Groves (Escort)	29
Class 4	Simon Benoy (Imp)	28
Class 5	Keith Pettit (AH Sprite)	26
Class 7	Keith Oakes (Dutton Phaeton)	36
2nd in Class 7	Jim Bounden (Marlin)	41
Class 8	Andrew Curtis (VW Buggy)	34
2nd in Class 8	Clive Booth (Dellow Replica)	36