

CLASSICAL GAS

January 2004

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

Allen Trial



Top Left—Patrick Osborne attacking the Travers Special Test. Patrick's Uncle was in charge of the mid-route diff test.

Top Right—Peter and James Mountain giving their newly restored Dellow Mk1 it's first one day trials outing. Peter found the Class 8 restarts a real challenge.

Bottom Left—Simon and Matt Robson trying in vain to get the Liege away from the restart line on Guys Hill. Had they succeeded they would only have to come back down again as the exit from Guys was an early casualty in the campaign to ban cars and bikes from our tracks, see the sidebar on the right.

Bottom Right—Mike Hayward taking care of Michael Leete's Beetle in the queue for Guys Hill. They went on to finish second in class 4. The Allen was very friendly to the lower classes with only one re-start for the whites.

Classic Trials Under Threat

As you may have read elsewhere our much revered government have discovered that a small body of people have the audacity to be enjoying themselves. They have reacted by getting Mr Alun Michael on the case. Yes this the man who had to leave his position as First Secretary for Wales with his tail between his legs, very appropriate as he has been described in the press as "Mr Blairs Poodle".

This is a quote from their so called consultation document.

"As Rural Affairs Minister, I have been approached by many individuals and organisations who are deeply concerned about problems caused by the use of mechanically propelled vehicles on rights of way and in the wider countryside. I share these concerns, having seen for myself examples of damage to fragile tracks and other aspects of our natural and cultural heritage in various areas of the country. There is considerable concern about behaviour that causes distress to others seeking quiet enjoyment of the countryside."

Reading the paper gives the impression that they are out to ban Cars and Bikes from all un-surfaced tracks. The ACTC, LARA and other organisations are fighting against the effect on our sport. Please support them. You can read more on the Internet at <http://www.laragb.org>



Guy's Hill pretty much decided who won The Allen Trial with only two cars getting away from the re-start. The full report starts on page 2.



Michael starts the year by musing about Class One versus Troll's on page 4.

Paul Bartleman wins Allen Trial

THE WEATHER

The rain god shone on Bristol Motor Club and there was a fair amount of the wet stuff descending from the sky during the week before the event to make the sections on the fringe of the Mendip Hills nice and muddy. The day itself started dry .

THE START

There had to be a last minute change of venue when The White Hart Inn pulled the plug at the last moment and the start was moved to The Cross House Inn in organisers Pete and Carlie Harts home village of Doynton. The pub was right in the centre of the village with a super atmosphere and a nice car park un-spoiled by all those nasty trailers which were relegated to a muddy field several miles away.



Paul Bartleman made it a hat trick of ACTC wins on the Allen Trial with a clean sheet. It was another excellent Allen, helped by the God of the weather who organised rain the week before to bring the sections into prime conditions as can be seen by this picture of Simon and Matt Robson struggling in vain to get away from the slippery re-start on Guys Hill.

THE ROUTE

This years Allen incorporated the usual favourite hills, including Birch Hill that was added last year. Perhaps the only disappointment is that it's no longer possible to use Elwell, that lovely long section the other side of Winford. The route did go a slightly different way though, with the usual opener, Tog Hill, coming towards the end of the trial this year.

BITTON LANE

This was the usual section, entered by the side of a house on the A431 in the village of Bitton, the challenge being a restart on polished stones positioned on a left hand bend for all but classes one and two. It wasn't as slippery as usual so tyre pressure limits were in force and only four competitors didn't

get away. Unfortunately these included both Simon Robson and Peter Mountain, competing in his newly restored Dellow Mk1 for only the second time. So, the Allen wasn't being very kind to Falcon Motor Club members driving open yellow cars! John Looker in his Yellow Beetle and Colin Biles in his Midget were the other competitors who didn't get away. Classes four and five could now breathe a sigh of relief, as they had no more re-starts for the rest of the day.

GUYS HILL

Next on the agenda came one of the Allen terror's, Guys Hill with its deceptively slippery surface with separate restarts on slippery stones and tree roots for the yellows and reds. It wasn't a doodle for the non restarting blues and whites though as the hill is

much steeper than it looks and quite a few didn't build enough momentum to carry them over the slippery tree roots on the upper reaches. Unfortunately these included Stuart Cairney, taking part in his first trial since the Exeter and shaking down a new transmission in his Imp. Stuart had a bit of drama just before the trial when he found fuel spraying out of his fuel lines all of which had completely perished during the Imp's lay-off, sparking the question about the effects of un-leaded fuel on rubber.

The yellows and reds had different re-starts and these were to have a big effect on the results as only three yellows, Roger Bricknell (Vincent), Andrew Martin (Dutton Melos), Mal Allen (Marlin) and one red, Paul Bartleman (Troll) got away to clean the section. Pete Hart was there to see Paul's climb and his impressive trickle away from the restart.

SANDY LANE SPECIAL TEST

This was run downhill this year, approached by the local councils newly surfaced entrance road. Despite being the only class eight to clean Guys Hill Paul Bartleman was taking no chances and set the fastest time amongst the

specials but it was beaten by a flying Andrew Martin in class seven which put him into the overall lead of the event.

TRAVERS HILL

There was a diff test just before the section with Patrick Osborne's uncle in charge. On this occasion competitors had a different face at the start as Jim Travers (after whose father Ted the hill is named) was marshalling on a bike trial elsewhere. The restart for yellows and reds was in its usual place on a rocky step and positioning was crucial for both front and rear wheels. John Parsons was well aware of the difficulty and went high on the bank to the left in an attempt to avoid both step and gradient. It was to no avail as the car slipped sideways as soon as he let the clutch out and he was stationary in the middle of the track with spinning wheels just like so many others. Simon Robson made up for his indiscretion on Sandy Lane, picked a good place and restarted successfully but neither Peter Mountain nor Clive Booth could get away. Clive was trying some new Continentals, which were proving very successful in mud, and disaster as soon as a rock came into view.

TRAVERS SPECIAL TEST

This started downhill, through a puddle to line B before a reverse to stop astride line C. This was a disaster for Andrew Martin who got a fail, which was to cost him the chance of overall victory. Patrick Osborne and Michael Leete both fumbled their changes to reverse gear. Earlier Patrick had problems on Travers when the coil lead came adrift just after the section ends board.

CHEW VALLEY LAKE REST HALT

This couldn't really be called a lunch halt as it came very early in the event, perhaps "Brunch Halt" would be more appropriate! Never less it was a welcome opportunity to have a social chat with other competitors and helps the organisers by regrouping and controlling the flow to the following sections.

BURLEDGE

Another of The Allen's major challenges was on form this year, with

Nigel and Ian Moss in charge. It starts with a rocky surface on a gentle gradient with a big bump over a sunken pipe a few yards up the track just before a right hand bend. This slows things down, even for those who don't have to re-start. Once round the bend the real challenge of Burledge comes into sight. It's a rutted sunken lane, very muddy with the ruts getting deeper towards the top. The yellows and reds have a restart just as the ruts begin, the blues and whites have a straight blast, in as much as the dreaded bump over the pipe allows!

As you will gather ground clearance is all-important at Burledge and it was very unfriendly to the Midgets and Morgan in class five, all of whom

A fair sprinkling of class eights were clean but Tony Rothin didn't get away from the restart and Stuart Harrold, Clive Booth and Peter Mountain all bottomed out.

bottomed out early on. The Escorts were in similar trouble, David Heale getting furthest with a two. A BMW was the class three car to have here and both David Turner and Phillip Mitchell sped to the top on their larger diameter wheels with blowers whining. With Jim Scott and Colin Perryman marshalling the hill Stuart Cairney wanted to do well and got to the two after slip sliding away from the rocky start. Michael Leete and Dave Sergeant nearly got out the top

for a one as did Patrick Osborne. Dave could have cleaned the section if the throttle cable hadn't become detached, but the class one honours were definitely Giles Greenslade's as he stormed out of the section at enormous speed.

A fair sprinkling of class eights were clean but Tony Rothin didn't get away from the restart and Stuart Harrold, Clive Booth and Peter Mountain all bottomed out. The class sevens all struggled a bit but Roger Bricknell made good use of the Vincents 15 inch wheels for a clean and Andrew Martin came out of the top as well, kicking himself for his indiscretion on the Travers special test. Clerk-of-the-Course Pete Hart looked in on the section just in time to see both Dave Haizelden and Paul Allaway clean Burledge as both proved yet again that they are little short of trialling supermen.

NANNY HURNS

Run as a section rather than a special test this year Nanny Hurns gives lie to the Allen sections all being run on real roads. The organisers can be forgiven though as this strange little section is part of the character of the modern Allen Trial. For those of you that have never seen Nanny Hurns it's an artificial deviation off a track. First there's a more or less level sharp left hand bend, then a very steep bump where there is a great danger of bottoming out at the top before the downhill finish. The main problems came for the big engined Beetles who had the usual under-steer problem on the left hander and the low slung sports cars who bottomed out on the crest of the bump. So a special well done to the persistent Brian Osborn for his first ever Nanny Hurns clean in his MGB.

MILL LANE

This is the long section, going under the railway bridge just after the start. The big disappointment was that there was no big puddle this year, to drown out the electrics, and the entire entry cleaned the hill.

LITTLE UPLANDS

It was Little Uplands again this year as the track to its big cousin was blocked

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Michael's Musings

The year has come to an end but trialling is very much in full swing. It's always strange to me that the ACTC and MCC "years" end in the middle of what I think of as the "season". Perhaps we should change tradition and have the trials year from summer to summer?

Anyway, Roger Bricknell ended up as ACTC champion but only just as Dave Haizelden finished runner up in his Golf. It's quite amazing how the top Class One drivers get their cars up some of the hills, two of them even came out the top of Burlledge on The Allen, quite remarkable.

Roger and Dave were lucky that Paul Bartleman didn't do a full season as he won five of the six events he started in his Troll.

Talking of Troll's I here that David Thompson is recovering enough from his terrible injury to start thinking of trialling again and hopes to take part in The Northern Trial in his native Lake District. I'm sure everyone will join me in wishing David well.

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(The Allen Trial, Continued from page 3)

with construction machinery! The section was its usual self with a tricky restart in the rocks for the yellows and reds. Most of the non-restarters made successful climbs but both Dave Sargeant and Patrick Osborne lost momentum amongst the rocks and stopped. The restart was certainly a tough proposition though and by far the majority who had to attempt it failed.

BIRCH HILL

There was a long road run off over 20 miles east across the M4 to Birch Hill with John Sargeant in charge. The hill was similar to last year, a relatively straightforward run up a stony track then a right left into a field and the challenge of a huge patch of clay. The lower classes were allowed a straight blast but yellows and reds had a restart just before the glutinous stuff under the eyes of MGeetele builder Dave Nash. None of the cars in classes four, five and six got through but Giles Greenslade got far enough to give him the class four win and the lead in the Crackington league of the ACTC championship.

After cleaning Burlledge both Dave Haizelden and Paul Allaway showed they are human by failing at the three but it was possible in a class one car as both Michael Collins and Nick Farmer proved and this was to give Michael Collins the class win. In class three both of the BMW's failed to blast through the mire but both David Heale and Harvey Waters were successful in their Escorts reversing the fortunes of Burlledge.

The status quo in 7 and 8 was preserved with the leaders all going clear and John Parsons and Clive Booth were happy to be successful under Dave Nashe's gaze but Peter Mountain wasn't so lucky.

TOG HILL

It was back across the M4 and back to Doynton for Tog Hill, tackled in the dark for the later numbers, but presenting no problems and everyone was clear.

JOHN WALKER

The Allens usual finale was on form as usual. The first cars arrived a bit early at just gone 2.30 and were asked to hang around at the summit in order not to get back to the pub while the lunch-time crowd were still enjoying their meal! The water level in the stream was pretty low so there wasn't the usual problem of drowning out the ignition and everyone apart from Brian Osborn and David Mallin went clear.

THE FINISH

Back at Doynton Paul Bartleman was found to be the overall winner with a clean sheet, beating Roger Bricknell on special test times. Things could have been very different if Andrew Martin hadn't failed the 2nd special test as he was fastest on the first one and went clean on the observed sections.

So concluded another successful Allen Trial. The weather and skill of Pete Hart and his team resulted in a competitive trial over some non-damaging sections as it was mud, not rocks, rubbing the underside of the cars that ran out of ground clearance.

Results

Michael Collins (VW Golf)	2	Class 1
Jeremy Flann (Austin 7)	1	Class 2
David Heale (Ford Escort)	2	Class 3
Giles Greenslade (VW Beetle)	3	Class 4
Mike Wordsworth (MG Midget)	6	Class 5
Terry Ball (VW Beetle)	19	Class 6
Roger Bricknell (Vincent)	0	Class 7
Carl Talbot (Morris Trialsmaster)	5	Class 8
Paul Bartleman (Troll)	0	Best Overall