

# CLASSICAL GAS

January 2005

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

## Ian Davis Wins Class Eight on Allen Trial



*Ian concentrating hard as he fights for grip in the clay and mud of Birch Hill. Ian was one of the few re-starters to climb the renowned Guys Hill but like all the class eights he was defeated by Little Uplands.*

David Haizelden won The Allen Trial with one of six clean sheets. Victory going to the Green Golf on special test times. Take nothing away from David though, as getting a FWD Golf on 13 inch wheels to the summit of Burledge is a fantastic achievement, and he earned a well deserved victory. Falcon's Ian Davis won class eight but with a fearsome restart on Little Uplands there was no possibility of overall honours for the red brigade.



Read second part of Simons Season on page three and Ian Davis account of his Allen Trial on page two.

Pete Hart, Mark Tooth and their team had a full entry, and ideal trialling weather, for The Allen which maintained its well established format. All the sections, with perhaps the exception of Nanny Hurns, being run on real old roads, with no Mickey Mouse stuff marked out with tape.

Togg Hill was a nice easy starter before venturing back across the M4 to Birch Hill. This starts on a nice stony surface before venturing into deep, glutinous, mud as the track goes uphill alongside a field. The problem is that there is quite a camber, dragging the cars against the side of the bank where the ruts are deepest. The early numbers were at a definite disadvantage, as were class eight who had a restart. It was necessary to build up a fair head of steam to get through the mud and Duncan Welch was one who didn't have the speed to get through.

Ground clearance was a big factor as well as speed, and none of the sports cars in class 5, or Stuart Cairneys Imp made it though to the summit. Stuart had the misfortune to get a puncture and got wedged against the bank, necessitating a Land Rover tow as did Andrew Brown later on. The most spectacular climbs came in class two. Adrian Dommett and Bill Bennett just stormed up, but climb of the day was Jeremy Flann, whose passenger bounced the little Austin Seven up at about half a snails pace!

Bitton Lane was all about the usual slippery restart, for all, accept classes one and two, on a corner surfaced with polished stones. Dave Nash and Neil Bray couldn't get The MGeetle away but at least this time it was down to them rather than the

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*(Allen Trial Report-Continued from page 1)*

bad advice they had received from Michael Leete on Birch Hill! Andrew Brown was another to fail here as was Morgan man Rob Wells having his first outing in a Troll.

The infamous Guys Hill was next, with separate restarts for yellows and reds, and a straight run through for the others. Only three re-starters got away and went on for a clean. Gary Browning managed it in class six, which saw Giles Greenslade debuting his Nigel Allen built 1835 Beetle and discovering how much harder it is than class four! Duncan Welch was the first class eight to attempt the hill and used a little too much right foot. Paul Bartleman saw this and successfully trickled his Troll off the line for a clean climb. The only other car to succeed was Ian Davis in his VW Buggy, with the aid of a lot of bouncing, a change to second gear and a fair amount of tyre smoke. Clive Booth did well to coax his 1300 cc Dellow Replica off the line for a five which would put him a point ahead of fellow Falcon Mike Pearson at the end of the day.

Travers was another hill all about the restart for the higher classes where positioning was everything. Clive managed to get it just right to put him ahead of Mike Pearson who failed, although that position was to be reversed on the following Burledge which was very tricky this year. The ruts were deeper and the mud more slippery!

Paul Bartleman was the first car and had to act as a snowplough for those following. He'd got the Troll away from the restart OK but the mound between the two ruts was too much and he stopped at the three.

Burledge was another hill that favoured the late numbers because of the snowplough factor, but frankly anyone coming out of the top was a real hero, so a special well done to David Haizelden in his Golf. Also Adrian Marfell who was the only Beetle to get to the summit.

Nanny Hurns was its usual tricky self and Dave Nash was delighted to clean the section in The MGeetle, as was PCT expert Colin Weeks in his more conventional MG. Little Uplands put paid to Ian Davis' hopes of overall victory as the Class Eights had an impossible restart and none of them got away from the line. John Walker was drew the trial to its traditional conclusion, in the dark for later numbers. It didn't have any effect on the overall results, although Colin Weeks had the misfortune to fail.

At the finish six competitors had clean sheets, all of them in classes one to four, including both the BMW's of Colin Perryman and Nick Farmer. So it was down to special test times. David Haizelden was fastest and was declared overall victor. Well deserved for getting a FWD car to the summit of the fearsome Burledge.

## My Allen Trial - by Ian Davis

I haven't done the Allen for five or six years and was surprised at how much we enjoyed a trial with only 9 sections, where the first class 8 car finished 14th overall! We drove down from Oxford on the day but as things transpired this was not such a good idea.

I had never seen Birch Hill before, it was enjoyable at the time but how much clay is there stuck to the car now? Not as much as to Paul's Troll by all accounts, but still plenty.

We were travelling with Brian Partridge, Adrian Marfell and Tony Young and watched Tony fail to trickle off the Guy's restart. We wondered how we would get on, as I can't remember ever getting off it. We already knew Paul Bartleman was the only one to get away, so the pressure was on for us to pull something out of the bag. We just managed it, with much bouncing, a quick change to second gear and lots of tyre smoke! In the end the two of us were the only Class 8's to get off the restart and there was only one from classes 6 & 7, Gary Browning in the Type 4 engined Beetle.

On to the special tests which were well laid out. Long enough to be worth doing, but

not just a question of most power wins. The second one, which went through a lake of smelly water, was great fun in an open car as you can imagine! We managed Travers OK and went on to the lunch stop where we watched Camel organiser Hans Vierterl and Pete Barr effecting some running repairs to Pete's 1300 Beetle which wasn't going too well as its brand new twin carbs were out of synch.

Burledge was the first hill after the break. Brian Partridge had retired with a broken diff by now, it must have happened on Travers as the diff test was immediately before. No one had got up Burledge so a chance to pull ahead of Paul who had grounded out (running at the front). Tony Young was first car to get up followed by Adrian who stormed up in his 1300 and then us in the Buggy, again with the use of second gear after the restart. We watched a valiant effort from Dave Shaylor in the 1300 Beetle, but he stopped just yards from the top. As did one of the Trojans which apparently got pushed out the top, what a great effort!

Harvey Walters jammed the Escort's gears trying to change up near the top of the section.

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### Stuart Cairney sideways on Birch Hill



# Simon's Season

After The Lands End, it was off to the Forest of Dean for the Kyrle. This is one of Simon's favourite events, despite blowing a diff and first gear the year before. This year Simon was pleased to come third, dropping only 21, behind Dick Bolt and Harvey Waters who won on 17. The best memory of the event was climbing the notorious Jill, although he was not so fortunate on the parallel Jack. It was the nearby Burn Brae that cost Simon the class. This is the hill that starts by going through a stream, then embarks on a torturous route around the trees, the organisers varying the actual course year by year. It was quite tough this time and Simon could only manage to get to the eight while Dick Bolt climbed out of the



We continue the story of Simon Grove's Classic Trials season. We left him having retired from The Lands end with a burned-out clutch.

**Simon climbing Nailsworth Ladder on his way to winning class three on the Cotswold Clouds (picture by Chris Phillips).**

top. However, Simon really enjoyed his Kyrle and decided that the Escort was finally sorted, giving him the opportunity to compete with the The Cornish Boys on equal terms.

During The Kyrle Simon had noticed that the Escort puffed oil smoke every time he revved it and decided to strip the motor down and change the rings. Unfortunately he didn't put something together properly while John was at lunch, causing the engine to seize when it was started after re-assembly. The Ilkley and Testing Trial were coming up and Simon didn't want to miss them so looked around with Dad and found a 20-year-old lump under a bench, and

put this in for the long trek north. Simon led his class from the start, all the way through to the last section when he got stuck in the mud on the lower reaches and slipped back to third in class. Simon enjoyed The Ilkley, but reckons it has to move to another time of year, so it isn't so dry.

After the summer break it was off down to the West Country for The Taw and Torridge, where the Fack diff cried enough early in the afternoon. Simon and Dad John replaced it with a standard one to get back to their trailer. John soon spotted that the axle casing was well and truly bent, so there was a lot to do before the next event. The diff was in fact on loan from John, as although Simon had one on order, and had paid a deposit, it had never come. A call to Julian Fack revealed that there was no prospect of a new diff in the immediate future. Julian offered to try to repair the broken one but Dad wouldn't have any of that and decided to repair it with new pins and needle rollers. Unfortunately, he went

off on holiday before it was finished and Simon particularly wanted to compete on The Exe Valley. He put in a call to Paul Bartleman who was really helpful and explained how to turn down a Transit Diff to fit in the axle casing. This was a worthwhile call as Paul also fixed Simon up with a passenger for Stroud's Mechanic's Trial.

Simon only did the Exe Valley with the Transit Diff, but it held together for a really enjoyable trial. It was pretty dry but the organisers had some contingency plans. At Upper Kingswell, the local farmer emptied 16,000 gallons of water down the hill to make things more interesting! Sticker Martin won overall in his Escort and although Simon had, the fourth best score in class three got a second in class award! The highlight was of course Simms. Although they had a straight run most of the class threes were failing until along came Sticker, Harvey Waters and Simon and

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## Michael's Musings

The death of Graham Brasier, on the Lands End to John O'Groats Le Jog historic rally, was a shock. I suppose we think these are things we read about concerning people we don't actually know. I met him on a number of occasions when we were both campaigning his Class 6 Beetles. He was always very friendly even though he knew I was totally against type 4 engines!

More recently Graham was active against some of the changes in MCC events and he phoned me several times, about a letter he wanted published on the internet as he "wasn't a computer nerd".

The last time I saw him was at the MCC AGM when he was one of several Cornishmen to make the long journey to the midlands.

It remains to be seen if there will be repercussions following Grahams death as according to the BBC Web site the police are investigating whether tiredness played any part in the accident.

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*(Simons Season—Continued from page 3)*

they all got up! Simms was very rough though and Simon could well understand why repairs were necessary before The Exeter.

Verdun Webley got straight off a plane from Canada to passenger for Simon on The Edinburgh. They had a good run and were particularly pleased to be the first car after Dudley Sterry to get passed the A boards. They managed to pip Nick Farmer, in the ex - Dave Turner BMW, by one tenth of a second on the special tests to win the class so they were delighted.

The next weekend it was off to the Cotswolds for The Ebworth Trial, which Simon thought was fantastic, even though he only came fourth in class after the Cornish Boys. It was flat out all day long, although it was another event that Sara found a bit hairy, particularly when Andrew Brown had to sit on the wing to stop the Escort rolling over while reversing down one section. Next was a long drive west to do The Tamar where Simon came fourth in class, although only three marks behind winner Harvey Waters. The event had been badly affected by the local floods, which had meant the club had lost some of their usual sections.

Stroud Vice-Chairman Tony Underhill passed Simon on The Mechanics Trial, kindly putting him up the night before for an evening of Trials Videos. Tony is Mike Workman's usual bouncer and with his local knowledge, Simon won the class. The weather made The Mechanics pretty tough. Green Lane was a particular problem as the deviation around the fallen tree was horrendous and Simon couldn't stop the Escort slipping into a hole, ending up with the rear suck in the mud and the front four feet in the air! Green Lane 1 clinched the class win. Simon held the motor on the rev limiter while Tony literally bounced the car to the summit.

Simon couldn't get a firm entry on The Allen and didn't want to make the long journey to Bristol as a reserve. So, The Camel the following week was the season finale. Simon was going well, and leading class three, until the penultimate hill when he dropped 11, handing the win to Dick Bolt who got to the three.

It was a super year, a lot of miles and some great improvements to the car. Simon really enjoyed his season.

*(My Alan Trial by Ian Davis-Continued from page 2)*

The solution? Chisel through the floor of the car, take the top of the gearbox off, un-jam the gears and complete the event....obvious really when you think about it

A very slippery Nanny Hurns and on to Little Uplands. Conflicting reports from the start marshals as to whether anyone had got off the Class 8 restart. In the event no-one did although we tried long and hard before finally having to give best to a cunningly placed restart line. Dave Foreshaw unfortunately stopped on the Class 7 restart line which looked somewhat easier. At the top of Little Uplands we were pretty down, having failed the restart, as we knew Adrian Marfell in front of us was still clear and we were trying for a top 10 finish for the Wheel-spin points. Bizarrely Adrian wanted to finish outside the top 10 but win his class as he wanted Crackington points not Wheelspin points.

We went up John Walker too fast, smashed the car on the ground (I don't remember it being so rocky), punctured a tyre and experienced very strange steering on the road on the way back to the finish. Half a mile away the diff broke and we coasted down to the pub to sign off. The real trial for us then began, getting home courtesy of the RAC...but I'll save that story for another day. I must remember to tow the car to events more often in the future!

Also seen on the day was the latest of the Jones family from Bristol in a lovely old Lotus. He hill climbs and sprints it but tells me he's going to maybe start tri-alling a Cannon next year. His elder brother Matthew was a leading contender in the early 90's in the Dingo now owned by Pete Fear. Dad has also competed - in a blown Dellow I think but more recently in a VW special.

That's it, must stop now and finish replacing the gearbox in time for the Camel this Sunday.