

CLASSICAL GAS

October 2005

About Classic Trials and Falcon Motor Club Events and Personalities

Neil Wins Championship Class



Neil heading Al Weymans Chevrolet Camaro at Pembrey during the final race of the season. Neil spun during the first race but won his class in the second to win his class in the championship, finishing 3rd overall.

Neil's season concluded at Pembrey with races on Saturday and Sunday. It was a long drive down meaning two nights away. After Snetterton Neil fitted a close ratio box but found there was no synchro on third so put the old one back in, only to find there was enormous play on the first motion shaft. Fortunately A1 gearboxes came up trumps and it was all systems go for the Capri team.

There was everything to play for in the championship, although even if Neil won his class in both races, and set fastest laps, it still needed leader Stephen Primett to falter for him to win. There was drama on the way down when the clutch went on the truck but the problem was easily located and a part obtained from the Mercedes Benz dealer in Swindon, although it did necessitate Neil driving off the

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Right - Colin Sumner on the start line at Clough Wood on this years Edinburgh. Colin was the best Falcon performer on a very competitive Edinburgh. The report starts on page 2.

Below - Owen Turner and Alex Friel were 2nd overall at Chelmsfords JJJ on 9 October. 11 of the 60 entries were from Falcon.



Edinburgh 2005

Ian Bates and his team organised a very different route with some interesting “new” hills. After a nice easy introduction at the tree lined Haven Hill the entry soon found itself at the foot of a rather rough Clough Wood, and an hours delay, even for the early cars, as some of the bikers were falling off. With a long section and a tricky restart for the higher classes the delay built up, so later numbers were waiting for the best part of two and a half hours, although having arrived an hour early they were not so far behind scheduled time.

The section was quite rough and the restart caught out both Keith Oakes and Maureen Chattle/Ross Neuton. Ted Holloway had problems with the ruts at the bottom and got his



It was a very competitive Edinburgh. Litton, Great Hucklow, the restart on Excelsior really shaking up the results. It certainly thinned out the triples. Only five cars and five bikes gaining the MCC's premier award. The trial was well supported by Falcons, with 18 entries in the main trial and 2 in class 0. Colin Sumner put in the best performance, gaining Silver.

Keith and Claire Oakes passed the A boards on Litton but no further. (picture courtesy of Claire Oakes).

very special rear engined Mini wedged sideways across the track on the lower reaches. Barrie Parker was another Falcon to fail in the big Audi 80.

Deep Rake was another very easy section, followed by a special test before the run to Litton. The descent was as hairy as ever; especially when the skies opened every now and again and the rain came down. The old hill was in fine form and only 15 cars made it to the summit. None of the cars in 1, 4, 5 or 6 got to the A boards,

so the section didn't count in the results. Brian Partridge was the first car to show it could be done in his Cannon and Pete Hart made a fine ascent to go clear. Waiting in the queue I saw Ray Goodright make a flawless climb in his Arkley MG and then Adrian Dommatt and Julie Phillips fight and bounce their way to the summit after so nearly stopping just past the tree. I also saw Tim Whellock grind to a halt and loose his triple in the ex-John Parsons Fugitive. This was a real shame because Tim is taking over as Clerk of the Course for the Exeter and won't get another chance for a while.

Calton is starting to get ruttier again at the summit but there was plenty of grip and it only stopped one car, unfortunately Maureen and Ross in their Mk2 Dellow. There was an excellent breakfast waiting at The Bull P'th Thorn before going off to Haydale, with a very muddy and rutted approach to where the gradient and hard surface starts. The section

defeated Barrie Parker and Ted Holloway who had to retire afterwards.

The trial started to toughen up now, as the route wound its way down Winnats Pass and across the Ladybower reservoir to Haggside. This section was under threat a few years ago; full marks to the MCC for managing to keep it in the trial. As usual the main test was the restart, just after the hairpin right after the start. It can be very tricky if you don't know its there, or position the car in the wrong place and it wasn't that long ago it cost Falconry Editor David a triple. Most made it OK, although a few newcomers drove through before they realised it was there! It did stop a few though, including Colin Perryman in his lovely BMW and Falcons Peter Manning and Barrie Parker.

After a holding control came Bamford, a true prince amongst trials sections. OK, Litton can be more challenging but Bamford brings out

the brave! It was much smoother than in previous years, thanks to the MCC road gang. Class eight had to restart as well, just to stop them getting complacent. Running at the front of the field Dave Nash and Julie Fleet stormed up in the MGeetle. Neil Bray and Mike Hayward had problems getting away from the restart but a kindly marshal took pity on them and gave them a clear. Simon Robson cleaned the section in his Liege but to the sounds of tinkling from his transmission. Driving away from the hill it was clear all was not well with the 'box and Simon and Matt retired. Peter Thompson was delighted to go clear but Bamford wasn't kind to rear engined cars and Colin Sumner and Brian Alexander had their first counting stops of the trial. Earlier Clive Booth had struggled to get away from the restart, floored the throttle, spinning the wheels which fortunately dropped into a hole with plenty of grip and went on to clear.

Great Hucklow was its evil self with the rocky deviation up to the left for all but class 0. The yellows and reds had to restart amongst the rocks. John Parsons was amongst many who couldn't get away from the restart which some would say was just as he was one of the team who created the deviation back in the days of the SODC Conquest Trial!

Kings Stearndale was not to create to many problems but after the tea stop at Hollingsclough came a couple of horrors. Rakes Head was only just up the road. It was short but quite tricky. It started on the road before a sharp 90 left and a severe rise in gradient, with a restart for yellows and reds. Clive Booth was defeated by the combination of restart and harsh camber and didn't get away, although he backed down and got up with a run. Colin Sumner was delighted to get the Beetle away from the restart but Geoff Hodge had his first failure since Litton. At the front of the field Neil Bray got away but Dave Nash in the MGeetle couldn't make it.

Excelsior was the penultimate hill and was to prove a real sting in the tail. The problem was the restart, sited on polished stones just before a 90 left. Only 30 cars succeeded in getting away and none of these were Falcons!



Class 0 tackled this one, although without a restart, and this was Verdun Webleys only failure. Verdun using the shopping Seat as the GTM wasn't ready in time. Reg Taylor was more successful in his Anglia and went on to claim a class 0 award. Running at the back of the field the results show Simon Groves/Michael Leete as clear but they failed just like the rest. The "RB" was shown against Rakes Head (which they cleaned) and not Excelsior.

The route then went away from Buxton towards Ashbourne and quite a few of the late runners at the tail of the field decided to skip the section and call it a day as the trial was running quite late at this time. Chief Official Mike Pearson greeted those that did the hill. It was none other than Wigber Low, normally tackled at the start of the trial but at the end this time and still in the dark for some! The restart was to trap the unwary, including Brian Alexander whose diminutive Fiat wasn't running too well by now.

After a final special test it was back to sign off at the Bull P'th thorn before most went back to Buxton for a nice club supper. It was a shame later runners were so late but this is what happens when the Edinburgh is run as a competitive trial and most competitors were willing to accept that. Well-done Ian Bates and his team.

Simon and Matt Robson cleaned Bamford Clough but at the expense of a broken gearbox. (picture by Ed Nikel).



Nashy on Hucklow (picture by Mike Hayward), Peter Thompson in the queue for Clough Wood and Simon Groves Escort at the top of Bamford!

Michael's Musings

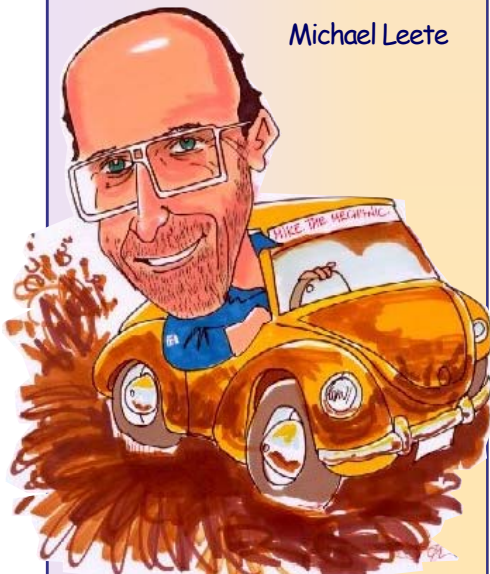
Pembrey was interesting with a dramatic journey down. Half way along the M4 there was a bang from the clutch and the pedal on the lorry went to the floor. We were rolling along in traffic, with no hard shoulder because of road works, so we kept going while I lay on the floor and dismantled the bulkhead around the pedal.

Pretty soon it was evident the problem was a broken plastic bracket on the end of the master cylinder pushrod.

Still rolling down the motorway Neil phoned around to locate a replacement at the Mercedes truck dealer in Swindon. We continued with Neil doing clutch-less changes for about 40 miles to pick up the new one. Fortunately lights and traffic were in our favour and we only came to a stop once. Goodness how Neil managed to get the lorry (with Capri on the back) towing a caravan going again but he did. It goes to show that necessity is the mother of invention!

As usual news, pictures etc, always welcome - mleete24@hotmail.com

Michael Leete



(September Surprise Autotest—Continued from page 1)

M4 and about 10 miles of A roads without a clutch.

The Saturday was fine. Neil qualified seventh on the grid, behind class rival Peter Holton. It was an all action race. Neil did not get a good start and spun in his attempts to catch up. He then went at a fantastic speed, catching and passing cars to get just behind Peter Holton who had a very wide Rover.

Neil tried and tried to get by and finally spun again at the hairpin. He got going and was closing yet again but there were not enough laps to recover a second time. David Howard was the overall winner with Stephen Primett second.

It rained on Sunday night and it was wet when the Post Historics went out to qualify. Neil drove conservatively and was 10th on the grid about half a second faster than Peter Holton in the P6.

It was dry for the race and Neil steadily made his way through the field to 5th overall and first in class. Peter wasn't that far behind and set the fastest lap.

Stephen Primett won his class in both races and that gave him the championship with 89 points. Steven Young was second on 87. Neil came third with 79 points and won Class B. Not bad for a first year but if only Dave Thomas hadn't done those four races!



Left - Neil heads Stephen Primett during practice. Unfortunately it was the other way round in the race.

Right - Alistair Bray changing the tyres after the wet practice session.



Below - Team Falcon on the way home after The Edinburgh.

