



## SILENCER OF THE SWEET LAMBS !

Greetings fellow trialers and a happy new year. This months trial report has been put together by last months C of C , yes Mr Lloyd has been relieved of his editorial duties but don't worry it's only temporary.

A moment of madness at the Xmas do I offered to write up the report but then soon regretted it as I had no score sheet to go by and I'd slept since then. Any road, it had to be done.

December's trial could well have been billed as the bleakest of the year, the statistics were against us, the time of year plus the venue, who in their right mind wants to be 'holed up' at the foot of the Plynlimon hills at the Sweet Lamb complex. We'd not been up at Sweet Lamb for over 3 yrs, I could remember the terrain well as I was a spectator that day, and how unforgiving it had been on the motors, especially the killer tree stumps which didn't agree with various props and steering parts.

Sunday morning dawned early, too bloody early! As the alarm clock rudely awoke the whole household up at 7am. A check on the weather report the night before revealed we were in for a chilly but bright start, no rain or cold winds, just what the trials doctor ordered. With 14 drivers down on the score sheet, more than enough marshals and a few wise monkeys to sort out class 4 we were in for an entertaining day.

The sections ahead were all quite drivable, avoiding the boggy bits, some nice hill climbs and of course various 12" high objects to encounter. Unfortunately the tempting lake was definitely a big no no! As I found out the day before. Being a bit of a water magnet there looked to be a possibility of a nice route through. So off I went and halfway across, over the small island and yep the second bit was deep. The front wheels disappeared under the murky water and I was now committed with no way back. The water was now up to the top of the wings and I had no more forward motion. I'd already killed the fan but with the engine still running, just, the temp gauge had passed 100 deg c. Oh s\*\*t where's Chris! After 3 tow ropes (D-shackled together, don't tell Frank) and lassoed across the lake a quick recovery was called for. The rest of the day was spent suffering with a spluttering wet V8.

Well it was down to business so onto the first section. From the start a steady approach led along the edge of a wet pool dropping in and out of a deep narrow ditch then a sharp right out of some loose shale. First couple of motors passed through unscathed but not without sparing the horses on the loose stuff as Dave T so gracefully demonstrated. The approach to the ditch was starting to cut up as Matthew was the first to find out stopping abruptly in some deep ruts. Dave Dee was to follow as was Marc who also ceased motion at this point too. A few other motors were also caught out here too. Beyond here was a loop down off the road, up through the widest 4 gate I'd ever seen, back down and up through a slippery dog leg finish. Some good clears here, Mick's first drive for a long time in Chris's class 5 motor included.

The second section started high up on the farm track with a good view down on the trialing site. The sun was now at its most lethal as the second half of the section meant driving directly into it. A gentle drive down to the 7 gate snaked between the road and the field then back up, sun visors down, over a high step and a nice greasy climb up to the 1 gate. As the score sheet reads no clears here but some good tries, Mick was getting accustomed to the 'Muddler', or was it the other way round, as he shot off side wards and flattened the 2 gate.

Just down the track started us off for the next one. A sharp right off the track down into a bog and an awkward climb out again found us only at the 9. After a bit of a discussion and

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banter we opened up the 9 gate to get a fair stab at what looked a good drivable section. Nobody suffered here. Onto the far side of the stone sided arena it looped back and hugged the edge with help of cross canes.

John B and Les were the only ones to fall victims here as they slid off the shale. A small wall of death taken at various speeds gave you a good line for the hill climb then onto the one gate sat amongst some large boulders. Eight clears and three ones demonstrated, a good drive all round.

Three down and one to go before lunch, a nice quick section was called upon, so it was off to negotiate those 12" high objects as previously mentioned, yep the return of the "killer tree stumps", At this point I should have got Chris to write up this one, as it was his baby. We had driven the section a couple of times and there WAS a good line through the stumps and I know I did over do the yellow crosses on the prominent ones, so there were no excuses. A good finish was also waiting for the lucky ones! Dave T was the first on the line, was it a case of Mister T's big adventure or road to nowhere and *ruin*. Oh dear, or something else in Dave's words, it was the road to no 7. Dave had well and truly got himself hooked up on a stump. After a lengthy extraction he was given a reprieve, have another go Dave!! Well this time it was definitely a case of 'road to nowhere' as he bypassed the 7 gate big time. Bearing in mind this was a class 4 shootout today, Dave was not impressed. Next away, you can guess JPR, relishing in the challenge, and who went onto clear in fine style. There was now 8 points between them. Some varied scores all round here. Dave Dee got cross axled at the 10, but then attempted to carry on and got caught up on a high stump on the crest of a small loop. I think Dave was trying to test the strength of the side bars on my motor, or should they be called 'stump sliders'. (At least the boulders at Ashfield move, these bloody stumps stay put). Again after a lengthy extraction the path was clear for the next victim. The only other casualty was Ceri when he stopped at the 4 gate and emerged with the rear coil in his hand. A quick fix was required as Hughes' Snr was still to drive. By now lunch was definitely beckoning so it was off to refuel for the second half.

Meanwhile I headed off to the river to look at the next section and to tighten up the gates and make the 1 gate almost unachievable. First half of the section snaked over small marshy banks up an angled step and onto the river. Crossing the river at the ford, back across up a stony bank then back into the river. A choice of either a greasy climb up the bank gave you a good line to cross again for the 2 gate or follow down stream but a tighter angle to get up the bank to the 2. Mostly achievable, but then strategically placed crossed canes made the side slope to the 1 virtually impossible. John B came closest but a foot short of a hub through. Mick with the fiddles had the best chance but still the 1 wasn't on. A fine score of 1's, this was the second section all day without any clears.

Just up the track was the start of the next section. A small hill climb to the 9 claimed just one victim, Malcolm S, who was suffering with engine problems which seemed to be plaguing the Bradshaw motor all day. From here a gentle grassy side slope (we did have you in mind JPR), then a steep drop into a muddy bit. Again the natural route out to the left was catching most drivers at the 3 gate. Dave T asked about another line, which we had allowed, to drive straight across and loop back down for the hill climb out. A fine clear was to follow, again not sparring the horses; good job that rev limiter's working. Other good clears were Hal and Brian, are you sure those lockers weren't in Brian?

By now the scores were getting close. 4 pts separated Dave T and JPR, and steady away Jo was in the lead on 5pts. Jo was having a very good day, his motor seemed very at home on this terrain but how the bloody hell did you and Hal manage a 10 on the next section? I

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missed that one but can only guess it was the motor and not driver error!! The sun was now disappearing behind the hills and a chill was starting to settle.

Section 7 involved reversing section 3. Away from the lumpy start gate we were now doing the wall of death in the opposite direction and a tight left hugging the loose shale with cross canes again. A small hill climb to follow and a loop back down claimed Les at this point. Too much over steer Les? Perhaps you should remove that small knob!! Onto a hill climb which claimed Dave Dee, I suppose he could put his hands up and claim my V8 was not as powerful as Acnes 2 litre. He did claim at the end of the day he was not sparing the horses, heavily planting his right foot which is not his softly, softly nature. I'm still trying to convert him to coils, P.A.S etc etc. The previous day I had failed at this hill climb to the 2, the same line JPR was to follow later. But Chris in his climbing element was determined to run it up to the 1 gate which was halfway to the moon, or in a thirsty V8 case, a gallon of petrol away. This was first achieved in fine style by Ceri using every inch of his engines cc, nice to hear his V8 in full flight, followed by Hughes Snr gaining great applause. Other fine clears were Mick and Dave T pegging back another 2 pts on JPR.

After upping sticks and bracing myself for the walk to the moon, to claim the 1 gate, I can only describe what followed next was the best entertainment of the day. Half jokingly I asked Brian if he fancied driving up and retrieving the 1 gate. "Come on son, jump in, I'll put the diff locks in" he replied grinning from ear to ear. He didn't get far, plenty of wheel spin but going nowhere. At this point Mick relayed a few words of wisdom to him, "No no no not like that, you gotta rev the arse off it and release the clutch!". The big 90 lurched out in spectacular fashion only to plant itself into another bog. There was only one way out, backwards and with a loud crunch, the rear light clusters were reduced in size, both corners folded in. He repeated this process another couple of times before being snatched out by Mick. It soon became apparent there was no drive at the front, how familiar is that Brian? New CV joints were now on his Christmas list, how about downgrading those huge Simex's to diamonds, and give your drive train an easy life!? Chris was now busy hastily putting together a tough 3-2-1 finish for the last section of the day, time to split the boys from the men, although it's us youngens who have the upper hand these days! We followed a similar line to section 6 but with a steeper and what looked a harder finish. Halfway through there was a tricky 6 with a tight line back onto the track; it also meant that the lean of the motor was almost guaranteed to clip the 6, so the gate was widened to get a better stab. Apart from three motors falling at the first hurdle, the hill climb was on for the rest, not a very straight line for the climb but some valiant tries were to follow, the usual suspects clambered to the top and clears were the order of the day for Mick, JPR, Dave T and Jo.

This could mean only one outcome for class 4 as it came down to the wire. JPR managed to keep the 2pts between himself and Dave, but a good fight back after dropping that 7 was not enough as JPR was victorious on the day with a class 4 and overall win.

These short winter days soon draw to a close but not without plenty of action, entertainment and banter. Cheers Chris for a good day, thanks to the regular marshals and Laura for the scores, no easy task dragging two young nippers along whilst your old man's swanning off with his fishing rod!

Roll on next season and look out Mark; I'm on your tail!!

**Tim Mackley**

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