

MAC Clee Hills Trial

19th January 2020

By Peter McFadyen



Mark and James Smith (VW Beetle)
were second in Class 6

The winning Suzuki X90 of Nick Deacon and Ben Wear was going well at Flounders Folly



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The Clee Hills Trial run by the Midland Automobile Club, sees drivers set off at one minute intervals from their base near Ludlow to cover an 80 mile route around Wenlock Edge with Craven Arms at the south western end of the route and Much Wenlock to the north. Along the way, they have to tackle twelve hills or 'sections' (ten for the novice Class 0) and to even out the flow of cars – and bikes – half the field are sent one way round the course, the rest going in the opposite direction.

The sections are allocated according to the expected capabilities of the different classes so that, as in a handicap race, everyone has a chance of overall victory. The cars range from near-standard saloons to purpose built trials cars and the bike classes include sidecar outfits although this year only solos took part.

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Kathy Martin (Honda CRF) was first in Class B1

As if to prove that the system works in practice, the 2020 overall winner came from the class for Suzuki X90s running an original engine block. Nick Deacon and Ben Wear were the victorious crew and they were duly awarded the Fray Cup as their prize. Second overall went to the VW Beetle, a popular choice of car for this type of event, driven by Gary Browning who was partnered by Steve Louks while third and a class win went to Aaron Haizelden and Tommy Godwin in a Reliant Scimitar.

Les Rayfield and Chris Young do everything they can to keep the weight over the back wheels of their ABS Freestyle special.



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Aaron Haizelden's class-winning Reliant Scimitar



Clare and Robert Renshaw were an excellent sixth of 12 finishers in the novice class



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Ian Davis and Roger Baker in their class-winning VW Buggy

The highly modified or purpose built cars of Class 8 were headed by the VW Buggy of Ian Davis and Roger Baker.

The class for pre-1941 production cars normally has a good selection of entries from the VSCC but numbers were down this year, possibly due to a clashing event. Two Model A Fords came out top here, Robert Hodgkinson and Dave Chilton winning from Jim Hodgkinson and Gavin Shane. There were several more pre-war cars in the novice class where Andy Fox and Alex Hewitson took second place with their Austin



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7 to the slightly more modern Dellow Mk 1 of George Houghton and John Harris.



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These three Citroën 2CVs preparing to move on to their next section competed against each other but travelled the route together as a team.

The two-wheel competitors are always amazing with their ability to stay upright – most of the time, at least – on some incredibly slippery sections. John Kenny came out top of the two-wheelers riding his Beta RR Enduro machine while the class for pre-1970 solos of British manufacture saw John Cull leading an all-BSA entry.

Roger Ashby's Coates Orthoptera is actually a Ford 10 engined Austin 7 special.



Transport book dealer Simon Lewis took second place in the Suzuki X90 class with his daughter Charlotte navigating

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Ray and Hannah Ferguson's attractive little Liege SG



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Andy Fox and Alex Hewitson on their way to second place in the novice class in their Austin 7



George Godkin (Beta RR) tries to avoid the ultra-slippery clay surface as he tackles the Flounder Folly section



The Mazda MX5 of Nigel Jones and Dave Hunt



Adrian Marfell leans out of his VW Special for a better view © Peter McFadyen



Paul Watson's BMW Z3 was in all sorts of difficulty on the Flounders Folly section with steam issuing from the engine as well as the overheated spinning tyres.

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Tony Branson and Eric Gordon's Marlin Roadster heads the line of cars waiting to start a section