

J B Taylor Sunday 6th February 2022 by Stephen Barnes

Kentish Border Car Club returned to their local venue of Stoneacre Farm at Otham near Maidstone for their J B Taylor trial. The site is a grassy valley with one side being drier than the other, nothing too steep but just enough features to make it interesting. The date was the 6th February when we would normally expect sodden ground and impossible car parking conditions, but this is 2022 and the South East of England has seen next to no rain over the winter. The six hills were laid out on a blue-skied Saturday morning with light rain forecast overnight, it was much needed. This did of course cause some problems getting into the paddock, but an array of abandoned tow vehicles was soon forgotten when the day got underway.

25 entries were received for this the first round of both the MSUK and BTRDA Championships for 2022, made up of 12 red class, 5 blue and 1 rookie. The remainder of 7 were in an Invitation class including a double driven Cannon from the early 1960s.

3psi was the decision taken with light rain falling and hasty altering of section starts. The first round was generally a trickle, fast in places, with a little panic blasting creeping in for the ends. Darren Underwood (Crossle) and Thomas Bricknell (Crossle) led at the end of the first round on 4 points lost, Andy Wilks (Crossle) and Simon Kingsley (Crossle) hot on their heels on 5 apiece. Stephen Barnes (Sherpa) was leading the live axle charge on 6. Stuart Beare (Sherpa Indy) dropped a very costly 7 on Hill 6 and Ian Wright (Sherpa Indy) similarly a 9 on Hill 5 – but it wasn't over yet!

Round Two and the rain had stopped and a fresh wind was drying the site out at an alarming rate. Eight crews went around clear for the round including Arthur Carroll (Sherpa) to take the live lead. James Tickle (Ibex) dropped 5 to dominate the Invitation class, and Simon Cowley (Avonova) 9 as the sole Rookie. Darren and Andy both collecting 5 and 2 respectively allowing any advantage to slip slightly. At the lunch break Thomas was on 4, Simon 5 and Peter Fensom (Hamilton) on 6. Four others on 7 – it was all to play for in the afternoon.

Round Three, and Clerk of the Course Paul Faulkner decided pressures needed to go up to 6psi for the rest of the day and several alterations were made to the hills. Clearly this was not enough though as Ian posted a clear round with Andy, Stuart, Thomas and Arthur all collecting the same 4 on Hill 3 close behind. Simon missing an intermediate gate on Hill 6 cost him a 6, and John Cole (Crossle) failing the first climb on Hill 2 a 9 put them both out of the running. The low sun was now causing some problems for some.

Round Four saw five teams go clear including an increasingly smoky George Watson (Hamilton) leaving his charge until the last minute, and Richard Sharp (Cartwright) quietly keeping up with the top runners. The best of the rest saw John drop 6, Mark Howse (Impunity) 8 and George Barnes (Sherpa) 11.

Thomas took the spoils on 8 having lead all day, followed by Stuart and Andy on 11. (Stuart cleared 22 of the 24 hills!) Richard in 4th on 13, Ian, Arthur and Darren (in that order) on 15 with Arthur claiming first Live driver. Simon and Peter on 17 and George completing the top 10 on 22.

Results read out and awards presented, most were ready to hit the road for home, but the trial wasn't over for some! Having extracted the aforementioned abandoned tow vehicles and trailers, to leave the site there is a single track lane on a fairly steep hill with a couple of tiny speed bumps to divert excess rainwater. Momentum from the bottom and the hope of not meeting anyone coming the other way and you are homeward bound. Not so for John and Anne Cole in their latest front wheel drive motorhome with trailer on the back, meeting a car at the worst point, jack-knifed the

trailer trying to go back, they were going nowhere! The resulting tyre smoke was something to be seen before an army of willing volunteers could reach them and help push to the top of the hill. Has anybody heard from John? Did his bald tyres make it back to Ross?

FINISHING ORDER

T Bricknell	1st	8	Red Ind
S Beare	2 nd	11	Red Ind
A Wilks	3 rd	11	Red Ind
R Sharp	4 th	13	Red Ind
I wright	5 th	15	Red Ind
A Carroll	6 th	15	1 st Red Live
D Underwood	7 th	15	Red Ind
S Kingley	8 th	17	Red Ind
P Fensom	9 th	17	Red Ind
G Watson	10 th	22	Red Ind
S Barnes	11 th	26	1 st Blue Live
J Cole	12 th	36	1 st Blue Ind
M Howse	13 th	44	Red Live
G Barnes	14 th	52	Blue live
J Tickle	15 th	59	1 st Invitation Class
D Overy	16 th	69	Invitation
P Blagden	17 th	82	Blue Ind
B Bruce	18 th	92	Blue Live
S Cowley	19 th	96	1 st Rookie
Ashley Deacon	20 th	118	Invitation
T Wood	21 st	124	Invitation
M Deacon	22 nd	152	Invitation
D Bowles	23 rd	187	Invitation
K Pestell	24 th	192	Invitation
S Beare	Rtd		