

Mercian Sporting Trial October 2026

Sunday 11 October 2026 · Long Compton · Clerk of the Course: Ian Veale



Thomas Bricknell and Andy Beveridge in their Crosslé — winners of the 2026 MTCC Mercian Sporting Trial. (Photograph supplied; not necessarily taken at this event.)

Bricknell takes Mercian honours as changing conditions catch out the field

The Midlands Trials Car Club's October Mercian Sporting Trial attracted 33 entries to Long Compton, where competitors faced three rounds of eight hills under the direction of Clerk of the Course Ian Veale.

It proved to be an intriguing day's sport, with constantly changing ground conditions, some impressive recoveries and several costly mistakes making a significant difference to the final finishing order.

The opening round presented competitors with long grass carrying a heavy dew, making grip difficult to find and resulting in some surprisingly high scores. As the morning progressed, the grass

began to dry and conditions appeared to improve. However, the drying surface concealed another challenge. As cars repeatedly tackled the sections, the grass became churned up, exposing damp, slippery ground underneath.

By the final round, some sections had become unexpectedly treacherous, with the changing grip catching out even experienced competitors. It was a day when delicate throttle control, accurate positioning and a little patience could make all the difference.

A close battle for the lead

At the head of the field, Thomas Bricknell, partnered by Andy Beveridge in their Crosslé, emerged victorious with an excellent 27 points, just three clear of Josh and Lindsay Veale in their Sherpa.

Veale made the strongest start, completing the opening round on just 15 points, one ahead of Bricknell on 16. Stuart Beare, Richard Sharp, Boyd Webster and Peter Fensom were all well placed on 20 points, while Julian Fack was also in contention on 22.

The second round proved decisive. Bricknell produced an outstanding round of just seven points, including four clean climbs, to move into the lead on 23. Veale added ten points to sit second on 25, while Beare's 13-point round moved him into third on 33.

Richard Sharp remained in contention on 34, with Simon Kingsley and Boyd Webster tied on 35. The final round saw some remarkably low scores despite the increasingly unpredictable surface. Bricknell held his nerve with just four additional points to secure victory on 27, while Veale's five-point round brought him home second on 30.

Kingsley stages a remarkable recovery

One of the outstanding performances of the day came from Simon Kingsley and Sara Briggs in their Crosslé. Their opening round of 24 included a costly seven on Hill 6 and a five on Hill 2, leaving them eighth overall.

A much improved second round of 11 brought them into fifth position. But it was their final round that really caught the eye: just three points across eight hills, the lowest final-round score of any competitor. That performance lifted Kingsley to third overall on 38, level with Richard Sharp and Cara McGovern in their Cartwright, but ahead in the published finishing order. Sharp scored 20, 14 and four across the rounds to finish fourth.

A closely fought battle behind the leaders

The competition behind the leading pair was equally close, with several drivers exchanging positions throughout the day. Boyd Webster and Andy Gains finished fifth in their Crosslé on 40 points, just one ahead of Stuart Beare and Chris Clements in the Sherpa Indy.

Beare had been third after two rounds but dropped to sixth following a costly four on his final hill, demonstrating how quickly fortunes could change on the increasingly slippery surface.

Andy Wilks and Mark Smith finished eighth on 44 points despite an expensive eight on Hill 2 during the opening round. Their recovery was impressive, finishing with a five-point final round. George and Victoria Watson recovered from an opening round of 27 to finish ninth on 46, tied with Peter and Liz Fensom, who completed the top ten.

For Fensom, a second-round score of 18 included a four on Hill 3, while another four on Hill 5 in the final round restricted his opportunity to move further up the order.

Ian Wright produces a remarkable final round

One of the most impressive recoveries came from Ian Wright and Chris Taylor in their Sherpa Indy. After an opening round of 25, they endured a difficult second round, collecting 22 points, including fives on Hills 5, 6 and 7. However, the final round was a very different story.

Wright produced an outstanding score of just four points, with five clean climbs, to finish 11th overall on 51. It was a fine demonstration of how fortunes could change as drivers adapted to the conditions, and one of the standout individual rounds of the competition.

Carr finds his form as the day progresses

Alan Carr and Alfie Carr also produced an impressive turnaround in their Crosslé. Their opening round of 46 was a difficult start, including a nine on Hill 8 and several other expensive scores. The second round brought a considerable improvement, with 30 points added to their total.

By the final round, Carr had clearly found a better rhythm, recording just nine points across the eight hills. That improvement of 37 points between the first and final rounds was one of the most striking of the day, bringing the pair home 19th overall on 85.

Fack claims the PH class honours

Julian Fack and Mark Goodyear took seventh overall and won the PH class in their Impunity with 43 points. An opening round of 22 was followed by 16 in the second, including a costly four on Hill 3. However, a strong final round of just five points secured an excellent overall result and the class victory.

Underwood heads the Blue class

Darren and Sue Underwood took the Blue class honours in their Crosslé, finishing 12th overall with 58 points. Their second round featured a particularly costly nine on Hill 2, but an excellent final round of ten secured the class win.

Mike and Carole Readings finished second in the Blue class on 87, followed by John and Anne Cole on 117. For Cole, Hill 2 proved especially troublesome, with a nine recorded on each of the three attempts - 27 points from just one hill.

Simmons leads the live-axle competitors

David and Anita Simmons, competing in their live-axle CAP, finished on 60 points, winning the live-axle category and taking 13th overall. Arthur Carroll and Katie McCorkindale also finished on 60 in their live-axle Sherpa, securing second and 14th overall.

Alan Baker and Ian Rodman completed the live-axle podium in their Apex on 64 points, just ahead of Roger and Julia Bricknell in their Facksimile on 65. With only five points separating the first four live-axle competitors, it was another closely fought contest.

Rookie class provides its own competition

Jack and Jess Watson headed the Rookie class in their CAP with 88 points, taking 21st overall. Their opening round included a costly nine on Hill 2, but they recovered well, recording 34 in round two and just 12 in the final round to secure the class victory.

Jamie and Fiona Bartholomew took second Rookie on 108 in their Avonova, followed by Ian Brooks and Matt Sunderland in their Sabson on 114. Arthur and Kelly Baker were fourth on 132, with Clive and Teresa Morgan fifth on 136.

For the less experienced crews, the event provided plenty of opportunities to learn, with several competitors demonstrating considerable improvement as the sections developed throughout the day.

A challenging day further down the field

Chris and Max Burton finished 17th overall on 80, with Graham and Frank Wilson just one point behind on 81. Simon and Hester Cowley recorded 94 points after an opening round of 47 that included a ten on Hill 8.

Among the Rookie competitors, Arthur Baker and Kelly Baker had a particularly difficult first round, recording a ten on Hill 1 and an eleven on Hill 8, but improved significantly as the day progressed.

Paul and Mark Goodyear endured a difficult event in their RB7, finishing on 153 points. Garry Preston and Paul Myatt were recorded as non-finishers in their Facksimile, the only crew not to record a classified finishing score.

Final overall top ten

POS.	DRIVER	CAR	POINTS
1	Thomas Bricknell	Crosslé	27
2	Josh Veale	Sherpa	30
3	Simon Kingsley	Crosslé	38
4	Richard Sharp	Cartwright	38
5	Boyd Webster	Crosslé	40
6	Stuart Beare	Sherpa Indy	41
7	Julian Fack	Impunity	43
8	Andy Wilks	Crosslé	44
9	George Watson	Hamilton	46
10	Peter Fensom	Hamilton	46

A Mercian of changing fortunes

The October Mercian was a fine example of how the character of a sporting trial can change throughout the day. What began as a battle for grip on dew-covered grass gradually developed into a more subtle challenge as the surface dried, only for the churned-up ground to become unexpectedly slippery later in the afternoon.

Several competitors demonstrated remarkable improvements as they adapted to the conditions, while others found that one troublesome hill was enough to undo an otherwise excellent performance.

Bricknell's consistency and outstanding second round ultimately made the difference, while Veale pushed him all the way and Kingsley's superb late recovery secured the final podium position.

Credit must go to Clerk of the Course Ian Veale and the Midlands Trials Car Club for putting on an enjoyable and competitive event, and to all the marshals, officials, passengers and competitors who helped make the day a success.

Results based on the provisional finishing order issued at 15:30 on 11 October 2026.