

North Birmingham News



NEWSLETTER

The Levis Road Cup Trial

It was a perfect early autumn morning as competitors, marshals and organisers arrived and readied themselves very early for the day ahead. There were 72 entries as a few retired at short notice, but it was good to see plenty of new faces competing, as well as the regulars that return each year. They came from far and wide; they came down from Scotland, came up from Essex, they came from South Wales and over from Ireland too. Among the entries were 8 veteran machines, which included Keith Wakelin's fabulous 1905 Rex, and Michael Shirwin's Bradbury Tourist. Another machine that attracted a lot of interest in the paddock was the wonderful and original 1920 Douglas bought along by John Quirke from Tipperary Town. It was good to see a varied selection of Levis machines competing; Jim Pool's 1927 Model M, Bill Martin's 1930 machine, and Steve Nutt's 1936 A34.

Ian Harris had once again set a fabulous but testing route through the Worcestershire and Shropshire scenery, but unfortunately, due to the heavy rain that we had suffered throughout the summer, the surface of Flagstaff hill had been washed away and the road was closed. The road closure meant there was no observed section on the morning route, so the organisers decided to put in an alternative, and instead of another hill used Clee St Margaret Ford.

The first task after lunch was the slow/fast test on Whitbach Hill, which was eventually won by Roger Kordas on his 1937 Rudge Ulster, who had a very good slow section and then stormed up the fast section to take the award. The Ford was the next observed section, where penalties were collected by a fair few people, along with wet feet! The Final test of the day was Farlow Hill, which also caused problems for some competitors.

Amongst our own Section that competed were Trevor Bull on his 1940 Triumph Tiger 100, being eagerly encouraged by John and Marion Walter at the start line,



Michael Burton from Birmingham on his 1939 Norton 16H

The Levis Cup Road Trial

Adrian 'Skippy' Lockrey on his wonderful 1919 Triumph Model H, Andy Briggs on his 1935 Triumph, and Jonathon Jinks on his BSA M20.

Trevor Bull finished in 10th position with 24 penalty points, and

Jonathon Jinks finished a very creditable 18th on 27 penalties. They both did well to finish so well up the leader board, as there were 60 competitors that actually finished the trial, and another 6 that retired or did not finish, including Skippy, who was one of two competitors that went for a dip at the replacement observed section, Clee St Margarets Ford. Our breakdown team provided by Peter Mellor of Anchor Garage and assistant John Aston had just 3 bikes and riders to bring home at the end of a very long day. All the other competitors got back under their own steam,



First Away at 10.00am



A 350cc Levis from Reading

some tired, some saddle sore, but nearly all with huge smiles.

Finally, to the huge team of people that gave up their time to help organise this event; without them it would not be possible, so to everyone who got up early to organise the start area, the marshals on the route, the Ludlow team, the Whitbach team, the back up team.

Thank you!

Josie



Three BSA's ready on the startline



Robin James's 1927 AJS H1

"A Day out" on The Levis Cup Road Trial in 2007

I have competed in the "Levis" for about twenty five years. During this time venues, organisers, competitors and routes have all changed. The enduring thing, however is the spirit of the original event, taking in the original test hills, although it was once a winter event! I would not personally wish for a return to that format.

Early events had mileages and checkpoints detailed and competitors had to work out their arrival times at these. Twenty four miles an hour is two and a half minutes per mile. It could be quite exciting having lost time in the lanes due to a recalcitrant tractor, it was then necessary to make this up. The last few miles into Ludlow were sometimes done at prodigious speeds. Not necessary with the new format where times are calculated between checkpoints.



I have used my '29 Sunbeam 492cc. longstroke model 5 on numerous occasions and with no speedo managed to complete the picturesque and challenging route with as few time penalties as eleven. on that occasion I believe I won the best vintage award, though on another run I had only nine but due to the bonus points available to early machines I was out of contention and quite right too! What an achievement to complete the Levis on a single speed veteran.

This year I used my '40 Tiger 100, and as it has a military history, it was impressed by the ministry of supply as a new machine in the war and not released as a civilian until 1948.



A few years ago I won the Sgt. H. J. Colley trophy on this machine. this year it was not to be, I lost my way due to a hidden sign and a lack of confidence! Had I entered in the post vintage class I would have done rather better.

I would have liked to have done better on the timed hill in the flexibility test but the Triumph was a bit flat this year, but this does not diminish the joy of simply riding in this our premiere event, and if anyone feels that it is all too difficult to countenance then think again. If you have access to an eligible machine, then *get it on the road for next years' event* and help make it even more memorable than this one.

You will enjoy it!

Trevor Bull.



“A Day out” on The Levis Cup Road Trial in 1956

By Mr E.A.Beadle

There was sound reasoning behind our decision to fit a chair to the Scott for this year's Levis cup Trial - Mick, my passenger, makes such good tea en route!

We also decided, after the Banbury, that we could make the journey to Worcestershire and back - 350 miles in all - in the day by using high ratios to get us there and changing sprockets for the trial itself. We duly made our preparations - machine checked over, route memorized, spare plugs, chains, tubes and plasticine packed into place (plus of course the “tea outfit”) extra petrol and water was taken on board, and at 3.30am we left London, driving into a very mistl dawn. Keeping going at a steady 40, we arrived at Holt Heath at 8.30am after a break for the inevitable tea at Oxford. Sprockets were changed and we went up the road to try out the timing on trhe stretch o the finish. Everything was OK- or so we thought!

The trial started, and Ankerdine was climbed with no bother at all; passing the foot of Red Marley we admired the view of the famous “freak hill”, but decided not to try and climb it! Then came the turning for Abberley, and our troubles began. The long pull up to Abberley and on to Flagstaff in bottom fear made the engine really hot, and we started to boil. The engine failed on the observed part of the hill, and I sent Mick on up the hill on foot, returning to the bottom to change the water for some cold. I was told afterwards that on my second attempt the front wheel left the ground at intervals all the way up! The clutch was on the fierce side, and I had to resort to slipping it in order to keep the revs. Up. Our performance on the hill had lost us some little time, and we had a hectic few miles trying to get back on schedule before the time check.

Everything went O.K. until we plunged into the network of narrow lanes near Coreley – where a horrible clanking sound told of the imminent collapse of the sidecar wheel. We stopped, and

while Mick unshipped the tea outfit and proceeded to “brew up” I set to work on the wheel. Eight spokes has broken, and by transferring sound spokes from one side of the wheel to the other I managed to even things up.

Coming into Coreley we found another competitor whose magneto had packed up: we towed him for a while until the hill became too steep and the water in the radiator too hot. Percy Pitchford then tried to tow him, but soon his sparks, too , disappeared: finally we refilled the rad with cold water, I left Mick at Coreley and towed both solos up to the top of Clee Hill, from where they could coast down into Ludlow; then I returned to pick up Mick and we went on our way—rather late!

At Ludlow everyone had already left, so on we went to Whitbach, where we had an uneventful climb. Approaching Farlow Bank the engine again became overheated and we failed on the first stretch, sliding broadside down again to the bottom. More cold water went into the “rad” and we tried again. This time the machine went wonderfully; with the throttle wide open we got wheel-spin, the revs mounted and then the power came in. In true trials fashion we bounced that Scott all the way up the hill. I wonder what it sounded like. I couldn't tell 0 I was too busy encouraging the machine, telling it to “Come on, old girl!” The old girl came on, and we finished the course without further incident.

Back at the finish we changed sprockets again and set out on the homeward journey. The going was fine until darkness began to set in; our only “lighting system” consisted on flashlamps, and trying to cruise at 40 m.p.h. in those conditions was rather a nightmare.

About a mile from home the sidecar wheel again collapsed—and this time the effect was final; there was only one way to proceed, so Mick sat over the back wheel of the bike, and in this way we arrived safely home at midnight. Unhappy? Not a bit of it! What a marvelous day out—and we wouldn't have missed it for anything.

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Results

THE LEVIS CUP, Premier Award: Mick Brown
 THE ALEC ROSS CUP, Runner Up: Peter Kent
 THE ALICE ROUND CHALLENGE CUP, Best Opposite Class: Dave Skinner
 THE GEORGE YEOMANS CUP, Best Performance on a Veteran: Glynn Udall
 THE LE VACK TROPHY, Best Performance on a Vintage Machine: Dave Barlow
 THE CALTHORPE CUP, Best Performance on a 250cc or below: John Charlton
 THE CON WHITLOCK CUP, Best Two Speeder: Not Awarded
 THE OMYGA TROPHY, Best Post Vintage: Gary Baker
 THE SGT. H J COLLEY TROPHY, Best Performance on an ex-WD machine: Reg Eyre
 THE PETER ASHEN ROSEBOWL, Best Performance by a Lady: Jenny Hart
 THE ROLLY NEWTON CUP, Best Performance by a Sidecar Outfit: Fred Smith
 THE TIMEKEEPER'S TROPHY, Best Time Performance irrespective of Class or Bonus Points: Peter Kent
 THE JOHN GREENWOOD TROPHY, Best Performance on the Flexibility Test: Roger Kordas
 THE ALBERT MATTOX TROPHY, The Team Award: Cotswold Ariel
 THE ENDEAVOUR AWARD: Keith Wakelin



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If anyone has any dates of local shows for 2008 please can you let me know for next year.

01384-294666 6.00pm-9.00pm

Julian

Our website is now up and running at again and can be accessed by typing in the address below

www.vmcc-nbs.co.uk

All of the previous newsletters are now available on the site

OCTOBER 31st	Slide show by Stephen Mills on the History and development of Morgan, AJS, Austin 7, and the pocket watch.
NOVEMBER 28th	Bring and Buy evening
DECEMBER 26th	No Meeting

[illegible]