

Martin's Two Days of Trials 9th / 10th April 2022

The Stuart Butterfield Hill 2

This is a swift account of the happenings on Hill 2 of the aforesaid trial on a bright but chilly Saturday morning.

The slope faced South-East and offered exceptional views down the Eden valley towards snow covered Cross Fell (Pennines highest point), Great Dun Fell (with its radar dome) and the villages of Knock and Dufton, famous for the Helm* wind. Hill 2 had been conveniently placed between Hill 1, with motorsport grandee Richard Milne and Hill 3, a labyrinthine challenge with the legendary Ginette and Brian Callister.

The surface was dry and the vegetation brown, like straw but tyre pressures more suited to Mark Cavendish didn't prevent a squadron of zeros in the first round. A subtle shift of the blue 4 designed to rob the crews of momentum failed miserably. How the likes of Bob Packham and Trevor Aston dropped points is a mystery, not in Geoff Wolfenden's case who was just elsewhere with the bonnet up. Have you thought about gas, Geoff?

The afternoon brought a whole new challenge - a big step between the 3 gate and the 2 with a bunch of bothersome birches beyond. A two was a gimme. If you engaged the turbo a wheel might nose through to a one. Only three drivers cleared it in the third round and they are all too modest to be named, apart from Simon.

The four was eased a bit for the last round but it was still a big ask just to climb the step let alone get inside the yellow one pole once you were over. Kudos to the eight that did.

Special mentions:

Richard Sharp - for giving me a lift up and helping me get my leg over.

Harry Barr and Peter Frost - for keeping calm and carrying on after getting perpendicular (and the rest) on Hill 3.

Simon K - for the win.

The Stone Trough Trial Hill 2

Sunday brought cloudless skies and hordes of trialers keen to fill their boots with yet more Edenhall sand.

The problem with this site for folk of delicate disposition and little ground clearance is getting to the hills. However, in lieu of a donkey and a bag of carrots we were blessed with the generosity of Jeff and his Amarok. The man is a star and should be given the freedom of Morecambe.

So we were delivered to Hill 2 in style. For those conversant with the site, the gates rose up the Eastern slope of the bowl on stony ground strewn with straw. It was easier to drive over than walk on. George Watson was first on the hill and he kindly offered to turf Victoria out and give me a lift up to a marshalling post at the 4. George then goes and muffs the 9. So everyone else clears the Hill. Don't let this put you off, it's just coincidence.

There was a tweak for Round 2 and the scoresheet collected the odd one and two here and there. Colin Armitstead suddenly forgot how to do the first two gates and needed divine guidance in the last round. Didn't see Bill Rhodes after the first round. Some sort of major mechanical malfunction.

There was a re-jig after lunch where Martin went for width which introduced greener grass on softer ground. This brought out some bigger numbers all round but the drivers were more confident in the final round, either that or they just wanted to finish. Stephen Barnes was among the few to clean the hill in round three only for the trialling gods to aim one squarely at the gonads in the last round. C'est la vie. Didn't see Simon in the afternoon.

Tom Bricknell didn't look like he was going to drop any points anywhere, certainly not on Hill 2. He won the trial having dropped just a single point.

Thomas drove beautifully all weekend, very controlled and no need for fireworks. A deserved winner of the Stone Trough and the cumulative award over the two events.

Credit goes to all the visitors who made the event successful. The brave souls who endure the M5 or M25 are always welcome and it was a pleasure to have the Irish visitors. Trevor and Andrew Aston so nearly won on the second day. Harry Barr and Peter Frost were seventh over the two days and picked up 8.3 for their floor routine on Saturday. David and Suzy Webster were eighth on Saturday but fell out with Hill 4, not literally but it did them no favours and I think David has already won a couple of events at home this year so he might be short of space in the trophy cabinet.



Special Mentions:

Jeff Armitstead for pulling Bill's car & trailer out of the site. No mean feat.

Matthew Sharp: Like Noel Gallagher at Old Trafford, a blue in a sea of red.

Arthur Carroll and Warren Pinto: for services to the bar of the Edenhall Hotel.

