

THE TERRIBLE TALES OF THE TRIALS TYPES (ALIAS TRIALS TRIPE)

I was going to miss this months' Query but owing to the demands of the Ed. I have been forced to pushing my pen once again.

The Bill Besson Trial held on the 28th of April was a great success for the other clubs taking part as they supplied 15 of the 20 observers. Earth works etc., left only 5 Wycombe members observing. A shocking state of affairs, but still it was a good trial, and everyone went home happy. The results were in the post by 11.00 pm., a great effort by Craker, Craker and Craker, stencil cutters of the highest order.

This months T.T.T.O.T.H.T. INCORPORATES 'A Soaking in Scotland' by Soggy Socks Valder, which covers the exploits of the Manager on Holiday.

Having a holiday in early May is not everyones idea of a holiday, but this year it was mine. So after riding in the Bill Beeson Trial, I spent a couple of days doing odd jobs, which included putting a reconditioned back axle in the van, before I set off to Kendal where I was to stay a couple of days with some relations whom I Hadn't seen for a number of years. The Friday turned out a wonderful day, and in the morning I walked up the hill behind my cousin's house and from the top had a wonderful view of the Lakeland hills with the highest ones still covered in snow. In the afternoon off the pick-up and went for a ride over the hills to Kentmere and over a rough track to Troutbeck. Needless to say I found some rocky going on the track to practise on.

On Saturday morning I left the Lakeland by way of Shapfell to Carlisle and Edinburgh where I arrived in time to pop down to the Gorgie Cattle Market to have a chat with the trade Barons, and get some lowdown on the trial, The Scottish Six Days Trial. The evening was spent eating and drinking at the Hotel where I found myself in the company of all the works Managers and riders etc.

Sunday morning after a mammoth breakfast, everyone left the hotel for the cattle market to do some final adjustments before handing their bikes into the Control in the afternoon. For some people, final adjustments must mean a complete overhaul.

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for there were engines in the smallest pieces, but somehow they were all ready for the scrutineers by the afternoon. After their bikes have been inspected, the riders must not touch them again until one minute before the start, and even then, they can't start the motor until it is their turn to move off. Sunday evening we all retired to bed early, all, that is, except Don Smith and a couple of charlies who want to antagonise the maids.

Monday morning was dull and not very warm: I went and got my bike, then it was my turn and the starter said I could go. I pushed down the kick-start and the engine sprang to life first time. 'We're off' I thought as I trickled along in the last of the Edinburgh peak traffic, out of the town towards Kirkcaldine bridge, which goes over the Forth. On the way, we had a good view of the Forth railway bridge and the new road bridge which is still being built. Snow capped mountains also came into view, and after a long ride the first section, called Culross, which goes up between two high walls, and is covered in loose boulders. It cost me one park. Not long after this, the heavens opened, and we got our first soaking. Glenogle was reached, and it was still pouring with rain. With our hands frozen, everyone was wishing they hadn't bothered to come. Some hot soup at the lunch check put us in a better mood for the next section, which was called Mell Glass. Eight subs straight up through a rocky path on which we rode for about the next forty miles over the top of Rannock Moor, with all its bog holes, gullies and everything else that will find you out. When I was on the highest part, ploughing through the snow, Mother Nature saw fit that I, also, should be covered in snow, so it snowed. I could only see about ten yards;; Marvellous, when you're tearing along, trying to keep clear of the bog holes and gullies. After the snow came sunshine on the next hill, then a lovely blind on a forest path alongside a loch. Many miles further on was a section called Ben Nevis, right under great Ben himself. One more section called Town Hall Brae, which goes up an alley at the side of Fort William Town Hall, and that was the finish of the first day with 170 miles on the clock

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My hotel for the week was half a mile from the official garage, where all the bikes were locked up for the night, so I got a lift on a bike trailer, which was propelled at a fair rate of knots down the High Street by a very large car. The evening turned out very nice, and we retired to bed, hoping it would be as nice in the morning.

Next morning, I drew back the curtains: what a morning, rain coming down by the bucket-full, and that's how it stayed all day, perishing cold with it, too. The course led out on the very rough Mamore road to a section called Collert Pass which went up over the top of a 2,000 foot mountain. Going down the other side was a very hairy affair, as it was extremely slippery and muddy, with, of course, the usual amount of rocks thrown in. Half way down, a gent came rushing past all out of control, to perform all sorts of strange acts in an attempt to regain control of his machine. Needless to say, he failed, and parted company with his bike.

I was very pleased to see the road, and set off to do battle with Martium: another long section over the top of a hill and another equally long wrist-breaking descent on the other side. This was followed by a ten mile tramp along a very water-logged track to the bridge of Orchy, where there was a time check. Plenty of time to spare - so round the corner to the very welcome sight of a Pub, where Rum and anything to warm the inside of frozen, soaked trials riders was being downed. Twenty miles of road work took us to Tyndrum, a section up the side of a hill of a dis-used slate works. From the top we dropped down at never less than 1 in 5 to the lunch check which was a very welcome sight. The afternoon's run was a return over the morning's route. More aching wrists, more rain, and more rain.

The lady who kept the hotel where five of us were staying, dried all our boots, Barber suits every night ready for the next day's soaking. On Wednesday, we did start in the dry, sunshine in fact, which lasted for the first thirty miles, which made the run up the side of the Caledonian Canal very pleasant. Laggan Lochs was the first section of the day, and a superb section it was too, on to Fort Augustus and the long 25 mile ride over the top of the hills

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on the rough. Here the weather was very changeable, sunshine hail, rain, sunshine, in that order, before having a very cold ride along the side of some loch, thirty miles after the lunch, which led to a return trip to Ben Nevis. After this, we continued twenty miles to a new section called Letior Bon. From a path cut by German prisoners during the first war, it zig zags up the side of a very steep hill and caused chaos. When one did get to the top, there was a path to ride on five feet wide, with a 3,400 foot drop on one side and since we were all a bit late, things got a bit hairy. A section that has been used in every Scottish trial since they started, is Mamore, but as there was a time check at the top I didn't stop and have a look, but just blinded up it in second to find some large boulders just round the corner, which had me all over the place. Then back along the Mamore road, and that was the third day finished.

Thursday morning, it was fine and it lasted all day. The course led out of Fort William along what is known as Mallig road or the Road to the Isles - some wonderful scenery. After about twenty miles, we left the road for a rough track which led us to Loch Sheil where the view was even better than earlier. Also along this track were some very good sections, Ravine, Bay Hill, and the Devil's Staircase, which was not observed on the way down, but was on the way up. Every one seemed a lot happier after a day of sunshine and the town seemed a lot brighter when we returned in the evening.

Friday morning, and only 66 miles to do. It's not raining, but the sun's not shining either as we made our way through Kinlochleven to a section I will not attempt to spell, on over the hills and back to Kinlochleven for the section of the week. Loch Ele Path, it was called. 15 subs, with a few breaks between subs to prevent delays. Sammy Miller was the only one to clean it all the way up. The view back over the loch from the top of the section is breathtaking, well worth the struggle to get there. A short run over the hills and another go at Mamore. This time, I had a look before rushing up, and then back to Fort William, for Town hall Brae, and another section in the town centre called

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M & D., pump the tyres up and do odd adjustments ready for the 150 mile ride back to Edinburgh, and that was Friday's run over. The rest of the afternoon was spent buying souvenirs etc. One of the foreign riders bought himself a kilt and a tweed jacket with a hat to match. Looked all right and all.

Saturday morning and time to say 'goodbye' to our very good landlady and to Fort William, out of the town by the Mamore road for the last time, over the moors to Kinlochleven then South through Glencoe, Tyndrum, where we had been earlier in the week, to a timed road section, average 40 mph for 25 miles. Not very fast you might say, but after a week's hard work in the Fighlands, no fewer than five bikes packed up whilst on this run. Not more than 30 miles from the finish, the foreign gent who had bought the kilt had to pack up, as during the week, he had had some trouble and several parts of his 500cc Ariel were held on with bits of wire; but now the exhaust pipe and silencer had fallen right off. He stopped, picked it up, and carried on, truly regardless, with flames leaping straight out of the exhaust port, because the mag had come adrift, and was being held on with his foot. Every now and then he would wave the complete exhaust system at anyone looking on, and with the tail of his Davy Crockett hat stuck straight out behind him in the wind, his foot lifted up on the mag, and waving his exhaust pipe at passers by, he looked a fair old sight. However, the mag chain finally broke and he had to drop out. Hard luck indeed, so near to the finish. "I come back again next year with a better bike" is what he said when he got back to Edinburgh. After having gone through the final check, I had about four miles to go to the hotel, and in these miles, I got a puncture. I am very pleased it was in Edinburgh and not out on some lonely moor.

That evening, together with a load of other chaps, I went to the presentation of the awards, already engraved by the jewellers between 2 and 7 pm that evening.

Next morning, I was up early for the Alan Trophy Trial which I had entered for, some 15 miles south of Carlisle, so I said my farewells to Bonnie Scotland and pointed my old pick-up south. The Allen started off in lovely weather, but not for long it soon started raining and spoilt the day as far as I was concerned. Some /

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very good sections, some 'orrible weather. A fair do I suppose.

After the event I nipped off down the 118 miles to Manchester, where I was to stay the night. Next morning up early, as I have to report for duty at 12.29 pm., so I left Manchester at 7.15 am., in bright sunshine and was doing very nicely, when at 9.30 am., I got stuck in a traffic jam, caused by road-works at Stonebridge, near Birmingham. It put my schedule all up the creek, so I decided to come down the M.1., instead of Warwick-Banbury way. I came off the M.1. at 11.55 am., at Hemel Hempstead, thinking that things were getting a bit short on time, so 'brain-wave''ring the Garage' - so stop - rush into a phone box - rush out again, thing not working, up the road find another phone box, it works. All I've got to do now is wash and change - about two and a half minutes that took, then off up the road to Amersham, where the bus I was due to take out was just pulling up as I parked my van nearby. 'Ah well' never a dull moment. and that was the end of my restful holiday, 'Haggis and Addenew' (don't ask me what it means)

While I was away the rest of the management i.e: the Hon.Chairman and the Hon.Sec. etc., were at the dance. The jungle telegraph tells there were some right goings on including some dancing lessons given by Andria (Sylvester) 1.2.3 and all that and I missed it. Lesson Two next time.

Signed.

The Manager, alias Soggy Socks, alias Haggis, alias Brian Valder.

P.S. Don't forget the Greybeards and Novices Trial,
Sunday 30th June 1963 at 1.45 pm.

Hedgerley Park is just off the A.332 Gerards Cross/Slough road. Turn right at the traffic lights on the A.40. at Gerards Cross if coming from Wycombe, and then straight on for 1/2 miles then turn right again. Plenty of room for picnics.

Don't forget the coastal sither, please. EB.