

Scottish Classic Motorcycle Club

Round 4 Kirkness Farm Ballingry

Sunday 10th June

Report by Chris Montignani

After what was a decent event weather-wise and a good turnout of racers for our Round 3 event at Drumclog back in May the Scottish Classic Motorcycle Club competitors made their way to Kirkness Farm near Ballingry in Fife to hold Round 4 of their current championship. This of course is the first of two visits the club will be making to this superb hillside venue in 2018 with the other being scheduled for the 2nd of September.

With the entire UK population currently enjoying a fantastic spell of good summer weather which has lasted almost five weeks without any major rainfall it was good that the current forecast was for much more of the same for this fourth round encounter.

The track builders once again had been working their magic and had laid out a track that would suit all ages and levels of skill in this fantastic little grassland park. This Kirkness track is very good from a spectator point of view and there is not much of the track that the discerning classic motocross enthusiast cannot see with regards to witnessing all the racing action.

The track on Sunday morning was the hardest I have ever seen it at Kirkness due to the lack of rainfall in the area over the past weeks, there was a heavy downpour early doors Sunday morning although it did very little to dampen down what was going to be a very dusty afternoon's racing in the Fife "stoor".

Practise was already taking its toll on some of the riders machines when Robert Kennedy and Stewart Roden's CCM's encountered mechanical problems whereby some remedial work would be needed to get them back on track. Stewart's 74 bike suffered a bent pushrod and it would take him until the start of the second part of the race programme to get it up and running again.

When racing finally got underway the Pre 68 class were first to the start line and in the Over 350cc class it was Fergus Moodie who took full honours with an excellent performance riding his very quick BSA. Brian Aird took the runner

up spot in second with another consistent ride. Liston Bell should really have won this class outright as he was by far the fastest rider in this class on the day although a broken chain in race three would leave him stranded trackside and give him a DNF for his troubles. In the Under 350cc class it was Clifford Hardistay who won the title overall with the top spot from Ian Ridley who was always quick from the gate over the course of the three legs. Mr consistency Ian Ward always finishes in the top three or four spots and his incredibly reliable old Villiers has yet to let him down, but a third place finish here at Kirkness has added more valuable championship points to his already impressive years tally.

In the big boys Pre 1984 class it was a dominant overall win for Davie Loudon on his very quick YZ Yamaha. Loudon was quick throughout the three legs in this class and was well worthy of his class win. In moto four just after the break it was a mad dash for the holeshot as multiple riders went into turn one looking for a quick race lead. At turn two on the top of the track there was a coming together between Steve Mower and Neil Glendinning as the two collided into a heap and it looked for all the world a serious accident as officials rushed to the scene. It wasn't long before both riders got to their feet and dusted themselves down, and thankfully both riders were fine and at least Neil Glendinning lined up for the race re-start. The runner up spot in this formula was eventually taken by Daniel McNally who showed he was someone to watch out for in the future as he was not afraid to mix it up with the front runners to improve his track position. Despite his heroic efforts Neil Glendinning would have to make do with the third place spot although he spent most of the day running at the front of the pack on his very fast 480 Honda.

In the Pre 75 Over 350cc class it looked like all the hype regarding the prodigal son's return was true after all as Les Calderwood shot from the gate into second spot and eventually secured two runner up places in moto's one and two. Unfortunately the luck of the Irish was not with Les on the day as he succumbed once again to bad luck as his CCM would refuse once again to fire up for moto 3. This was eventually traced to a faulty kill switch wire and was repaired only for Les to then give the Clews bike a handful of gas in celebration whereby the throttle cable then snapped ending his days racing. Nevertheless

I'm positive the big guy will be back bigger and stronger for Round 5 at Thornhill. The eventual winner on the day was Lewis Bell who was very quick around the dusty Kirkness track and took holeshot's in races two and three riding his rolling thunder CCM. Also a relative newcomer to the Scottish club was Michael McNiven riding a very tidy 360 CZ although it was plain for everyone to see he was not a complete novice when it came to racing dirt bikes as he was very quick and secured a well-earned second place spot for his first time out racing with our club. Les Calderwood virtue of his excellent two second place spots in moto's one and two would find him on the final step of the Pre 75 Over 350cc podium.

Derek McAulay was the fastest rider in the Pre 75 Under 350cc class and he rode the wheels off his old Bultaco to take the No1 spot at the chequered flag. Youngster Sarah Louise Nelson showed the guys how to ride around the twisty Kirkness track as she was flying on her Billy Chisholm Husqvarna and was willing to scrap with anyone that stood in her way as she secured the runner up position for her much admired bravery. Kenny Harper filled the other vital podium spot in third with another great performance on his immaculate Bultaco.

In the age related classes after the lunch break it was Fergus Moodie once again who secured the title in the Over 60's as he was virtually unchallenged over the course of the three legs. Davie Hillis took a good second place spot riding Fergus's spare CCM machine and although Davie said to me earlier in the day he was going to have a run out just for a laugh he certainly didn't show that he was doing it just for laughs with the speed he was carrying. Gordon Watson was never far from the front pairing of Moodie and Hillis throughout the day although a third place finish overall was still a respectable score for his eventual three leg encounter. The Over 65 class was won by Clifford Hardistay with Tom Forsyth in the runner up spot. Tom Forsyth was going well over the course of the three legs although dropped his bike at the line for some strange reason in the first over 65 race.

Stewart Roden had to sit out almost all of the first part of the race programme due to doing some Formula one style engine rebuild on his CCM after it died in practise. But when he lined up for the start of the Over 50's class he completely dominated this formula. Three holeshot's from the gate and three

emphatic wins was a decent consolation for his initial bad start to the day. Derek McAulay was not fazed in the slightest about the lack of horsepower from his little Bultaco as he chased Roden all the way over the three legs, although a second place finish was a decent result for him as his Spanish bike seems to have got some of its mechanical reliability back. Ian Robertson was on course for a decent overall score although his new winter bike build Yamaha's ignition cdi unit packed in during the first few races of the programme and he had to revert to his trusty Can Am to see him through the rest of the day and to an eventual third place spot.

The Over 40's supplied some good racing over the three moto's and it was Stephen McNally who nursed his sick Kawasaki home to an eventual winner's enclosure with a win. Bryan Aird was in there again on his trusty BSA and he would fill the runner up spot with a great ride chasing down the very quick McNally.

It was only going to be a matter of time before a race win was on the cards in the Under 40's class for Sarah Louise Nelson going by her emphatic display at Drumclog last month on a borrowed bike. A pre-race paddock interview with Sarah at Kirkness told how she just took to riding the borrowed bike in her stride although plans are afoot for a new sponsor and different machine for 2019. Sarah hounded Lewis Bell for most of the lap in the first leg of the Under40's class and was never far from his rear wheel, Lewis then took an unscheduled drive through the marker tapes leaving the young miss Nelson to steal the track position and go on to secure her first ever win with the club . . . so well done to her. Lewis would still take the overall win virtue of his better performances in the remaining two legs with newcomer Michael McNiven on that very quick CZ filling the second place position. Wee Sarah stood on the final step of the podium for a well-deserved third place overall in this class and believe me she was well worthy of it.

In the Pre 84 Over 60's class it was a win for club secretary Brian Hamilton riding his antique CZ. John Porteous would secure the runner up position in second riding his very quick and lovely CR480 Honda. Despite his big off earlier in the day Steve Mower still managed to get back on his 490 Maico to take the third place overall in this formula. In the Pre 84 Over 50's Davie Loudon was very fast over the course of the day switching from his YZ Yamaha to his KX

Kawasaki for the age related races and took the win with some style. Andy Malloch was the best of the rest with a second place finish on his 1983 MX 500 Armstrong and appeared to like the now very dusty and hard conditions of the Kirkness track as he thundered round the twisty course. It was good to see Aberdonian Kevin Smith back racing again on his 250 Maico Spider as Kevin has been out of the scene for a few months but he has started his season off in fine style with a third place finish here in the Kingdom of Fife.

Neil Glendinning was eventually rewarded for his relentlessly fast race pace over the course of the day on his Honda CR 480 with an overall win in the Pre 84 Under 50's class. Glendinning for me was a class above and although in the early moto's never got the best of starts it wasn't long before he hit the front and disappeared into the distance. Young Daniel McNally was giving it his best shot and looked for all the world like a class winner although it was a bit of a long shot to match the pace of Glendinning and a second place finish was another good result come point's calculation time. Daniel's dad Stephen filled the third place spot riding Jim Colligan's 490 Maico after his old Kawasaki gave up the ghost and eventually pooped out, although that's the beauty of our little organisation if your bike lets you down there is always someone on hand to help you out.

Summing up I can't believe the run of excellent weather we are having this season as we have not had a bad meeting so far this year. This was another event for the history books with some great racing and a decent turnout of competitors although I can't help thinking that the attendances could be better.

As usual all the paddock interview's and lovely bikes along with all the racing footage is already posted on my You Tube Channel and you can find links to these video's on the club Facebook page, although I may in the future speak to the website admin boys to see if it is easier for club members to access the video's from a page on the official club website at www.classicscramble.com

Our next event of course will be Thornhill in a few weeks' time but before that I will be heading off to Northern Ireland for a two day event and then down to the superb Blencarn Scramble the week after.

So there's plenty going on for me at the moment and I never seem to have a minute, so until we meet again ride your bikes safely and I will see you all at Thornhill on the 8th of July.

Chris Montignani