**3rd Quality Scotch Corner Classic Rally**
**7th August 1999**

A record entry of 51 cars lined up for the start of the 3rd Scotch Corner Classic Rally in the car park of the sponsors’ Quality Scotch Corner Hotel in on a very dull and rainy August morning.  A number of crews were already under pressure before the start as the organisers’ notice board revealed a measured 2 mile route to replace the 8.6 mile route shown in the final instructions.  The amendment specified that the 2 mile route was the one to use for calibrating trip meters.  Many crews could be seen frantically charging up and down the A 6108 between 8 and 9 am re-calibrating their instruments having carefully set them up to agree with the 8.6 mile route the night before.  By the end of the day, however, many of them may have felt that they shouldn’t have bothered!

Peter Horsburgh and Mark Appleton led the field away in the absence of last years winners and Dave Hughes in his Volvo Amazon was seeded at 2 by virtue of his paring for this event with Andy Gibson who was the winning navigator in 1997.  Next were championship leaders, Geoff Twigg and Graham Carter in the Cooper ‘S’ followed by Geoff Breakell/Nigel Raeburn in the Alfa Guilia with Nicky Porter and Colin Francis completing the top 5 in Nicky’s immaculate Cooper ‘S’ which he has owned from new in 1964!

The navigation handouts were given to the navigators in 19 sealed envelopes at documentation   The first was a simple 2 mile section to TC2 where “clock faces” defined 14 junctions in just over 9 miles leading competitors to TC3 and the start of the first regularity.  The navigation was defined by spot heights, map features and a couple of avoids. At the intermediate and final controls competitors were scratching their heads as there was no indication at either control of the ideal time or organisers distance so navigators were unable to verify that they had correctly calibrated their trip meters.  Marsden & Garstang in the Cortina GT led over this section with 21 seconds penalties from Roxburgh/Ing’s Rover on 32 and Skinner/Pettie on 37.

TC4 was located near Downholme inside the grounds of Catterick Army Camp and comptetitors now tackled three tests and a ‘regularity test’ in the camp.  The handout here had a typo suggesting that Test 3 & 4 would follow Test 1 without the intervention of Test 2 and a wrong plot for the location of TC4!  In fact, the order was Test 1, Regularity Test A then Tests 2 and 3.   Test 1 saw Russ Swift, a former Autotest champion and well known stunt driver set fastest time at 28 seconds despite running at 52 as he had entered late.  Close behind were a group of cars on 30 seconds including Twigg, Eyre-Maunsell, Profitt and Armstrong.  Colin Francis couldn’t find the envelope for Regularity Test A which was unfortunate as this was a 4.7 mile section mostly on gravel defined by 31 tulips and including 9 PC boards!  Competitors were also supplied with a colour photocopy of an MoD map but most people found it easiest to simply call the junctions from the tulips.  The section was run at 30mph and was very tricky - cars could be seen travelling in all directions with many crews, including several experts, admitting to having missed some of the boards.  Unfortunately, the finish control marshal was not in position for the first 4 cars and so the organisers subsequently decided to cancel the whole section, to the relief of those who had failed to note down all the passage check bourds. Test 2 was another short gravel test where Swift was again quickest from  Hughes, Twigg, Forster and Humphrey who were all 3 seconds down whilst Test 3 consisted of a 360 round a cone, up to a very tight cone hairpin and downhill to the finish via another 360 round a cone.  Russ Swift was an amazing 8  seconds quicker than Twigg here with Hooley 3rd and Horsburgh 4th each an additional 1 second slower.

The overall order now was now Marsden on  180 from Twigg on 191, Horsburgh on 195 and Roxburgh on 201.

A 19 mile standard section led to the next regularity with two speed changes and two  controls led by Boyce on 20 followed by Hooley 1 second behind then Twigg and Hughes a further 2 seconds back.  Marsden dropped 60 seconds here allowing Twigg/Carter into a lead that they were never to relinquish. Horsburgh/ Appleton were 10 seconds behind in 2nd place.

Despite suggestions from past competitors after each of the previous two events,  the organisers continued to run the rally with standard sections timed to the minute and the next section showed the folly of this for a daylight road rally.  Experts were confronted with a triangular herringbone with four or five junctions shown on each of the three sides with instructions to start at a corner.  The section was 12.4 miles for which 25 minutes were allowed.  Crews who solved it quickly were reasonably happy with this but some navigators struggled for quite a while leaving the drivers with extremely high averages to maintain – several crews admitted to having AVERAGED 60mph in order to complete the section on time.  This is really unacceptable during a daylight event and the organisers of this event should be strongly urged to discard this method of scoring and follow the example of other events by simply having no penalties for lateness other than OTL on road sections.   Several well known crews dropped road time here, some as much as 22 minutes! Another regularity followed with one speed change and two controls with Doe/Rossitter best on 6 seconds and several crews tying on 7.  This was followed by an interesting ‘make your own route up’ test at Hawes cattle market where various lines had to be crossed once only in any direction.  Twigg, Swift and Wiseberg tied for fastest here on 23 seconds and competitors now moved on to Hawes Creamery for lunch.

**Top ten at lunch halt**

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 3 | Twigg | Carter | Mini Cooper 'S' | 247 |
| 2 | 1 | Horsburgh | Appleton | Mini Cooper 'S' | 255 |
| 3 | 2 | Hughes | Gibson | Volvo 122S | 274 |
| 4 | 13 | Wiseberg | Blackett | Mini Cooper  | 289 |
| 4 | 4 | Breakell | Raeburn | Alfa Romeo Guilia | 334 |
| 6 | 12 | Brook | Waggett | Triumph Herald | 366 |
| 7 | 11 | Boyce | Raeburn | Saab 96 | 375 |
| 8 | 38 | Clegg | Smith | MGA | 474 |
| 9 | 18 | Profitt | Harrison | Triumph TR4 | 724 |
| 10 | 8 | Doe | Rossiter | Riley 1.5 | 779 |

From Lunch a short neutral section led to the longest regularity of the event mainly over moorland.  The navigation clues included pairs of spot heights combined which caused one or two furrowed brows.  There were no less than five speed changes and five IRTCs.  All the leading crews had penalties of over a minute at three of the controls.  The size of these penalties from crews who normally get scores in single figures at every regularity control seemed to indicate either a discrepancy between the organisers’ measured 2 miles and their measurements on the actual regularity section or else wrong siting of controls.  Either way it contrived to make the actual results appear to be somewhat of a lottery.  Best here were Roxburgh/Ing on 193 followed by Hughes/Gibson on 307 then Twigg/Carter and Wiseberg/Blackett on 309.  Ned Brook and Steve Waggett lost 344 seconds here dropping them behind Boyce/Raeburn for the first time.  This was to be the only change in the top 10 positions all afternoon.

Two neutrals and a standard section now brought the crews to TC14 via the quaint bridge at Marske Bridge which has a steel suspension system with a wooden slatted floor and is only about 8 feet wide.  The DoE had specifically requested only one car at a time on the bridge which was one of five bridges crossed which are included on the “list of buildings of special architectural or historic interest.”   TC14 was sited in front of the imposing Bowes Museum.   From here it was a short run back down the same road to two tests at Streatlam where Swift was again fastest on 75 followed by Twigg and Porter on 77.   The overall order now was Twigg on 633 then Horsburgh, 651, Hughes, 665, Wiseberg, 683 and Breakell, 751 There was a long wait at TC16 as the marshal had been missing from TC15 allowing crews to get 15 minutes ahead of schedule.  However, compensation for those interested in rally cars of significance was that the marshals manning TC16 were driving an immaculate RS200 – not the most commonly seen vehicle on the road!

A 25 mile section defined by spot heights and then a long herringbone delivered the cars to Raby Castle for the second regularity test and the last two tests.  Many experts seemed to struggle for some time with the route instructions but as there were 51 minutes allowed for the section it didn’t produce any surprise penalties.

The regularity test was around 2.1 miles following arrows around a similar route to previous years’ events and was won by  Exelby/Wilkinson on 2 from Hinchley and North’s MGB on 5.

The final two tests saw Swift fastest again on 64 from Exelby/Wilkinson and Profitt/Harrison on 65.  Wiseberg took 15 seconds off Hughes on these two test but it was not quite enough to overhall him for 3rd place.

A ten mile run back to the Quality Scotch Corner Hotel where Twigg/Carter were declared worthy winners by 28 seconds from Horsburgh/Appleton. Hughes/Gibson were 3rd pipping Wiseberg/Blackett by just 8 seconds.  Once again Minis occupied three of the first four places and Geoff & Graham showed that they are currently the in-form crew and the men to beat.  The championship is really hotting up now though as Geoff Twigg and Dave Hughes have to start dropping scores and Peter Horsburgh and Dick Appleton are still one event away from having six counting scores.

The organisers again found some excellent test venues and wonderful roads but really need to take a hard look at their own regulations and perhaps concentrate on ensuring that the paperwork is entirely accurate.  However, they will be encouraged by the tremendous support shown for this years’ event and presumably will be hoping for a full entry with reserves next year.

AHW

Top ten results

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 3 | Geoff Twigg | Graham Carter | Mini Cooper 'S' | 711 |
| 2 | 1 | Peter Horsburgh | Mark Appleton | Mini Cooper 'S' | 739 |
| 3 | 2 | Dave Hughes | Andy Gibson | Volvo 122S | 758 |
| 4 | 13 | Adam Wiseberg | Peter Blackett | Mini Cooper  | 766 |
| 5 | 4 | Geoff Breakell | Nigel Raeburn | Alfa Romeo Guilietta | 834 |
| 6 | 11 | Peter Boyce | Graeme Raeburn | Saab 96 | 898 |
| 7 | 12 | Ned Brook | Steve Waggett | Triumph Herald | 923 |
| 8 | 38 | Stephen Clegg | Bryan Smith | MGA | 1053 |
| 9 | 18 | Ricky Profitt | Phil Harrison | Triumph TR4 | 1268 |
| 10 | 8 | Cliff Doe | Simon Rossiter | Riley 1.5 | 1324 |

Top ten test times

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 52 | Russ Swift | F Bourne | Mini | 299 |
| 2 | 3 | Geoff Twigg | Graham Carter | Mini Cooper 'S' | 318 |
| 3 | 1 | Peter Horsburgh | Mark Appleton | Mini Cooper 'S' | 327 |
| 4 | 10 | Robin Eyre-Maunsell | Willy Cave | Sunbeam Alpine | 335 |
| 4 | 13 | Adam Wiseberg | Peter Blackett | Mini Cooper  | 335 |
| 6 | 28 | Chris Exelby | Dave Wilkinson | MGB | 344 |
| 7 | 19 | Peter Stonor | Joe Applegarth | Porsche 911S | 346 |
| 8 | 2 | Dave Hughes | Andy Gibson | Volvo 122S | 351 |
| 8 | 42 | Ken Forster | Sally Forster | Escort Mexico | 351 |
| 10 | 6 | Chris Hunt-Cooke | Dave Kirkham | MGB | 354 |
| 10 | 23 | Nick Watkins | Jackie Salter | MGB GT | 354 |

Top ten Regularity penalties

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1 | 14 | David Roxburgh | Jonathan Ing | Rover 2000 | 333 |
| 2 | 1 | Geoff Twigg | Graham Carter | Mini Cooper 'S' | 393 |
| 3 | 2 | Dave Hughes | Andy Gibson | Volvo 122S | 407 |
| 4 | 1 | Peter Horsburgh | Mark Appleton | Mini Cooper 'S' | 412 |
| 5 | 13 | Adam Wiseberg | Peter Blackett | Mini Cooper  | 431 |
| 6 | 4 | Geoff Breakell | Nigel Raeburn | Alfa Romeo Guilia | 467 |
| 7 | 22 | Derek Skinner | Tony Pettie | Austin A35 | 481 |
| 8 | 11 | Peter Boyce | Graeme Raeburn | Saab 96 | 483 |
| 9 | 12 | Ned Brook | Steve Waggett | Triumph Herald | 506 |
| 10 | 17 | Dave Marsden | Mike Garstang | Cortina GT | 512 |