



THE OBSERVER

For the members of Castle Colchester MCC – Colchester: A safe distance from Norfolk

May 2013 Edition

This month I have been spoiled rotten as two articles have been submitted by Club Members (well, kind of) – see RN's trial report below and Caroline Mann's report about her day at MXTryout.

On another matter the turn out for the JKMT meeting, on 16th April, was disappointing with only six turning up.

Report from Richard Norman.....

Eastern Centre Invasion of Belgium

The Belgium adventure really started in 2012 when Buck ventured down with a mate by the name of "Peachy". Based upon his recommendation Andy Buggy, Tom and Richard Norman in one vehicle, and Buck with Sudbury club "all-rounder" Stevie Roper entered. An Early start on Good Friday got us down to the Belgium town of Aywaille in the Ardennes, we signed on and checked out our "digs" which were excellent. The event does take on public roads which remained open throughout the event, luckily we had Buggy on hand to make up some number plates making letters out of gaffer tape. Buck was already prepared for this and had A 250 OSA on his bike, when questioned by another UK rider regarding the cost Buck replied "about 10p a letter" Ever the comedian Buggy came up with: TIT 711 L and TOM 91 IX.

Bikes are set off in the order that they are presented so we got down to the Park Ferme about 8am and pushed our bikes into the queue and then sought shelter from the bitter cold in the community centre that had been taken over by the club. The first man away was 9.30 and we were about 20 minutes after that. The course was a figure of eight with the start area in the middle passed twice on each lap, there were 6 sections on each "loop" giving a total of 12 sections with 2 laps. This doesn't sound like many sections but each one was good value with no "gimmes" There were 4 classes and we were all on the second hardest described as "Expert" and it proved to be ideal.



Tom, Buggy, Richard, Buckster & Steve Roper

Buck and Stevie were the first away with Tom Andy and Richard catching them up at the 1st section, a twisty rocky job with the frost still in the ground. I think we all fancied it but in the end all came away with disappointing 3's. It seemed to take us a little while to get into the event with Tom the first to settle posting the best score of the gang with 12 marks lost. Richard had a scare at section 10 where the normally ultra-reliable Beamish lost its back brake, a quick check revealed that the threads had stripped on the brake adjuster nut, Buck was on hand with a couple of 10mm nuts and it was game on. This seemed to settle him as he went on to nail a very good second lap of just 8 marks, the second best in the class. Buggy spent the day moaning about jetting and poor front brake, the carb was stripped after the first lap and the front brake overhauled at the finish. Stevie was also inspired for some serious maintenance and bought / fitted a new rear tyre, stripped the carb and freed off a seized front brake cable. Sunday was a 09.00 start and bearing in mind the hours difference in Europe and the clocks change it was a 04.30 (in old money) alarm call, not great..... and it was even colder.....

The route was the same as Saturday with just a couple of sections tweaked. We covered the ground very quickly and didn't see a queue all day. Sunday proved to be Bucks day with laps of 6 then 9 with Richard not far behind on 8 & 11. Some of the off road was frozen solid and we came across fellow Brit John Bull of Rockshocks nursing a badly cut chin and loose front teeth after a tumble, despite the obvious problems Buggy also managed to ditch the Ossa throwing himself into the snow. Overall a terrific weekend away and we will all be back next year !

Results: 4th Richard 46, 7th Buck 57, 11th Tom 68, 15th Stevie 80 and 20th Buggy 103.

A quick Google search under Belgium Classic trial 2013 and you can find videos and pictures of the event.



Mmm, one of these machines *could* be described as 'agricultural'...

Its 12 degrees and overcast. Perfect conditions. I roll up at the MX track and before I know it, I'm presented with full elbow, knee and chest armour, riding jeans, shirt, helmet, goggles and gloves. The kit is in good condition and smells of soap powder. This is the loudest gear I've ever worn. Kawasaki green is not my colour. Is it anyone's I wonder? There are eight bikes all lined up neatly which are immaculate KX125, KX250F and KLX450Fs.



Moto Verte.....

Although a keen road rider, I'm actually pretty worried as I'm a total offroad newbie. However, after a short technical briefing, I hop on a 250 four stroke and venture onto a small practice area in the hope of gaining some key skills, patiently guided by the former British Moto X Champion Geoff Mayes. I get going, riding like a fish out of water. He urges me to forget everything 'roadie'. Get uncrossed, keep my elbows up, stand up on the straights, sit forward on the corners and most of all to counter balance with my legs and butt. I'm not exactly riding like Laia Sanz but so far so good.

Next step - onto the Big Boys Track.

Geoff leads me round for two steady laps demonstrating lines and

positioning. I lead him on the next one, get the thumbs up from him, and then I'm on my own. It starts off being brilliant fun. In a few laps I manage to ride the corners tidily, pick up speed and catch some air on the jumps. This is cracking! I love the way the bike skips around over the loose ground and flicks you up out of the seat on the table tops. I get used to leaning the bike not the body. This is all very alien to road riding and after an exhilarating spell when it's all going swimmingly, I begin to get tired. I scare myself once or twice using way too much throttle. The front wheel washes on a stony corner and I have to bail out. My confidence is knocked. I pull myself together for a couple more circuits but everything seems ten times harder than it needs to be. By the end I'm hot and worn out.

Later in the day after a restorative lunch, I reflect on the mornings events. This was my first 'warm up' for a trail riding holiday later in the year and I learnt a huge amount. It was a very exciting and valuable introduction to riding on dirt. I think back on a few times during the session when I got it just right - a feeling once tasted - surely no rider can get enough of.

Want to try this? Ring Geoff Mayes on 01379 852452 or have a look at www.mxtryout.co.uk



Haute Couture.....

May Round Up

Glaven Pit, Holt, Norfolk – Norwich Vikings – 14th April.

Expert Route: No Castle riders.

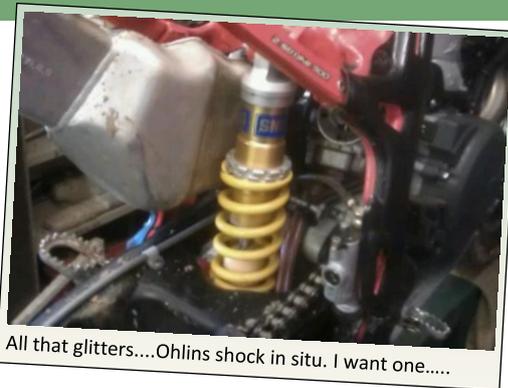
Red/Blue Inter Route: Neil had a strong ride finishing 3rd in Class.

Buck had a steady day coming home 6th. Chris limped home a distant 8th.

White route: No Castle riders.

Buck, Neil and Chris made the long trek up to North Norfolk for this one – a round of the EC Champs. By way of a change the weather was sunny and warm - but quite breezy. The strong gusts could actually blow you off line on Section One and an allowance had to be made for wind speed!!

Glaven pit is a bit like Raydon on steroids with a lot of sharp climbs and descents that got your front forks working overtime. Buck's new Ohlins shock got a serious workout (see above photo of the fitted unit – very blingy indeed).



All that glitters....Ohlins shock in situ. I want one.....

Raydon – Essex & Suffolk Border – 28th April.

E&SB laid out a very good trial, on a lovely sunny day and a pleasant 12°C, and conditions were nigh on perfect.

Expert Route: Tom hadn't ridden for a bit and had a steady ride to finish 6th in class.

Red/Blue Route: Richard Norman topped out the Castle riders with a single digit score of 9 and 2nd placed finish on this route. Paul Whitehead wasn't far behind on 16 and 5th 'on route', as it were. Buck finished mid pack, Chris Eley was last finisher, breaking 2nd mudguard in two weeks, and Richard Chamley retired.

White route: Rich Eley had a very tidy ride to end up 2nd in class.

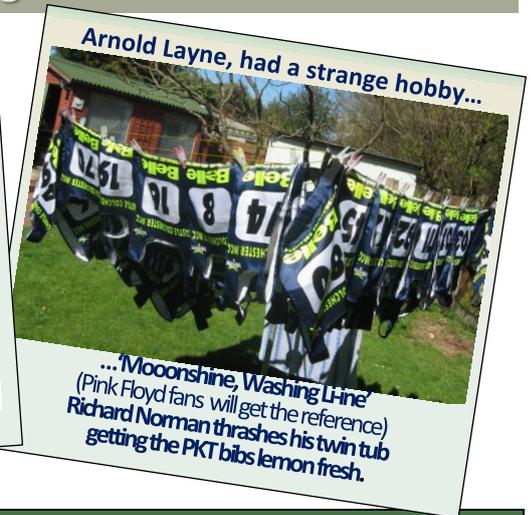


Chammers: premature retirement.

I think there was some twin shock action somewhere this month but I've missed that one. Apologies....

Every year the 'main men' of the Club take the landowners out to dinner by way of a thank you for letting us – the ordinary clubmen of the East – use their ground for our events. Chatting to GW and Richard Eley it sounds like the evening proved to be quite a success and, hopefully, the bond between the landowners and Castle MCC has been strengthened and improved and we can look forward to more of the best events in the Eastern Centre.

Nothing To Do With Anything Much



There isn't another next page

CLUB NIGHT – 14th May 2013

May Club Night (yes, there IS one) is on 14th May.

For bare naked ladies & booze come along to Club Night. Oh, and JKMT debrief, too.

The Bar, Stanway Rovers FC, New Farm Road, Colchester CO3 0PG

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June Newsletter...JKMT Results (and a less sombre Observer colour scheme).