



THE OBSERVER

For the members of Castle Colchester MCC – **The Lovecats**

May 2015 Edition

Well, last month's Observer started out as a Post-It Note edition and, thanks to some late-in-the-day input from Rob Blackman and Ray Parfitt, ended up with quite a bit more content than originally expected. By then it was too late to change back to 'normal' so the newsletter came out as a slightly confusing hybrid. Still, you're never going to find me complaining about having too much content.....

Big thanks to Rich Norman, for providing most of this month's content, and Rob Blackman for more enduro news.

Report & pics from Richard Norman

Belgian Twin Shock Trial 2015

It's the 4 day Easter weekend so it must mean that the 4 of the Castle trials brethren are heading down deep into the Ardennes to the town of Aywaille for the 21st Classic Clubman trial. Paul, Buck, Tom and Richard were joined by Graham Brown on his 250 James and James Williams on his baby faced 100cc Honda.

This year the club moved away from the massed start and allocated start numbers for the 200 plus riders meaning that we left the town community centre just after 11.00. The forecast predicted rain on Saturday and sure enough wet weather gear was the order of the day as it rained until mid-afternoon but cleared up into a pleasant evening. For some reason the club seemed to have been caught out by the weather with sections much harder than normal and in fact 2 had to be cancelled meaning we faced just 2 laps of 10 sections. Even the off road going between sections was in places very tough with many of the lesser riders on heavy Pre65s really struggling to make their way around the long course.

At the end of the 2 laps we headed back to the start area for a bit of maintenance and fettling with the Suzuki needing the needle lifting after pinking heavily on the road portions of the event. James was top of the weary Eastern riders followed by Graham, Richard, Paul, Tom and Buck. As usual Tom was below par on the first day as he learnt how to ride the Fantic and Buck was in the wars with a badly twisted ankle and an Ossa that was not behaving well. Word is that the Ossa will now reside at the back of the workshop with the Fantic 300 deservedly moving up the pecking order. Pauls Honda had been to the chop shop with some nice mods and paint on the frame but what it really needs is a handy guy to sort out the clutch and transmission.

Sunday was a beautiful day but sadly Buck decided to take a kip in the van as the ankle would not have held up. Ground conditions had dried considerably with many of the sections adjusted to suit and back up to the usual format of 2 laps of 12. We headed off at 11.00 with Richard having a shocker on the 1st lap falling behind both Tom and Paul in the Castle battle. As expected Tom had worked out how to ride the Fantic and had a much better day. Meanwhile at the sharp end both James and Graham were having cracking rides with James finishing 3rd in the Twin shock class and Graham an excellent second place in the Pre65. We were all loaded up by 4.30 and hit the motorways to be back in Colchester and unloading at 10pm.

A quick Google search and you will very quickly find some video of the event.



'Castle' twin shock line up.



Many bikes, one van....



....and out they come.

3 laps of 12 sections around the large pit provided good entertainment for the 55 riders, once again the event was a round of the Eastern Centre Novice and Twinshock championship and despite heavy rain overnight a good days sport was had.

Top on the Twinshock Hard route was Mark Banham who travelled down from Diss with his Fantic, the slippery sections were right up Mark's street and he used his years of experience to take a convincing win. Second was Matt Skeet who has taken a liking to his new Fantic creation, a 300 engine in a 240 frame, third place went to Graham Palmer on his very period Montesa.

Top of the Twinshockers on the easy route was former top enduro man Mark Chapman on just 3 marks lost with Pete Bavin just 1 behind on his TY which is evolving into a very tidy bike.

There was a tight battle in the Novices with Castle rider Paul Lonergan setting the early pace with 2 clean laps however the pressure almost got the better of him as he lost 3 on the last lap resulting in a tie break with second place man Steve Smith who also parted with just 3 prods. Third place went to Paul Owen on 6.

The Intermediates were the biggest class of the day with top Eastern Centre MX man Aaron Wakefield getting the holeshot on 36 marks followed by Neil "King of the Hill" Kemp on 44 marks and Darren Tovey on 54.

The sections proved popular with the 5 Expert riders that were topped by Beta rider James Yearly on 43 with Sherco Youth rider Kieran Tovey next best on the route on 58.



Tom styles it round....



Eley Minor...



Eley Major...



Neil on the gas...



Paul Lonergan attacks...



Matt 'Star Wars Trooper' Rayner...

IMHO

It's well worth making the effort to get yourself down to the Tunbridge Wells area, on 31st May, for the annual Quaife Trophy/Camden Cup trial. Hopefully, you will have seen the write-ups in previous Observers and know that it's a firm favourite with the Castle regulars. Follow the link below – you won't regret it.....and it'd be nice to see some more Castle faces there on the day.

http://www.southeasttrialscombine.org.uk/kent_sussex_mcc_camden_cup.html

Keith Nicholl's generous offer to get some new sweatshirts organised met with an overwhelming dollop of indifference, as do most requests on The Observer for that matter, with the exception of Steve Tye. Thanks, Steve, but I don't think we'll be putting Keith to the bother as the response was so poor.

The annual Land Owners Dinner took place on 9th April and was very well attended and probably as big a success as last year, really. This is the first time I've been able to attend and it was a great opportunity to socialise with the club members (which we don't get to do very often) and meet our generous patrons – the land owners.

Scotland BEC.

Easter weekend myself, Craig and Jamie Roper, Richard Walters and a few more centre lads made the 1400 mile round trip to the North East of Scotland for the first round of the British Championships. I had been told by Craig for years to ride this event as it's one of the best thanks to the special test being on the beach and in the sand dunes. Oh how wrong he was! The club had lost some of the land they used to use so the lap was a lot shorter and extremely worn and bumpy. I was riding in the Clubman e1 2 stroke class and had to ride the lap 3 times, my tests went well although riding a 125 in that deep sand is so hard and power sapping, but awesome fun. I was clean on day one and finished 8th overall in clubman which is ok considering I dropped it on 2 tests. Day 2 was meant to be better, the organisers said they were going to us new going thus making it safer and more enjoyable, I got half way round the first check and realised they were just using the same course as yesterday. I have never ridden bumps like this not even at Lommel motocross track in Belgium! The course was 1 bike width wide and with rock hard bumps that if you tried wheelieing them then you would head for a tree. Jamie and Craig both called it a day as did many other top expert riders as for them it was too unsafe. I chose to ride at a pace where I was comfortable but not to take any risks. Doing this I came in on time so decided to push hard for the final check to the special test to see if I could clean it. I made a slight mistake hitting a stump on a corner and dropped the bike, this made me late to the check by 5 seconds. Gutted!! All I had to do was ride the test then pub! Finished day 2 14th in Clubman and 3rd in class. Was a good weekend but was definitely not worth the 22hr round trip up there!

Cornard MX.

More close to home, last weekend we rode at The Dave Roper Memorial race at Cornard, this was a chilled out fun event in memory of Dave. I was racing in 2 classes the pre 65 race and on my 125. Dad had let me race his old Tribsa 650 and after riding it round ours for 20 mins I was scared, this thing has got dreadful brakes and the rear suspension is non-existent. My aim was not to come last on it and I did pretty good, first race I kept missing gears and losing places but once I got used to it I was finishing mid pack so well chuffed with that. Dad qualified for the b final and finished in the top half, Andrew and myself qualified for the main final, not sure of the results but it was an awesome day!

Cheers, Rob.

April Round Up

Southend – Poles Wood – 5th April

There were 2 riders from the Castle Club riding here. Nice to see that CoC Paul Nash had laid a 50/50 route for the in-betweeners riders.

Yellow: Chris Ryland took the Montesa to a 3rd place finish on 43 marks lost.

Red/Blue: No Castle riders.

Novice: Gary continued the 4-stroke-theme by finishing second in Class on a score of 7.

Norwich Viking – Corton – 12th April

There was a good turnout for this event with about 70 riders on the day. However, only 3 were from the Castle Club and here's how they got on.

Yellow: No Castle riders.

Red/Blue: In the Expert B Class Paul Whitehead finished in 6th place losing a miserly 15 marks. Moving to the Inter B's Buck rode into 4th place, with a score of 31, and Neil was 8th having lost 43.

White: No Castle riders.

NEL – Puckeridge – 12th April

This has to be one of my favourite trials of the year. You get 40 sections to ride: 30 of which were spread out on a 36 mile road route and the last 10 being close to the start area. The road route consists of country lanes, farm tracks and byways through the Hertfordshire countryside and with the bright and breezy weather was at least as enjoyable as the sections. The Castle action took place on the Clubman (white) route.

Clubman: Jim had a good ride, dropped a single dab, and came second in class. Chris Eley had at least one daft five, clocked up 16 marks and 17th place. Rich Eley came out of his winter hibernation and finished 20th on a score of 22.

E&SB – Raydon – 19th April

Looking at the results there was a fairly small turnout, for this one, which is a little surprising given that it was a 'B' Championship round. Only 3 Castle riders entered.

Expert: Chris Ryland finished 5th on a score of 93.

Expert B: Rich Norman managed to finish first, middle and last being the only entrant in the class on 42.

Novice: Paul Lonergan had a comfortable class win dropping 18 marks in the process.

NSJMCC – Gt. Ellingham – 19th April

Not much interest from the middle-to-south of the centre, here, including nobody from the Castle club.

Castle Colchester – Thorrington – 26th April

Read the report from earlier on, to get a flavour for what happened, but here are the bare numbers.....

As a bynote both Buck and Dick Norman were suffering from Man Flu and chose to observe rather than ride. Matt Rayner started but, having come straight from a 12 hour night shift (and still struggling with mangled fingers), retired.

Expert: Chris Ryland and Paul Whitehead battled it out for Castle honours with Chris finishing 2nd overall, on 64, and Paul being 3rd on 74.

Red/Blue: Neil had a good ride taking 2nd in Class dropping 44 marks in the process. Chris Eley had a rare excursion onto this route and came in 8th (dead last) losing 99 marks for his troubles.

White Inter B: Rich Eley was 2nd with a score of 11 (including a hotly disputed 5 on section 8).

White Novice: Paul Lonergan won a tie break to take the Class win on 3 dabs. George Holmes was 10th on 45.

Red/Blue Twin Shock: Tom dusted down the Fantic and rode it to 5th place losing 65 marks.

Nothing To Do With Anything Much



Election Special.....



Smile: It's Chris & Paul



Latest helmet from Airoh – only £500

Club Night

Club Night Diary:

May Club Night – Tuesday 12th.

June Club Night – Tuesday 9th.

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

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