



Red Tape Trial

by John Ward, Motorcycle Group member

The Red Tape Trial has a bit of a reputation: a reputation for being a traditional trial where riders can enjoy a day's trialling with sensible do-able sections that don't risk damage to machine or rider. Moreover, with an entry of 83 riders (the highest number for many years) from places as far apart as Suffolk, Kent, Devon and Northamptonshire, it seems to be the sort of event that many riders appreciate.



Clerk of the Course Neil Bowker and his team laid out an excellent course and sections. To cope with such a large entry, and hoping to avoid too many delays, Neil deliberately made the first three sections quite easy, but the watchful eyes of observers Chris Brown and Graham Stratford punished riders who were a little too 'gung ho'. With a short climb, and a tricky step followed by a tight turn, section 4 was proving popular with the photographers.

At section seven, observed by Phil Brown and Dave Quinton, things got tougher, taking a total of 160 marks on the first lap, although many of these were because having successfully mastered the lower parts of the sections, riders lost concentration and went outside of the markers at the top. Moreover, a second lap total of 130 for the section showed that many riders had not learned the lesson.

Section 11 included a slippery gully with a tricky step, and took most marks of any section. This year, section 12 included the Special Test, so on the first and second laps the riders were observed but not timed, and on the third lap they were timed but not observed, which gave them something more to think about.

Best performance by a CSMA Club member riding the harder route went to Colin Sadler, riding a Royal Enfield; his name will shortly be engraved on the South London Cup. Philip Wiffen (Matchless G3C) ended the day with a clean sheet, giving him the Best Invited Rider Award.

The award for Best in Class A, (pre-1967, pre-unit, sprung, harder route) went to Peter Gray, riding an Ariel HT 500cc, with just one mark lost, one of the victims of section 11.

Red Tape regular Roy Enticknap was riding his usual 250 DOT which was running somewhat erratically, and failing to live up to its epithet (Devoid Of Trouble), resulting in a score of 34. Another Red Tape regular, Paul Casling, also riding a DOT finished with a score of 11, (five of which were lost on section 7).



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Michael Smith (250 Triumph Cub) won Best in Class B (pre-1967, unit construction, harder route) with a score of 11, while Gavin Shaw (Matchless G9 350cc) recorded the second clean sheet of the day, giving him Best in Class C (pre-

1965, Rigid) on the easier route. Julian Wade, riding a rigid 350 BSA, also put up an impressive performance in Class C, twice cleaning the tricky section 11.

Darren Lulham (Beta Evo 250cc) travelled up from Devon to ride in the trial, earning a Best in Class D (Clubman, any machine, harder route). Class E, was for twinshock machines on the harder route, and Craig Crowfoot (one of five entries from Eastern Fourstroke Association) riding a Fantic took the Best in Class, with a score of just eight. Paul Sims (Scorpa 125cc) was only the third rider to end the day with a clean sheet and thus rounded out the awards with a win in Class F (clubman, any machine, easier route).

No less than eight Greeves machines graced the trial, but since the chairman of the Greeves Riders Association (Rob Thornton) is also a member of CSMA, and one of the Red Tape's most enthusiastic supporters, we have come to expect no less.

All competitors seemed to agree that Clerk of the Course, Neil Bowker had pitched the sections just about right, resulting in an excellent day's sport, with lots of "We'll be back next year" comments.



Photos by Malcolm Grubb