

Scottish Classic Motorcycle Racing Club

Round 4 Townfoot Farm Thornhill

Sunday 7th July

Report by Chris Montignani

Now before we get down to the business of what went on at our Round 5 event at Thornhill I feel I have to say a few words on the tragic passing of our fellow classic racer and a personal friend of mine Ian Robertson.

Ian of course was taken from us on Saturday 22nd June by what we only know as a heart breaking accident while working on his camper van at home. I had known Ian for around 20 years and during that time I had come to love his enthusiasm for life and his passion for racing motorcycles. Ian loved nothing better than racing his bikes, talking about bikes, and of course the social aspects of the pre-race nights enjoyed with his like-minded classic racing brotherhood.

I'll wager that there is absolutely none of us out there who will not miss Ian's smiley face and his good natured banter around the paddock, he was always the one who would have a carry on and bring the event to life with his laughter. Of course you don't need me to tell you that he was also very handy riding a motocross bike and throughout his years Ian had accumulated a decent hoard of silverware for his many successes on the track. Ian was loved not only here in his native Scotland but when he ventured farther afield was always seen as a classic racing fun loving guy and was always flying the flag for Scotland whenever he visited Europe, the United States, and even Australia.

Ian's funeral held at the Dunmar House in Alloa on Monday 8th July was a sight to behold with the place packed to the rafters with friends and family, in fact many well-wishers could not even gain entry to the service due to the hundreds of people who turned up to say farewell to the great man. But for me

it was a surreal moment to see my old pal laid to rest although I will never forget Ian's enthusiasm for life and his cheery smile each time we met.

For myself personally I have lost a dear friend and will miss Ian's laughter and smiley face around the paddock. Nevertheless we will all never forget the great man and the witty banter and happiness he brought to all of our Scottish Classic race events. R.I.P Ian you were without doubt larger than life and a true inspiration to many of us on how to live your life to the full and to use your very own words "Adious Amigo".

And so back to Round 5 Thornhill

We are already now more than halfway through the season and it seems like it was only yesterday that we kicked off our 2019 season at a sunny Finavon in Forfar. Nevertheless it was all systems go once again as our intrepid S.C.R.M.C circus headed to Townfoot Farm Thornhill near Dumfries for Round 5 of our current championship.

As I write this report the Scottish weather still hasn't got into full on summer mode as yet and the weather has been about average for the middle of July. Although if you think back to how dry this Townfoot track was last year during the driest summer we had experienced for years it was a miracle we got away with racing on that very dusty racetrack at all when it seemed that everyone else was cancelling events almost weekly because they could not water their tracks.

But anyhow it was great to see those lush green pastures back to normal once again at Thornhill and its thanks to the efforts of Ian Ridley and his crew that another great course was laid out for us all to enjoy ourselves. Where this club would be without this man because the work and effort Ian puts in to our organisation is just sometimes baffling in how he actually completes it all. It is almost unprecedented in the world of classic racing for people like Ian to have the enthusiasm and the will to month after month build these racetracks for us just so we can all just then turn up and race our bikes. I for one continually applaud Ian and his team of helpers for the sterling service they give to our club year upon year and I don't know where we would all be were it not for Ian and his gang.

And so as the formalities of signing-on and scrutineering were completed a minutes silence was immaculately observed as we all reflected on the loss of our #100 racer Ian Robertson.

Then of course it was down to the dirty business of racing as the first of the riders took their places at the start gate.

Another decent turnout of Pre 68 bikes took to the track in the superb summer sunshine and the racing was some of the best we have seen here at Thornhill in recent times. In the Pre 68 Under 350cc class it was Robert Kennedy who was the star of the show on that very quick little Cotton 250 Starmaker, Clifford Hardistay put in another good performance to bring his BSA home in the runner up position from all round good guy Ian Ridley in third.

Lewis Bell was the eventual winner of the Pre 68 Over 350's although Fergus Moodie did much of the early running at the front of this class throughout the day. Fergus was very quick in all three moto's and more or less shot to the front of the pack in each one, although when the Bell brothers of Liston and Lewis got their rhythm going on their almost identical 500 Jawa's there was no stopping them and they would take the top two placing's in this class with Lewis 1st and Liston in 2nd. Despite his hard efforts and undoubted speed over the course of the day Fergus Moodie would still take the final podium position in third.

Derek McAulay was back to his winning ways at this round 5 event at Thornhill and once again was very quick on that little 250 Bultaco Pursang in the Pre 75 Under 300cc class. The Arbroath man was flying around the dusty Thornhill racetrack and had some decent wee scraps with Husqvarna rider Tommy Anderson over the course of the day. But his efforts would eventually reap great rewards with the overall win for Derek with Tommy Anderson second Daryl Wylie in third and a heroic effort from Callum Wilson on the 250 Honda Elsinore to finish in fourth.

The Bell's were ringing once more in the Pre 1975 Over 300cc class with another one two overall finish for Liston and Lewis Bell who were just superb as they weaved, slipped, and slid their way around the Townfoot racetrack. Stewart Roden it has to be said was the quickest man on the day in this class although during a last lap scrap with Liston as they both headed side by side

towards the chequered flag Stewart lost the rear wheel of the big CCM and hit the deck. Although Stewart was uninjured it was still a fantastic race to the finish line and despite Stewart's win in both races one and two this DNF would leave him with a consolation prize of a third place overall finish, but at the end of the day this was without doubt classic racing of the highest order.

In the Pre 1977 class Sam Sibbald was the man in charge and over the three race legs was very quick riding his old TT500 Yamaha. It's great to see that Sam has never lost any of his racing ability from all his years racing these old fourstroke dirt bikes and has been in fine form since the start of the season at round one at Forfar. Brian Hamilton put in another good shift to bring his old CZ home to the runner up spot with John Fullarton on another fourstroke Yamaha in third.

The big boys in the Pre 1984 class seemed to enjoy the sweeping turns and changes of elevation in this natural terrain Townfoot Farm racetrack. And for me the man of the match was of course the extremely quick David Houston who was riding ex Scottish Motocross Champion Tony Caig's CR480 Honda. Houston was not the quickest from the gate over the three legs but when he got the big Honda up and running in its sweet spot he was well in charge and enjoyed a comfortable lead over the chasing pack. On the last lap of the final moto Houston began having trouble with the Honda's gearbox leaving second place man Jim Grieve and Andy Malloch to make the pass. Shortly after the new race leader Jim Grieve then dropped his Maico on the penultimate corner leaving Malloch to charge to the finish line with a recently re-juvenated Houston now hot on his tail as they both crossed the finish line almost side by side with Malloch the race winner by narrowest of margins. Houston would not take part in the rest of the race programme due to a broken gearbox on his very quick Honda but it would finish David Houston 1st David Loudon 2nd Andy Malloch 3rd and Jim Grieve 4th.

After the lunch break it was time for the age related races for the second part of the race programme and in the Pre 75 Over 65 class Stewart Riddell was again the man to beat on that very quick twin-port CZ. Stewart seldom put a wheel out of place in all three races and fully deserved his overall win on the day. Stephen Shaw also mounted on his Twin-Port CZ rode well and he would bring his bike home to the runner up position on the day. The third and final

step on the podium would be occupied by Tom Forsyth as he was always up there in the mix using his best efforts to catch the front runners.

The beautiful summer weather at Thornhill continued to shine as the Pre 1975 Over 50's class took to the start line. It was another case of the Sam Sibbald show as he dominated this class with three very assertive wins in the three races. Arbroath man Derek McAulay was in there once again with another good finish on the Bultaco Pursang in the second place overall spot with another sterling effort and finish from Ian Ward on the Villers 250 Sprite.

The relatively mature riders in the Pre 1975 Over 40's class laid on some good classic racing for the decent crowd that had turned up to sample the summer weather and to gawk at the antics of these "so called" motorcycle grown up's as they took to the racetrack. Tommy Anderson was the eventual winner overall and there was not much that could touch Tommy over the three race legs. Robert Kennedy Jnr again showed up in a good position on the final score sheet as he brought his CCM home to the runner up position from Bryan Aird on the BSA in third.

The young bairns in the Pre 1975 Under 40's made it yet another one two finish for team Bell as Lewis and Liston entertained the crowds once more with their bar bashing gear crunching skirmishes around the fast flowing Thornhill racetrack. There is certainly no peer pressure from either of these two when they take to the track and brothers or not it is great from a neutral's point of view that these two give it their all to win when they are lined up side by side in a particular race. In this instance it would be Lewis who would be the victor with Liston in second overall, Daryll Wylie was in there yet again ready to pick up any placings should these two trip themselves up but it was all good clean entertainment and a feast for the eyes if you like your classic dirt bike racing.

Steve Mower made a welcome return to Thornhill and this was his first outing of the year for Steve at Thornhill riding in the Pre 1984 Over 60's class. Steve was duly rewarded with the overall win in class on his very quick 490 Maico and finished just ahead of John Porteous on the black 490 Maico in second.

Although for me one of the biggest performances of the day was in the Pre 1984 Over 50's class and it was great to see Mike Van Der Mer doing so well on his 1981 490 Maico. Vandy was riding superbly in this class and also did well in

the Pre 1984 races before the lunchbreak. It was excellent to see him performing to such a high level and I personally was well impressed with his overall performance. David Loudon filled the second place position while the sly old fox Andy Malloch was in there again with a third place finish overall.

Summing up it was without doubt another cracker of an event for our round five meeting here at Thornhill and well done to each and every one who did their bit and helped out on the day. As well you know this club cannot function without the input of volunteers and other helpers, and it's mainly thanks to your involvement that we can put on a show at each round every year.

I hope you are continuing to enjoy watching yourselves on my You Tube Channel after each and every round of our Scottish Championship has been completed, as I am continually being messaged by like-minded people around the world how they envy what we do and the tracks we race on. Furthermore with now well over 6000 subscribers from around the globe tuning in it's now becoming a full time job for me trying to find interesting bikes and classic racing footage to keep them all interested.

Although if you would like to help me out

When you watch any of my video's just click on the advert at the beginning of each video as every time someone clicks on an ad I receive a few welcome pennies from Google, it doesn't mean you are buying anything but just shows interest in the advertiser's product. Of course this system is the one and only income I have from those long days and nights sitting in front of a computer in order to satisfy my family of classic dirt bike subscribers.

But finally my last word's go out to Ian Robertson's family who have naturally been shocked of the tragic passing of such a great man, father, and all round larger than life character. Everyone here at The Scottish Classic Motorcycle Racing Club send their very best wishes and condolences to Ian's family and we will always remember and never forget his enthusiastic laughter and the many happy times we have all had the privilege to share with Ian during his tragically shortened life.

So it's forever onward as we head to Round 6 of our championship at my local track at Kirkness Farm near Ballingry in Fife on the 18th of August, and so to

everyone involved with the S.C.M.R.C keep safe and I will see you there on the day.

Chris Montignani (Monty)