

The Scottish Classic Motorcycle Racing Club Round 6 Scratchmere Farm Penrith Sunday 4th September 2022

Well I must say it's quite hard to comprehend that we're now already into our penultimate race event of 2022 and almost at the end of another classic racing year. But of course there's still plenty of racing to be done before we wrap things up for our current championship and to hold round six of this year's calendar the club headed to Penrith in Cumbria and a welcome return to Scratchmere Farm for another Scottish Classic race event.

It's always great to head down to this part of the country and this track at Scratchmere although slightly different from the 2020 grass field we raced on last time it was still a nice undulating stubble field for this round six race meeting, and I must say these old school stubble parks are well suited to our old classic dirt bikes as generally there are no big jumps or tabletop obstacles to spoil our fun. And on that point I don't understand why we can't make more use of stubble fields for the last two rounds of the season as there are always plenty of them available at this time of year before the farmer ploughs them up for next year's crop.

As usual we normally get a very good turnout of entries for this Penrith event and this year's meeting was certainly no different with an almost full to capacity paddock. Although I think one of the main attractions for this Scratchmere Farm racetrack is that it's perfectly located so as to allow competitors and spectators from both the north and the south of the country to make the journey.

On the day the forecast was for heavy rain in the Plumpton area and judging by the colour of the black sky that hung over the track all day it certainly looked like it was going to bucket down at any time although surprisingly no such rain appeared and even the sun came out nearer the end of the day so weatherwise the day was absolutely perfect.

But before we find out what went down on the day, a big thanks from myself to Peter Dobinson and his local businesses for their generous donation towards my traveling expenses to this round six Scottish Classic event. I must

say it's nice to be rewarded for the small part I play in these Scottish Classic race events and every gratuity received no matter how small is very much appreciated so again thank you Peter and to your associates for your generosity.

Anyhow back to the plot . . . so to get things underway we had the Pre68's Upto and Over 300cc head to the start line for race one and in the Pre 68 under 350cc class it was a decent overall win for Jim McQuillin on his BSA who rode super steady all day to take the win from Ian Ward on the Villiers in second and Andrew Johnson on his antique DOT in third. There was also a good scrap over the course of the three legs in the Pre 1968 Over 250 class and although Liston Bell was without doubt the quickest man on the track in this class Liston wasn't without mechanical issues on both his bikes throughout the day which led to him finishing in third place overall behind Kenny Harper's CZ in second and the eventual winner of the class Fergus Moodie on the B44 BSA.

Now it was suffice to say that there wasn't a huge influx of Pre77 bikes at this round six event and as far as I was aware there were just the two racers in this class but nonetheless Peter Maxwell pretty much dominated this class on his 1976 400 Maico and was very quick from the gate in all three moto's and it was Brian Atkinson who was the eventual runner up when all of the points were calculated. So maybe if you've an old Pre 77 bike lying around in your shed or workshop then it would be great to see more of these bikes on the track next year to swell the numbers a bit more.

Again another very healthy turnout of Pre 1989 125 bikes at this round six meeting at Scratchmere Farm and although our current 125 championship leader Mike McLarty was missing at this round there was still some very quick racing talent to fill his shoes. Euan Davidson ended up as the top dog in the 125 class and he was very quick on his little KX125 Kawasaki to take the top step on the podium. But in a good runner up spot was Callum Davidson on his Honda CR125 who was the mystery rider I couldn't name when I was putting the video's together as he wasn't listed on any of the paperwork I was supplied so apologies to Callum but he still did very well to cross the finish line in second position.

Aaron Dent was another of the very quick CR125 Honda riders that took part in the Pre 1989 125's and he would fill the last step on the podium to take third overall, but there was some great racing from all of these riders in this now very popular racing class.

So as we get to the Pre 1975 Up to 300cc class It was another decent win for Colin Nelson on the 250 Husqvarna with Colin Bland in second position, Jake

Gowan was also very impressive on his CR250 Honda Red Rocket and did quite a bit of the early running at the front of the pack but a few mechanical issues would see him drop down the race order to finish in third overall.

Liston Bell again showed his speed and skill by winning the Pre 1975 Over 300cc class switching between his triumph and Jawa bikes over the three races, and Dunoon youngster Kyle McLure was also quick on his 400 Maico and was running pretty much second fiddle to Liston over the three races but Kyle still managed to secure that runner up spot at the end of the day. Again it was good to see Keith Barnes back out on a race bike once again as Keith's been away from the track for quite some time, but he came back with a fantastic performance on his big CCM to take a third-place finish overall which was a pretty decent result considering the lack of track time Keith's had recently.

So in the smaller capacity class of the Pre 1984 250's Clark Davidson was again one of the more outstanding riders in this class and over the three races was more or less running with the front two or three riders which was more than enough to secure him the No1 spot overall on the day. Mike Tweddle also managed to bring his Honda 250 Red Rocket home to a runner up spot from Peter Carr in third place but essentially all three of these riders took their turn to lead from the front in this class and any one of the three was well worthy of the win on the day such was the wealth of talent these riders supplied, not to mention they were great to watch as they were banging bars on the track.

Possibly the best racing of the day was supplied by the riders in the big bike Pre 1984 Over 250's class because there was an abundance of racing talent in this group and again all highly competitive on the track. But naturally there had to be a winner on the day and Jonathan Bethell made sure that he was the man to beat as he was pretty awesome on that big 540 TC fourstroke Husqvarna and was certainly giving the rest of the pack a run for their money.

Andy Barnes ended up taking the second place position on his 490 Maico with yet another good display of riding skill although the results may have been slightly different had Ryan Glendinning not suffered mechanical issues with his CR480 Honda as Ryan was visibly one of the quicker riders in this class, although after he suffered a DNF in race two when his chain came off that would drop him down the race order and the eventual result at the end of the day. But still these big open class riders and their machines were all very good value for the large spectator crowd that had gathered to watch the action.

After a quick lunch break it was back to the racing again with the usual age-related races and first up it was the combined Pre 77's, Over and Under 40's

and Over 50's class. Our mystery man Callum Davidson was the eventual winner of the Under 40's with Patrick Brown taking the second place step on the podium. Liston Bell again would have been further up the score sheet had he not suffered more issues with his race bike and a third place finish was still a good result from what was a very indifferent day for Liston.

In the Over 40's race class it was again Colin Nelson who secured his second overall win of the day on his 250 Husky from Ian Marr in second on his superbly turned out 360 CZ. One of the farthest travelled riders to make the journey to Penrith was Steve Halloway and Steve was quite rightly rewarded for his long motorway endeavours by finishing in third place overall riding his quite rare 1979 CR125 Honda.

Ian Stainton again did very well at this Round 6 meeting at Penrith and Ian rode his CCM to a fine race win for the three races in the Pre77 Over 50's class. Ian Ward went about his business in his usual reliable way riding his 250 Villiers and Ian would secure more valuable championship points and a second place overall for his efforts on the day. In third place at the final whistle in this class it was Craig Hunter who secured that final step on the winners' podium in third.

In the Pre 77's Over 60's formula it was "Mr Drumlanrig Castle" himself Kenny Harper who would take the win on his nicely turned out CZ Twinshocker from Fergus Moodie's Faber BSA who came across the line in second position. Mike Walker took the final track position in third place riding his ancient big single cylinder Matchless machine, a bike that Mike said his father used to also race back in the day.

Peter Dobinson again did well in the Over 65's class and he took the overall win on his lovely Rickman Triumph just ahead of Gordon Watson who was making a welcome return to racing with the classic club on his BSA, and it was all down to Johnny Walker to fill the top three in this class as he secured the third place position for his efforts on the day.

Ryan Glendinning made up for a dismal result in the earlier Over 250 Pre 1984 class by taking the top spot overall in the Pre 1984 Under 40's class and Ryan fully deserved the win for his pretty dominant display in this class over the three races. Lee Bateman also did well on his 490 Maico to secure that runner up place on the podium and it would be Stuart Muirhead who would romp home in an eventual third place spot at the end of the day.

In the Pre 1984 Over 40's Jonathan Bethell was the man to beat who to be fair was pretty quick on his big 540TC Husqvarna once more and Jonathan was the class of the field here at Penrith and it seems that these big fourbanger Husky's suit Jonathan better than his older CCM's that he used to race. In second position in this class it was Damien Roberts who raced with the number 666 on his bike so whether there's a connection there with the name Damien and that 666 figure I'm not sure but it's suffice to say Damien was well worthy of the runner up position.

Andy Barnes was the man on top form in the Pre 1984 Over 50's class and for sure was always running with the top two or three riders the entire day on what can only be described as a very quick German Maico. Chris Cannon put in another excellent shift on his RM Suzuki to cross the finish line in second position although David Bateman and Peter Carr had to share the final third placed position between them as they both tied on points when the overall calculations were done.

To finish the day off it was Craig Holmes who would be the eventual winner of the Pre 1984 Over 60's class with David Herdman in second and John Porteous on the John Hand Racing JBR Honda in third, but all of these associated classes did put on a fine display of racing in the wide open stubble field of Scratchmere and it was certainly a breath of fresh air to watch the bikes race on these wide open spaces.

Well another Scottish Classic round done and dusted and what a fantastic advert for classic racing as the old bikes (and riders) appeared to have made good use of the wide-open spaces of the Scratchmere Farm circuit to get those vintage bikes opened up and find that sometimes elusive top gear. Again many thanks to the guys who built the track and put in all of the hard work prior to us turning up because without your commitment naturally we wouldn't have a track to race on. Now I don't have a full list of who did what in terms of putting the track together but as far as I know it was Peter Dobinson, Kenny Harper, Dougie Meek, Tom Forsyth and a good few others who I don't know personally but you know who you are and thanks again for your help.

Probably by now you'll already have watched yourselves in action on the big screen from this round six meeting at Scratchmere Farm courtesy of my YouTube Channel at Classic Dirt Bike TV and I do hope you'll continue to watch my video content throughout the winter months because I have some very nice vintage bike projects to feature in the closed racing season. Plus if you fancy

having your old dirt bike or vintage classic featured on my Classic Dirt Bike TV Channel then just get in touch with me at monti2@sky.com and we'll see if we can sort something out.

But summing up... for me personally this Round 6 event at Scratchmere Farm was certainly up there with some of the best race meetings of our 2022 calendar and judging by the feedback and comments I've been receiving since then most riders and even spectators thought it was a belter of an event so hopefully we'll do more stubble field racing in 2023.

Ok so we have only one remaining round left to finish off what has already been a pretty decent racing season with the Scottish Classic club and that of course will be our last and final round at Merrylees Farm at Whitekirk East Lothian in early October. Not my favorite track it has to be said in terms of being able to film the racing mainly because you can't see enough of the course to justify making any sort of film but I'll still be there to cover what went down on the day so I can make up another of these report's. So until then everybody stay safe and well and I'll see you all at Whitekirk in early October for our last and final Scottish Classic Club party of 2022.

Chris Montignani (Monty)