

Commentary

Thank you for taking part in the Cloverleaf Rallies, but especially a big THANK YOU for your generous donations to our sponsored charity the Multiple Sclerosis Society. Christine has just finished bagging your coins and we are pleased to announce that a total of **£1372.45** has been raised.

From conception just seven months ago, the Cloverleaf revival team has worked around the clock to re-establish the event and bring road rallying back to West Essex Car Club. We are proud of what we achieved in such a short time. Just think how much better the next event will be.

Many Congratulations to the winners – David Barker/David Killeen – who piloted their TR4 to a closely fought maiden win. At the finish they reminded me that two years ago at the end of the Ross Traders Rally I spent time with them explaining how I did regularity timing. They've been practicing ever since and clearly the training has paid off. Glad to be of service.

We have much to say about the event, but thanks to your invaluable questionnaire feedback we can cover most of the issues in the questionnaire analysis. (Some of you must have missed out on the commemorative medal as a reward since we didn't get a full set!)

Here's a breakdown of responses and interesting comments:

Should we include driver/navigator only tests in the future? (Yes = 30, No = 14)

"A bit of fun but not on a Championship round." "Made everyone laugh and relax."

Apparently Shon Gosling tackled the Pegularity in chain shackles! Anyone got a photograph?

Tricky issue this. We added these as part of the event character and wouldn't want to drop them. Maybe a bit of optional fun next time.

Regularities with marked maps/speed changes - were they challenging enough? (Yes = 42, No = 3)

"Too many marked maps." "How about some navigation?"

Well received, but you still wanted some plotting – see later.

Doing without PCs, especially code boards – was this a good idea? (Yes = 30, No = 14)

One navigator complained his driver was board (sic) not looking for boards. We argue that the time penalty for missing loops is enough, plus it allows us to deploy marshals in more important places.

Dropping your worst two regularity penalties – was this fair? (Yes = 37, No = 5)

"One would be enough." "Should be 1 for Masters, 2 for Experts and 3 for Novices."

The idea was to eliminate the occasional high penalty that might occur through baulking. We were worried that there would be tractors on route still harvesting. In a course car I hardly saw any traffic; just one tractor and it was going faster than 30 mph!

Was the time spent at Bassingbourn ... (Too Long = 11, About Right = 30, Too Short = 3)

"Regularity arithmetic was unnecessary and annoying." "Could have a few more tests in there." "We don't like open tests." "Would have liked a proper sprint test."

Those saying "Too Long" were mostly referring to the long regularity. We will plan our use better if we go there next time.

Did you enjoy the visit to Red Lodge karting circuit? (Yes = 41, No = 3)

"Quality!" "Great!" "Best bit of the day."

You loved Red Lodge. The few against had big cars with poor lock. The circuit owners have tendered sincere apologies for causing the delayed start.

Driving tests – were they demanding enough? (Yes = 42, No = 3)

"Too many cones, too technical." "More flowing tests." "Have nice marbles on my tyres now." "Label both sides of cones."

Driving tests – was the paperwork clear? (Yes = 42, No = 2)

Generally you were very at home with our clear diagrams and "pace note" narrative.

Results – were you happy to text your times to speed up the process? (Yes = 2, No = 42)

A big No vote. However, it worked for the results crew, with our man – Preston Ayres – at Bassingbourn and Red Lodge doing it for you (although he is now complaining of RSI in his thumbs)

Were Rally HQ facilities adequate (food, parking, space, location etc.)? (Yes = 43, No = 0)

“Speed bumps too harsh for low, old cars.” “No breakfast for non-residents.” “Very good. Amongst the best ever experienced.”

You were unanimous. We liked it too, but the cost swallowed a huge part of our limited budget.

If there was one thing you could change about today’s event, what would it be?

“Slightly slacker overall timing.” “Speed changes at 30 mph signs.” “Reduce the reams of paperwork.” “Results clearer.” “Bound paperwork.” “Re-introduce targa timing and run it at night. ;-)” “Event a little too long. People are working on Monday.” “Add some plot ‘n bash.” “Drive from Bassingborn too long with no competitive element.” “Coffee and pee break mid-morning.” “The first test was too tight for large cars.” “Controls should not be less than 2 miles apart.” “We’ve obviously enjoyed it so much we cannot think of anything.” “Event seemed to have it’s own character.” “Marshals and organisers very helpful and chatty.” “Can I borrow Paul’s 911 next year?”

Paperwork: Yes, my cost-saving, time-saving idea to not bound the paperwork is confined to the dustbin.

Results: The results team have already self-debriefed and have significant changes on the drawing board.

Schedule: Perhaps we crammed too much into the day? Earlier finish and mid-session breaks will be considered.

Navigation: Perhaps a little something to keep you a bit busier? How about some of “Crow”’s table-top navigation? (Joke!)

Tests: Better use of Bassingbourn with more flowing, less technical tests is on the cards.

Drive from Bassingbourn: We did have a few potential tests lined-up, but didn’t pursue because of the rally length already.

Controls: The white was private, so less that two miles is okay.

Overall you gave the event an 8/10 rating. ☺

Since the event we’ve had a stack of complimentary emails too. I was particularly chuffed by this from car 1 – Nigel Raeburn:

“Congratulations to you and your team on what I thought was a great event. The thought and effort which had gone into it was very clear to see ... and I know just how much is needed! Your innovations were very refreshing ... we might try some of them in Cheshire (if that’s OK with you!).

It was surprising how demanding it was even without the need for any plotting. There was no time to relax and with all those speed changes and all that paperwork you certainly kept us busy! I liked the Pegularities too! I certainly enjoyed the whole event.”

We are suitably encouraged to start talking about the Cloverleaf Rallies for 2008. We are already negotiating dates with Andy Gibson.

We have many uncollected awards. I expect to be out on the Tour Britannia, Devonian and Regis rallies. If you or a friend of a friend are doing the same, perhaps we could deliver them then? We’d like to avoid the unreliability and cost of sending them by post.

Many thanks again for your support and generosity.



Ray Crowther
Clerk of the Course

for the Cloverleaf Core:

Paul Hernaman, Christine Crowther, George Hendry, Robin Hernaman, Rob Russell, Malcolm Heymer, Paul Carlier and Andrea Weston.