

SACU - MotocrossScotland - Scottish Enduro Championship 2012 Round 1 & 2, - Lossiemouth

Lossiemouth kicks off the start of the Scottish Enduro season – with a full calendar of 11 rounds this year – stretching from Inverness down to Selkirk and Dumfries.

As usual, the first round of the Scottish ACU (SACU) Enduro Championship is eagerly awaited and as has been the tradition in recent years the championship kicks off with rounds 1 & 2 hosted by Elgin Endurance Club in Lossie Forest. The hard core of club officials and helpers put in a lot of work prior to the event and this year there were a lot of new trails and a revisiting of areas that have been submerged for several years. Extensive alterations and a substantial increase in length to the Special Test took nothing away from its highly technical and unforgiving nature.

Those riders familiar with this forest on the Moray Firth will know that despite its relatively flat and unremarkable appearance it is the venue for one of the toughest enduros on the Scottish circuit. As always, the riders need no reminder that they are aren't here for an easy day in the woods. Off the start with cold engines, riders tackle the log obstacle or incur the minimum 40 second penalty the "chicken run" imposes. This sets the tone for the day. The first check is around 8 miles and takes the riders through mainly well worn routes and includes some tight trails, loose rocky going and the familiar roots and stumps. The next check is approximately 14 miles of hard riding and includes a lot of new ground that eventually takes riders onto the infamous Lossie "Dunes of Death" (the question was asked and as far as we are aware nobody has actually died). Riders leave the toil of the dunes and have a short ride through the whoops, stumps and trees to the start of the test.

The test is long by any standards taking around 90 minutes to walk with experts taking around 10 minutes to ride it. The race through the tightly forested sand is unlike anywhere else on the course and requires riders to substantially up their game to get through it cleanly. As check times are tightened and riders tire on later laps the sandy nature of the test saps energy forcing errors. Eventually the test ends and there is a relatively straightforward (by Lossie standards) ride to the end of the lap.

As always there are a few DNF's and many riders picked up time penalties but congratulations to all who finished a tough opener to the SACU Scottish Championship.

Lossie Veteran Derek Little took 1st place by 1 second from Allyn Scotland who pushed hard with Richard Hay a close third in the Expert class.

Former Scottish Champion Murray Thomson had close to a minute of a lead over Gavin Johnston to take the Over 40 win with James Harvey in third.

An exhausted Andrew Bisset took the Clubman E1, Craig Jagla got E2 top spot with Dean Barr E3 winner.

Hugh O'Neil got the Clubman B win and a storming Gazza Stephen won Sportsman by half a minute despite riding most of the day with no back brake!

And then on to Day 2 – where the riders get to do it all again.

There were a few retirements from Day 1 mostly due to wrist injuries – instead of the normal Lossie Foot. The weather held up all day and was not too hot – ideal race conditions. With the course reduced by a lap for most classes it was still a hard day out for most riders – but the Expert class still put in similar times to day one.

Ricky Mair was flying and ended up over a minute a test ahead of second place Derek Little and 3rd place Richard Hay. He was on a mission and keen to retain his No1 Plate.

In the over 40's James Harvey had a very consistent day with identical test times for 1st place. Steven Currie Snr getting 2nd with a very impressive 1st test ahead of Mark Ritchie – who travelled up from Newcastle - good on you mate.

Craig Jagla pushed hard for 1st in the Clubman ahead of Duncan Norrie – who carried on for second despite looking exhausted. And Richard McVicker put in a great show for 3rd – hopefully he will continue the rest of the rounds.

Lindsay Rae took the honours in the Clubman 'B' followed by Keith Watt and Neill Patton Snr

And the biggest class the Sportsman had a great battle for top spot with Alan Milligan taking the Honours. Andrew Sutherland had a good go and lead home Phil Hewitt in 3rd – and Enduro God John Pollock in 4th.

As always, thanks to all the officials and helpers that set out the course and gave up their time on the day and in the weeks leading up to event. You all know who you are and on behalf of all the riders I would like to offer my thanks and gratitude.

Finally, thanks to all who donated Easter eggs. They have all been passed to Moray Friends of ARCHIE who will distribute them to children's wards in NE Scotland.

The next two rounds are Pathhead on 21/22 April.

Brian Donald