

EEC 2014 SACU Scottish Enduro Championship

Rounds 1 & 2 Lossie Forest 19-20th April

Elgin Endurance Club

Lossie Forest, as in many previous years was the venue for the first 2 rounds of the Scottish Enduro Championships. The club has had to work extremely hard to retain this unique and highly popular venue in the face of pressure from a government funded interest group. A fairly substantial piece of ground was lost to us in the process including the traditional test. Many new trails had to be cleared in a very short space of time and the hope is that the character of the course is essentially unchanged.



For those unacquainted, Lossie Forest is a predominantly flat and mainly sandy wood between the river Lossie and the sand dunes on the beach at Lossiemouth. Many riders first impression of Lossie is that it's an easy ride in the woods. Very few that ride an enduro in Lossie Forest will leave with the same view. The course has no real technically difficult sections but there is absolutely no respite anywhere! To ride it well is to ride it quickly! Weaving through the tight trails at speed, avoiding the roots and stumps takes serious concentration, but it's the never ending whoops that really sap stamina. On top of all that, the real sting in the tail of any Lossie enduro is the sand. This years special test was in the most tiring sandy section of the whole course.

The sandy nature of the forest makes Lossie an all weather course. In previous years we've had the odd boggy section but this year, after a prolonged dry spell the course is bone dry. As the riders gather for round 1 they are greeted with blue sky and perfect race conditions.

Ricky Mair was unable to attend round 1 due to riding the "Tough One" but planned on making it up for round 2 on Sunday. Unfortunately Ricky sustained some fairly serious injuries in the carnage and was unable to attend. I'm sure all wish him a quick recovery.

As always with EEC events and with Lossie in particular, there is no easy ride. All classes have to work hard, particularly in the later laps when the check times are tightened up. Round 1 had only 3 championship riders that incurred no time penalties.

Results Round 1

Fraser Flockhart was a fairly convincing winner in championship class with a 35 second lead over Neil Chatham who was only a second clear of Frazer Norrie in third.

The small expert class saw all riders incur time penalties. Andrew Bisset lost the least amount of time in the checks and took the win by 4 minutes with Alastair Millar in Second. Sean Henderson rode hard for third spot.

The Clubman Class saw Ben Thomson ride his KTM 125 hard to take 1st place over Duncan Norrie in second. Lewis Forbes got 3rd place on his 250exc.

Grant Smith took the win in the over 40's by 13 seconds over Mark Ritchie. Not a massive margin over 3 hard laps. James Harvey was only a further 5 seconds behind Mark in 3rd place.

The clubman B class had fairly tight time checks and the highest retiral rate of all the classes. In spite of the tight checks (it's not supposed to be easy), Dax Edgley managed to make the times and rode well in the test to take 1st place by nearly 3 minutes on the KTM150. Liam Matheson incurred 60 points on the going but rode well for 2nd place. Jeppe Nygaard also rode well for a fairly convincing 3rd position.

The large Sportsman class had fairly slack 1st lap check times but these were cut by a large margin for their final lap. Steve Hughes held off Chris Spellman by only 3 seconds to take the win. Dominic Spellman was 3rd.

Results Round 2

Once again Fraser Flockhart rode a remarkably consistent enduro, remaining clean on time and with only a 7 second variation in test times over 4 laps to take the win. Frazer Norrie also rode a superb race but was beaten by 6 seconds over the 4 hard laps. Neil Chatham pushed hard for 3rd place.

Round 1 winner, Andrew Bisset showed the previous days pace to once again take the Expert win. Sean Henderson took 2nd. There were no more finishers in this class.

Ben Thomson was pushed hard all day by Duncan Norrie but managed to force the win by only 1 second. Graham Mehan took 3rd, 44 seconds behind Duncan (2nd).

Derek little took the over 40's win by over a minute from James Harvey in second. Grant Smith wasn't far behind for 3rd position.

Clubman B were running a slacker schedule on day 2 and there were no time penalties. Hamish Oag put in some very consistent test times to take 1st place. Colin Short took 2nd on his KTM250sx with Keith Watt on the 150xc taking 3rd.

The Sportsman times were tightened up from the previous day but the riders rose to the challenge with only the last 5 of the finishers incurring time penalties. Stuart Cooper took the win, Allan Stirling was 2nd and Steve Hughes was only a few seconds behind in 3rd position.

As always there are many people that work hard to make these events happen but Barry Hamilton and Kevin Gauld are the people that put in massive amounts of time and effort, both in setting up the course and dealing with the bureaucracy and they deserve special thanks. Thanks to Jimmy Ballantyne and Graeme Chalmers for Stewarding over the weekend. Thanks to all the marshals who gave up their time to scrutineer and watch out for us on the course. Thanks to Colette, Yogi, Craig and Trisha for timing the tests and sitting at what was possibly the coldest part of the course all weekend. Thanks also to all the people who gave up their time to man the various checks. I don't know all your names but you know who you are. Thanks to the ambulance crew for patching us up and thanks also to Neil and Thelma of the Frying Scotsman for providing the friendliest catering ever.

Many thanks also to the Officials of the Forestry Commission for their continued support; I'm sure all who have ever ridden in this jewel of a forest greatly appreciate it.

Well, that's the first 2 rounds of the EEC 2014 Scottish Championship under our belt and all at EEC would like to wish all riders and supporters success in their racing this year. Thanks to all for attending and we hope you enjoyed your weekend as much as we enjoyed hosting it.

Brian Donald