

Elgin Endurance Club

Fun Hare & Hounds/ Scramble 03/11/2013

Another new piece of ground kindly supplied by the proprietors of the East Grange Loft was the venue for an EEC fun event. The Loft offers excellent dining and outdoor activities and the club is pleased to be associated with them and thank them for making us welcome. In addition to the racing the event was also used as a fund raiser for the Moray Firth Radio "Cash for Kids" appeal.

The course is predominantly fast flowing stubble park with some flat out climbs and descents. Kevin, Barry and the Bus Boys from Nairn spent a lot of time hammering in posts and taping the 4 mile loop. In addition to the open going there are some more technical sections including a short climb through some mature woodland followed by a steep downhill and a tight lane through some bracken. A fast grassy uphill leads onto a nicely cambered right hand followed by a quick descent and a sharp left hand uphill turn that takes the riders back out to the fields again. A few quick blasts and bizarrely a single sandy turn that seemed to catch at least a couple of riders by surprise. A few more flowing turns where the moto x riders in the entry can show their skills then into the part of the course that gave the less experienced riders the most grief and the pit crews and spectators in the distance the most entertainment. The cause of the problems were a couple of steep descents followed by some grassy, off camber climbs. There were low speed, low side tumbles by the dozen as the turns caught many out. With around 30 minutes to go Kevin decided to bypass the worst of the hills, much to the relief of many worn out sportsman class riders. After the slippery hills it's more fast and twisty scrambling to the end of the lap.

An entry of around 60 riders was faced with torrential rain in the 24 hours leading up to the event leaving many rivers swollen and fields flooded. As is often the way in Moray the course missed the worst of the weather and the event ran in near perfect race conditions though a few degrees higher would no doubt have suited the spectators. After Kevin's traditional pre race briefing the riders are led out on the sighting lap, some have more than a little bother getting their bikes running but the majority follow Kevin back past lap scoring and bypass the gauntlet of parallel logs, the tyre trap, "the Nissan" and the long log obstacle. The parallel logs and tyres are (sort of) mandatory on subsequent laps but the car and long log obstacles will be optional. There are a few fallen riders on the still slippery hills but eventually the riders line up in their classes for the flag start. The top riders sail over the obstacles but as the lower classes reach them a fair degree of chaos ensues. The field soon spreads out with the quicker riders putting in some fast laps but one or 2 of the more experienced riders also fall foul of the obstacles! The predominantly fast nature of the course keeps all the riders focused and most riders managed the 3 hours. The first aiders had a relatively quiet day and there were no serious injuries.

After the race there were tea, coffee and burgers available in one of our hosts buildings followed by a presentation of trophies down to 6th place for every class.

Andrew Bisset was top in the Expert Class, Derek Little managed 1st in Over 40's despite running out of fuel and having a long push back to the pits. Lewis Forbes took the top spot in Clubman with Craig McCormack 1st in Clubman B. Ian Watt was first in the large Sportsman entry.

In addition to the race trophies Ian Bisset was awarded the club trophy for the highest EEC point scorer EEC club member across Enduro and Hare & Hounds in 2013.

Our first visit to the loft and it's excellent facilities appeared to be well received by all riders and the club would like to thank Mr & Mrs Butler for their generous hospitality. If you're ever in the area and fancy some great food and facilities then the Loft is the obvious choice.

The Moray Firth Radio Cash for Kids appeal also benefited with around £600 raised.

Thanks to all the riders who took part and made the event a great success, and of course it all couldn't happen without the numerous lap scoring ladies and man and all the other officials, marshals, scrutineers and helpers.