

Scottish Classic Motorcycle Club

Round 5 Townfoot Farm Thornhill

Sunday 8th July 2018

Report by Chris Montignani

As Scotland and almost the rest of the UK have now been basking in what can only be described as the very best of summer conditions, for the last three months it looked like there was still no break in this blistering heatwave as they headed to the border town of Thornhill near Dumfries for Round 5 of their current championship.

Previously at Kirkness in Fife for Round 4 we saw some good racing encounters on what was a very tight but enjoyable racetrack on the day, so naturally the SCRMC organisers were hoping for more of the same at this Townfoot Farm event. Initially it looked like it was going to be a very dusty affair as the normally lush green pastures of the Townfoot racetrack were well bleached by the relentless summer sun and were in dire need of some of those mid-season downpours that we have come to know and love during Scottish summers.

Traditionally this meeting is held right in the middle of the holiday season and as this was also another closed to club affair the numbers were naturally down on previous year's attendances. Nevertheless it was still another decent turnout of riders who trekked along to take part in this 2018 Round 5 extravaganza.

As the weather was still on the hot and sticky side it looked like shorts, T-shirt's and copious amounts of factor 30 sun cream were the order of the day. . . . Oh yes and something to keep those dreaded clegs from biting the hell out of you on each and every orifice of your body.

While doing my usual paddock walkabout I was looking for more interesting dirt bike subjects to use on my You Tube Channel and that was where I bumped into Robert Smith's lovely and recently restored 1981 490 Maico. "I built the bike while I was recovering from an injury" said Robert "it was just like a bit of therapy to keep me interested in the racing scene while I made the recovery".

When racing finally got underway the committee decided to combine all the Pre 68 classes into one race and do the same with the Pre 1975 classes, this would also make for a better racing spectacle for the large assembled crowd of enthusiasts who had come to witness these classic racers in action.

The Pre 1975 Over 350cc class turned into "The Stewart Roden Show" as he dominated the class with some fine riding on that big 1974 CCM. In race one it was Roden who shot from the gate, took the holeshot and never looked back until the chequered flag. With the absence of Roden lining up in the second moto it was big Les Calderwood who took the holeshot and subsequently his first ever win in 2018 with a very commanding ride by the cheery Tullibody catering engineer. The affable Irishman went on to secure a further two runner up spot's in races one and three to secure the overall win on the day with Stewart Roden as the second place finisher. Even although Roden never took the overall on the day he was without doubt a force to be reckoned with when he was on the track. Nevertheless I must say it was great to see the big guy Les at the front of the pack again, and due to his brand new winter fitness programme he had lost about two stones in weight which has helped him enormously to throw that big CCM around the curves and hairpins of the Thornhill venue.

The Pre 68 Under 350cc class saw the return of Stewart Riddell back racing for his first ever outing of 2018. Earlier this year Stewart had been taking a break from the racing and was helping out with our other events although he was back with a bang at Thornhill and he fully deserved the overall win on his 250 Twin-Port CZ. The runner up spot was filled by what I would deem the hardest working competitor in the Scottish Classic Club Ian Ridley who not only filled second place in this class on the day but supplied and operated all the plant, fencing, and machinery that led to the smooth running of this Thornhill Round 5 event, and I for one have the utmost respect for the time and effort this guy puts into classic racing. Clifford Hardistay was riding the best I have seen him this year and he quite rightly took the third place finish in this class.

The Pre 68 Over 350cc formula turned into a Fergus Moodie benefit race as he led the chasing pack a merry little dance around the dusty Thornhill landscape on his very quick Faber BSA. Peter Dobinson on that lovely sounding Metisse Triumph never gave up without a fight and was frighteningly quick from the

start-line and took three holeshot's in all three legs. All three races turned into a good old fashioned classic scrap for position between himself and Moodie, although to be fair Moodie was the quicker man on the day and deserved the win with Dobinson taking the eventual second place spot. Brian Aird never put a wheel out of place all day and once again secured valuable championship points for his 2018 title challenge with a third place podium finish.

Ian Robertson appeared to have brought his little 250 Yamaha back to life after it died on him during practise at the last round at Kirkness, but he never experienced any problems at this round 5 meeting as he was very quick on the day buzzing around the undulating Thornhill landscape. Three wins in the Pre 75 under 350cc class would secure him the title overall on the day from Derek McAulay second and Kenny Harper on that lovely Bultaco in third.

Some of the best racing of the day was served up in the Pre 1984 class and it was a battle royal between David Houston riding the Ex Scottish Champion Tony Caig's CR480 Honda and a very determined Neil Glendinning on a similar machine. In race two it was Glendinning who shot from the gate into an early lead with Houston in hot pursuit and close on his heels. As they both started lap four it was Glendinning on the inside into turn two but he went into the turn too hot and overshot the corner stalling his machine leaving Houston to take the advantage and the race win. Race 4 after the break saw both riders slug it out once again over the six lap race although this time there was nothing to separate both riders as they both crossed the chequered flag almost together to rapturous applause from the appreciative spectators. This was racing of the very highest order and a spectacle that was highly entertaining from an observer's point of view, although it would eventually finish David Houston 1st, Neil Glendinning 2nd and Richard Houston in 3rd.

After the lunch break it was time for the age related races and in the Pre 75 Over 60's class it was another dominant display from Fergus Moodie this time riding his 1974 CCM. Peter Dobinson once again dogged the flying Moodie over the course of the three moto's and it must have been quite frustrating for the Cumbria man not being able to get on terms again with Moodie after their previous battles in the first half of the day's proceedings, but nevertheless a runner up spot was still a decent finish for Peter on the day. Ian Ridley was in

there once again at the close of play and added another third place finish to the many talents and skills this man has in classic motocross.

The newly formed Pre 75 Over 65 class was won on the day by the recent returnee to the track Stewart Riddell. Stewart had certainly not lost any of the previous pace he enjoyed from 2017 and was back up to speed almost immediately with the overall win in this class. Cliff Hardistay was the runner up in this class with Steve Shaw riding another Twin-Port CZ similar to Riddell's machine in third.

The Pre75 Over 50's class on the day was won by Derek McAulay on his now very reliable Bultaco Pursang. McAulay was in good form over the course of the day and for me personally is certainly not worthy of that "dangerous Derek" tag that appears to have been hung on him for reasons that are unknown to me. Kenny Harper crossed the finish line to take the second place spot in this class with Stewart Roden filling the final step on the podium in third.

AMD contracts Gary Smith used the Thornhill event to fine tune his 360 CZ for the big event that was taking place at Drumlanrig Castle the following weekend, and it appears that the bike was running fine as he took the overall win in the Pre 75 Over 40's class. Brian Aird did what he could to make ground on the flying Smith over the three legs but he would still have to settle for a runner up position at the end of the day.

The young gun's in the Under 40's class saw Michael McNiven take his first overall victory since he started racing with the Scottish Classic Club in 2018 and he fully deserved the accolade on that very fast CZ. Andrew Johnstone also made a welcome return to racing by taking the runner up position on his very tidy vintage DOT scrambler.

The Pre 1984 Over 50's saw a good scrap between Davie Loudon on the KX Kawasaki and Robert Smith on the 81 490 Maico battle their way around the now almost obscured dust filled Thornhill racetrack. Nevertheless when the eventual "dust had settled" so to speak it was a worthy win for Loudon with Smith second and Richard McLaughlin on the 1980 Maico in third.

The Under 50's in the Pre1984 class continued where it left off after the first block of races before the lunch break with Neil Glendinning and David Houston once again fighting for the spoils in this very competitive formula. Race two saw both Glendinning and Houston power into the dustbowl section at the far side of the track just before the turn back up the hill near the wall. It looked to me like some sort of collision took place between the two and Glendinning emerged from the Thornhill "stoor" as the lucky rider who would take the race win. It would finish as Glendinning the overall victor with David Houston second and Richard Houston in third.

Summing up it was yet another cracking race event for our Round 5 meeting of the 2018 racing championship under perfect racing conditions as the summer temperature tipped out at about 24 degrees when the Thornhill dust started to fly. We were quite lucky with regards to the dust not spoiling our event although it only seemed worst near the far side of the track.

I honestly cannot believe how fortunate we have been this season with regards to the weather as we have not had a bad meeting this year thus far, although having said that maybe I have now put a curse on our next round which will be at Strathaven on the 5th of August. Now as you know this is a brand new track for us in the Scottish Classic Club so we are hoping for a decent turnout of riders for this brand new venue.

As I write this report all the video's from this Round 5 meeting at Thornhill should now be available to view on my You Tube Channel, and please remember when you view them that although there are adverts before the video starts please feel free to click on them because these commercials are the one and only way I receive any payment for my time filming and uploading these video's.

Every time you click on an ad I receive about 0.2 of a penny per click and although it sounds a very small amount, for me it is always something towards the many hours of work filming and sitting behind a computer to produce them for our very worthy cause. I no longer have a social media site on Facebook as I have decided to delete my account although you can still keep track with my video material by just subscribing to my You Tube Channel.

Subscribing does not mean that it will cost you money it just means that if you subscribe you will then be notified if or when I upload a new video.

Anyhow upwards and onwards be safe and ride safe until we meet up at Round 6 at Strathaven on the 5th of August.

Chris Montignani