

Melville Cross Country Championship has a Bright Start to 08

The sunshine welcomed 160 riders for the first round of the Melville Motor Club Cross Country Championship. There was a short trophy presentation to the Melville Members who had won their respective classes in last years series.

This year, at this first round there were two races running, a three hour hare and hound for the Enduro classes which included a large forest and a two hour motocross around a shorter loop for the riders who did not want to charge through the trees.

At eleven o'clock the Experts set off with a wave of the saltire flag. Ecosse Motocross of Penicuik had generously offered a pair of goggles for each class as a holeshot award. The first pair of goggles went to Grant Smith as he charged over the line on his KTM 200. During the first lap Grant Smith, Stuart Mowbray and Neil Chatham set the pace although all three of them succumbed to the tight going in the woods, Grant damaged his knee, Stuart Mowbray fell and Neil Chatham crashed and broke his shoulder which resulted in retirement for all three within the first few slippery laps. With their departure the lead was constantly changing between Scottish Champion Murray Thomson on his D3 Racing KTM 250 and Derek Little on his KTM 125. Derek had the upper hand all day, although Murray had his share of the lead as the two stopped for fuel. At the final refuel Derek held off Murray for the win although they literally finished nose to tail at the end of three hours racing. Behind them, as the race drew to a close Paul Chatham and Allyn Scotland were fighting for the last step on the podium. Paul had taken the upper hand on his Chatham Racing Honda CR250 with a one stop fuel strategy early on but super fit Allyn Scotland was closing in on his Jim Allan Suzuki RMZ250. Allyn took third place and Paul stopped for a splash and dash refuel to ensure a strong finish, Scott Girvan nearly claimed fourth from Paul with a fight to the finish line. Altogether all these battles gave the spectators a great show on a beautiful day.

In the Over Forty Class Ian Paterson claimed the holeshot goggles with the pack in hot pursuit. Ex British over 40 Champion Graeme Naismith won completing 13 laps with Graham Charlton second and Ian Paterson finishing third. Graeme used this event as a warm up for the Metzeler British Championship starting next week at the Muntjac Enduro.

Ben Metcalf won the goggles and the race on his Suzuki, Ben looked in a determined mood from the start and he did not back off for the 3 hours. Melville regular Craig Jagla finished second with Adam Brayton third. Hamish Patrick finished 11th following his presentation for best enduro newcomer in 2007.

Alastair Wark won the holeshot goggles and then unfortunately retired after 4 laps. Chris Wilson went on to win the sportsman class on 11 laps with Stuart Jenkinson second. Ryan Gilhooley was just back from a skiing holiday that must have helped his fitness as he achieved his best result so far in third place.

Jason Martin won the holeshot goggles from Ecosse Motocross despite two riders jumping the start. Jason soon caught them and went on to a convincing win with 26 laps of the shorter lap for the two hour motocross A class. Sean Docherty finished second having followed Jason for much of the race with Michael Graham third.

David Fergus won the motocross B class with 25 laps followed by Craig Smith in second and Colin Forrest third. Local rider Chris Clark finished fifth despite carburettor problems which cost him two extra refuel stops.

This event would not have been possible without the assistance of all the girls who stood at the gates counting the riders through. The weather was sunny and bright although it was very cold so all the riders are due them a big 'thank you'.

The next Melville event is the 1st and second round of the Scottish Enduro Championship at Pathhead, regulations will be available to download shortly from www.melvillemc.co.uk

Lochhouses has proved a fantastic location again this winter, providing motorcycle racing when most other tracks have had to close. The Melville Motor Club would like to thank Robert Dale for the use of the ground over the winter and everybody is looking forward to returning in November.