

The 28th of February saw the season opener for what already looks to be a very interesting year ahead in the GH Motorcycles, Husqvarna Eastern Centre Enduro Championship as Diss MCC hosted the ever-popular Santon enduro, with a maximum entry of 200 riders. It was a cold but dry day which meant the course set out by Clerk of the Course Andy Waters and his dedicated team of helpers was in perfect condition, and riders were in for a great day of riding on the flowing 12 mile course through Thetford forest. With the special test on laps one and two, the first riders set off at 9am, and were soon round to the start of the test.



Championship class winner Brad Freeman

In the Championship class it was one of a host of riders coming from out of Centre to ride the event, such is its popularity, that took the early lead on the first test, looking to repeat his win in 2015, a British championship contender this year after a year out through injury, it

was Brad Freeman pulling out a 6 second lead from last years champion Jamie Roper, who was 0.04 seconds ahead of Aston Bird in third. It was already clear how tight the day was going to be with only two seconds separating Roper in 2nd from another out of centre rider, and British championship rider Daryl Bolter in 6th. Setting the riders and spectators up for a very exciting day in the events top class. It was Joe Wootton that took the honours in the second test, but had to settle for second overall as it wasn't enough for him to overturn the time Freeman had gained on the first test. Freeman took second on the second test, which was enough to retain the overall lead by some 6 seconds, and Roper took a fifth to remain in third overall, just a second ahead of Bolter. However all of the riders knew this could all change on the last of their 6 laps if they incurred penalties by not remaining on time with the times always challenging. It was a surprise when 13 riders managed to come in on time, including the top 9 riders after the tests. This meant Freeman held on to the overall win, from Wootton in second, and Roper in third. It was Adam Ranson flying the flag for Diss in the Championship class, who dropped 2 minutes, leaving him in a creditable 21st overall in a tough class, only one place ahead of fellow Diss member George Ellis in 22nd. Diss club's Tim Rose was also unlucky after a couple of good test meant he was in the running for some points before a crash in the final lap forced him out of the race, despite trying to carry on.

Moving on to the Expert class and it was Adam James, another rider looking to push on in the British championship who took the honours, with a 5 second advantage over recently upgraded Alex Rampton in 2nd, with Diss rider Alex Barkshire a further 3 seconds back in third. With



Expert class winner Adam James

the expert riders having 5 laps, only 7 riders managed to stay on time throughout the day, showing that the times were spot on, after a couple of poor tests Diss rider David Stevens, stayed clean on time to pull in a few places for 7th overall. Once again returning from a hand injury, Ross Taylor had a couple of good tests, but dropped 3 minutes on what had become a rough, physical course to pick up a point in 15th, and fellow Diss rider Martin Stevens unfortunately crashed early on in the final lap meaning he had to retire after two good tests had left him in the contention for points.

Diss rider Mark “Chappers” Chapman stormed to a win in the expert vets class with a lead of 9 seconds over the two tests from Championship sponsor Gav Hockey, and Phi Roper a further 6 seconds back in 3rd. No riders managed to clean the last lap in the expert vets, with a crash and traffic meaning Chappers came in a minute late, but that was still enough to take the class win with the top 3 all dropping a minute. Fellow Diss riders Gene Womack and Jason Green took 10th and 14th respectively.



Expert Vets winner Mark Chapman

In the clubman class Nathan Greenaway led after the tests, but bike problems on the last lap handed the overall win to Daniel Willis, with Ben Ramus in second, and Katie Walker in third. The best Diss rider in the clubman class was Dan hunt who took 11th after dropping time on the last lap, closely followed by Jason Naruszewicz in 12th, returning for a one-off appearance this season to ride in his favourite event of the year, who also dropped just one minute, and it could have been a much better result too had he not had to ride almost half of the last lap with a flat rear tyre, proving he's still got it. There was a strong Diss contingent rounding out the top 20 with Chris Wright in 14th, Michael Brouse in 16th, Aaron Barkshire in 18th and Paul Hunt in 19th.

There was another class winner for Diss in the Clubman vets, with Wayne Fulcher taking the win from Edward Hopkin, and Jason Carsboulton rounding out the top 3. Diss had further point-scorers in Paul "Archie" Wright in 11th, Paul Wilkinson in 13th, and Duncan Griffin in 14th.



Clubman Vets winner Wayne Fulcher

Finally onto the Clubman Super vets, with Club representatives Clive Stevens, starting his "last year" of riding for the 4th time, taking 7th, and Dave Ward taking 10th. With the class won by Mark Houson.

The club would like to thank everyone who volunteered to help with the course before and after the event, and everyone who helped on the day to ensure the meeting ran without a hitch. Thanks to the fantastic organisation, and brilliant team of regulars that do everything they can to put on a brilliant event year in year out. Despite being a tough days riding with the track getting very rough by the end of the day, there was nothing but positive feedback from everyone involved, from first time riders, to riders who have ridden all over Britain and Europe, and we look forward to seeing everyone back next year, with work already underway to run what we hope to be another successful event.

Finally a special mention goes out to Sam Arbon, who ended the day with a fairly serious leg injury, and everyone at the club wishes Sam a full and speedy recovery.

Report: David Stevens

Photos: Anthony Ridge