



NOVEMBER 2017 Newsletter



New(-ish) member **KEITH ROBERTSON** in his Discovery based special at Tordarroch. His brother **DAVID** was also there. Photo: **LINTON**

Editor's Corner

My last trial for a year or two was at Tordarroch (due to work roster) and it was a peach. As there was only one competitor in the OPEN class, I decided to enter Shog 2 in both Standard and Open classes (it's against the rules, so my place in the Open class won't be counted). After only 4 sections in the Open class, the other competitor, **GREGOR FORREST** destroyed a CV joint, so the class stopped there. In fact, it was clear that the Open class is a good deal tougher than the Standard class sections (although, I think Daniel, CoC of the Open class, was actually being quite gentle on us). Honestly, I don't know how much more of that kind of punishment my little Shog could have withstood - I have no illusions to the Shogun being in any way a "heavy duty" off-roader... As it was, Shog went home on a trailer next day, after more fuel feed issues (Gregor found a porous fuel line for me) and it now has a nasty rattle coming from the trans box...

I didn't manage to chat to all the newbies at Tordarroch, but here are some new(ish) names who I did get to meet (sorry if I spell your name wrong...):

- **GREGOR FORREST** and **SARAH**, who bravely rode shotgun in Gregor's fine looking Nissan. This model has coil springs and a rear locker, although it was clear that the rear locker was not working on this occasion. Also, mounted on 37" tyres, which put it firmly in the Open class. Gregor had driven up from Perthshire. We hope he can make it again in the near future, both because he is a helpful, friendly guy, but also because the Open Class needs more entrants.
- **ROSS CAMPBELL** joined us from Dingwall in his Vitara. In fact, he's been along to a couple of events before Tordarroch. His plastic trim was suffering at this trial - although the Standard sections are designed to be "non-damaging", if you fit larger tyres, as he has done, then it is quite likely that the tyres will impact on plastic bodywork trim, as happened in this case. That didn't seem to slow him down, however...
- Brothers **KEITH** and **DAVID ROBERTSON** brought their recently acquired, very smart blue / yellow Discovery special down from Gairloch. Only **KEITH** was driving on this occasion. Apparently, this vehicle was built up by Fraser Hughes' brother, but he was not getting enough use out of it, so he moved it on to Keith and David. We hope they can make it down from Gairloch to join us again soon.
- But the prize for furthest travelled for the Tordarroch trial has to be **STUART CLARK**, who brought his Vitara, on very loud tyres, all the way down from John 'o Groats area. He had to limp home with a broken front drive shaft too, although he did manage to complete the trial. Great effort, and we hope his ears have recovered. *I SAID, WE HOPE HIS EARS HAVE RECOVERED!!!*

PLEA to Clerks of the Course - please write competitors' LAST NAMES on score sheet, and send a photo of the sheet to me, to enable me to include scores in the newsletter. Thank you.

Please send your contributions for the newsletter to:

highland4wheeldriveclub@gmail.com

I use a PC, so please try to send MS Word stuff if possible.

If not, photos of hand-written stuff may be sent. *Cheers, Linton*



New member **ROSS CAMPBELL** at Tordarroch. **WILLIE PIRIE** observing.
Photo: *Linton*

Next EVENT - GALCANTRAY TRIAL Sunday November 26th

DIRECTIONS:

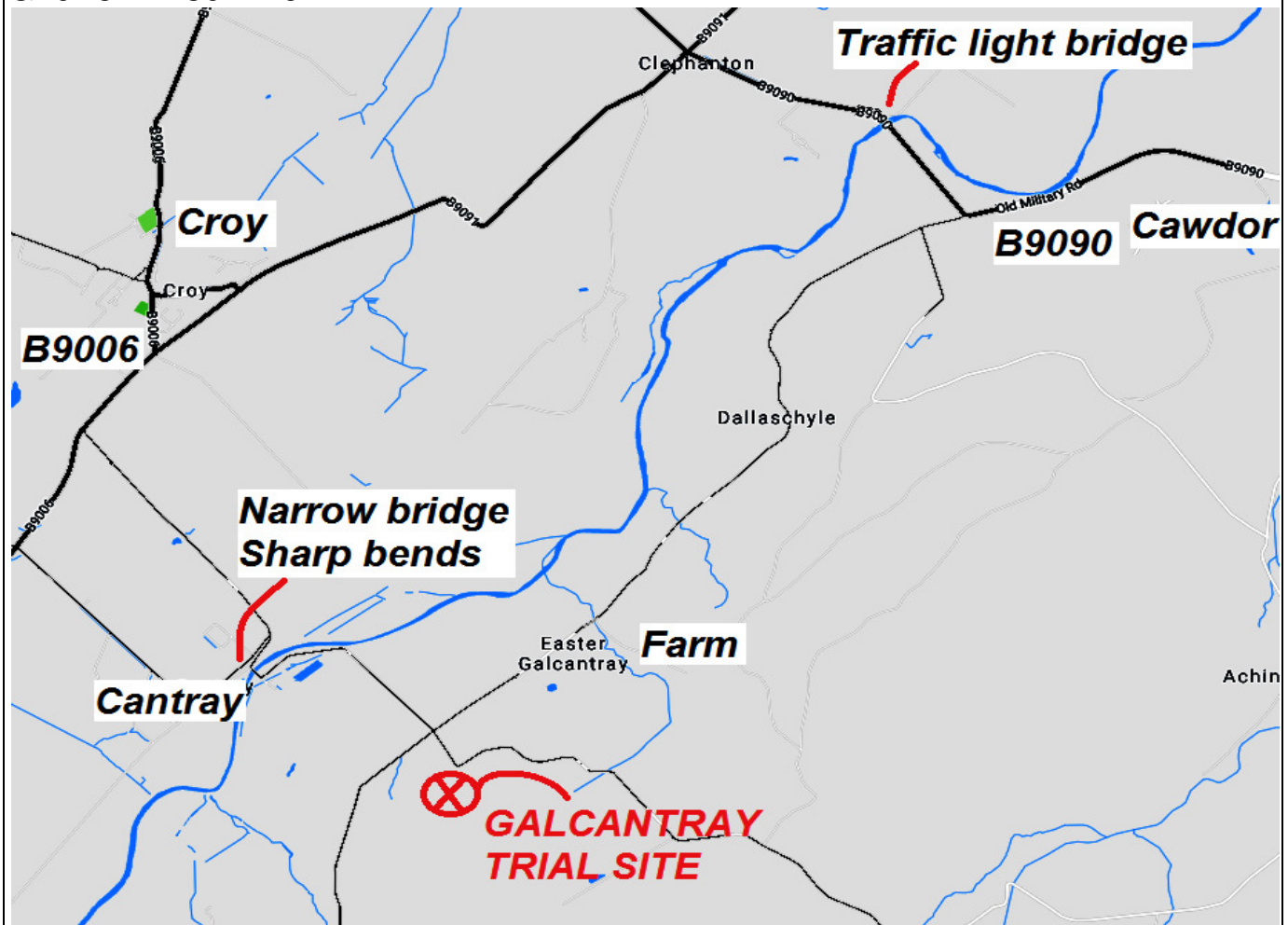
The site is a little remote, and can be hard to find. **The simplest route (south from Croy) involves crossing a narrow hump back bridge with sharp turns at both ends - NOT RECOMMENDED IF YOU'RE TOWING.**

With trailers, it is best to leave the A96 at Gollanfield junction (Ozzi Ali's restaurant), turning off southbound toward Cawdor on the B9090.

One mile west of Cawdor turn off the B9090 by Budgate farm onto a single track road. This junction is 200 metres south of the traffic light controlled bridge over the river Nairn.

From Easter Galcantray Farm (postcode IV12 5XS), head west couple hundred yards to cross roads. Turn left up hill, trial site is through gate on right at first bend.

Grid ref NH807476





New member **GREGOR FORREST** with his Nissan Patrol, at Tordarroch. Photo: **LINTON**

It seems Gregor brought the family pet with him, but it isn't "Patrol-trained", yet....

He also brought Sarah (sorry, no photo, unfortunately) - she WAS allowed to sit inside.



H4WDC Event Report Sheet

Event: TORDARROCH Trial Date: OCTOBER 2017

Clerk of the Course: James Fraser

Sections run: Standard class: 8. Open class: 4.

Weather: Rain showers, came out sunny, quite warm.

Class Winners:

SWB: JOHN MacLENNAN

LWB: ALAN HARROWER

OPEN: LINTON CHILCOTT (*unofficial - entry not allowed in 2 classes*)

Many thanks to the land-owner, Mr Alastair Forbes

Thank you to the Clerks of the Course, James Fraser and Daniel Watson

Here is James' report on the trial:

This was going to be a challenge. Went up to trial site a week early to have a look for good ground with not too many large obstacles which could cause any problems. Not easy when there are so many large rocks and trees at far end off the site.

First section was relatively easy to get started with.

Second section consisted of four axle twisters which only saw one unlucky victim to get grounded.

Third section was steep down hill start into soft ground and down gully through trees and out deep gully to finish gate - not a good gate for the man with high capacity.

Fourth section was a bit too tight at second gate causing everyone to take a shunt or two. I was being a bit ambitious thinking I could do that in my car and it was only the mountain goat Haflinger that made it round.

Fifth section was more axle twisting through deep ditch with some points getting scored here.

Section six started at bottom off steep hill through rabbit burrow to slow you down to second gate. Grass was very greasy and two small rocks stopped anybody taking the canes (I'm saving the club money) meaning you had to reverse back down and attempt gate three from a different approach. Last four canes were on opposite side of the hill. Lots of fails at this side with big scores.

Back over to the roadside of the site we did section seven at a tricky little bomb hole with hill climb at last gates.

Last section was in and out off large bomb hole with confusing gates for our older club member causing him to pick up his only point off the day. All in all it was a good day and the weather was kind to us.

TORDARROCH TRIAL, OCTOBER - ALL Classes

Name	Class	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Posn
John MacIennan: Haflinger	SWB	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1 1st
Willie Pirie Artic Cat	SWB	0	0	0	3	0	1	0	2	6 2nd
Linton Chilcott Red Shog 2	SWB	1	2	1	1	4	6	2	3	20 3rd
Keith Robertson Disco Trayback	SWB	0	3	1	1	4	7	4	7	27 4th
Roy Panton Blue G Wagen	SWB	0	3	0	2	8	14	1	1	29 5th
Angus Panton Blue G Wagen	SWB	2	3	4	6	0	17	0	3	35 6th
Stuart Clark Grand Vitara	SWB	1	12	0	4	6	21	6	22	72 7th
Ross Campbell Vitara	SWB	5	4	6	18	6	24	9	18	90 8th
Finlay Maclauchlan Jimny	SWB	0	5	1	4	0	17	15	RET	RET
Alan Harrower LR Hi-Cap	LWB	1	1	4	2	2	26	3	4	43 1st
Linton Chilcott Red Shog 2	OPEN									
Gregor Forrest Red Patrol	OPEN						RETIRED - CV Joint			

Many thanks to James Fraser and Daniel Watson, CoCs.

Fraser Hughes was at **MUDMASTERS!**

Today has not been the most productive day in the office due to being a little tired(!) so I thought I would put a wee something together while Mudmaster is still in my head.

Mudmaster 2017 saw 4 crews from H4WDC head down to compete. Myself and Peter MacInnes in my 100" Defender, John Martin and Allan Williamson in John's 90 Td5, Stewart Meikle and Lewie Cameron went down in Stewart's Disco Tdi and Michael Dearman and Andrew Norrie in Michael's 110 Td5.



For those of you living under a rock, Mudmaster is a 2 day off-road/on-road event organised between Scottish Land Rover Club (SLROC) and British Army Motorsports Association (BAMA). Previously based in Dunfermline but this year in Glasgow, 2 person crews made up of a driver and navigator are given clues for the road navigation during the week leading up to the event so that your route can be 'pre-plotted'. Getting the correct route is essential to getting to each site but more importantly, getting the all important code boards (small 4" x 4" yellow boards on the verge with single letters on them) on the way. Miss any code board and get a penalty! Once at each site, you need to then carry out an off road task.

This can either be a trial (the rules are different down there for these!), an autotest round cones or orienteer through a site or forest looking for more code boards but against the clock. There is a speed limit for this but getting up to 25mph without your navigator smacking his head off the roof is the real challenge!

Last year, it was felt my competitors and organisers that it had become a little easy as there were a lot of low scores at the top of the leader board. With the top two actually tied on 1 point penalty each. They certainly stepped up this year. Peter and I can only assume that code boards were hidden in various places only visible to a Mantis Shrimp as we managed to miss more than a few. The off road trials were more difficult as the event went on and if you were running towards the end of the 40+ entrants then it was very cut up when it was your turn! The orienteering sites were, in our opinion, the best fun. Doing your best to keep to the route on the google earth print out while keeping your speed below the limit (they had marshalls with speed guns!) and keeping an eye out for the all important code boards!

Over the two days, we completed 8 trial sections of 10 gates each, 4 orienteering sites with varying time limits from 12 mins to 35 mins, 2 autotests on different sites and a highway code quiz. All while covering a 220+ mile road route that had marshalls hid in villages to make sure you weren't going over the 30mph limit!

Results wise, Michael and Andrew came 29th overall, Stewart (who hadn't done it before) and Lewie came 26th, John and Allan were 19th and we managed to get 10th. The guys from LRO magazine, who have won it before, came 8th.

I cannot recommend this event enough. I can understand peoples reservations due to the drive to Glasgow and back (I actually towed my Land Rover as it was only MOT'd the week before after being sat for 2 years) but when you are down there the craic is constant and the event is impeccably organised. Every marshal, of which there are a lot, is delighted to see you and send you on your way into the mud. It is clear that a huge amount of volunteered man hours go into putting it together.

Will we be there next year? Absolutely!

Will we try and do better? Yes.

Will we do any better? Probably not.

Will that stop us having a ball? Not a chance!

Now, all I need is a shovel to start cleaning the mud off....

(Apologies for the poor photos, you don't get much time to hang about!)

Sounds like great fun, Fraser. Thanks for telling us about it - Ed.

NEIL BRISSENDEN was also at MUDMASTERS!

And here is an e-mail he sent me, for publication in the newsletter, by way of introduction (he is quite new to the club).

I'm Neil, and I drive the silver Duster on the clubs drive round days. I would like to get more involved and perhaps set up and take part in RTV trials. I understand there are a few shinies in the club, that could take part in non damaging competition, in their daily drives. Here is a brief history of me, and my 4x4s...

As an English incomer to the highlands in 2005, my early 4x4 experience was in Kent. My first toy was a left hand drive Lada Niva, fitted with a Fiat 2L twin cam engine (!) 130BHP was interesting, to say the least ! It wasn't road legal, and I soon bought a second Niva to trailer the first to playday sites.

After a mud blocked radiator caused the engine to overheat, it promptly dropped a valve seat through no. 3 piston! It chugged back on 3 cylinders to the trailer, to be broken for parts. (moral of this story - keep your radiators hosed out !! LOL) This did mean that my smart road going vehicle was to inherit lots of off road kit from the left hooker - and this was probably the start of my "under-dog" off road adventures.

I started a club called Kent Pluggers, and we built a large off road site in Kent, running offroad playdays and charity events for the Kent Air Ambulance. We even managed to get visits from the helicopter, and sponsorship from the local Land Rover dealer! We would have live bands and BBQs on our weekend events, which included a night drive!

I also used to teach (unofficially) off road driving techniques, and stage accidents, to train the Red Cross in "real world" extraction and first aid (far better than someone laying under a table in a classroom !!)

Anyway, I digress, After building a space frame 4x4 based on a Niva, with a brilliant engineering friend, Spike Collins (R.I.P.), I bought him out of his share, and took out the 1.9L turbo diesel engine he had fitted (making his own bell housing from scratch) and transplanted it into my own road going Niva. This transformed it from 1st gear low with the revs up, to 2nd gear low, ticking over - awesome! This was about the time I was planning my Highland move, and decided a D22 Navara would make a more pleasant drive north.

I blagged an RAC recovery for the Niva 700 miles, then drove the Navara to my new home. Needless to say the Nissan did not stay standard for long ! It was soon sporting a 3" suspension lift and Mickey Thompson Baja Claws, at

a height of 33" a corner. The cost of running two 4x4s on the road, meant eventually the Niva was reluctantly sold :-)

However the playing continued in the Navara, with many trips around the highland off road tracks and trails. Plus adventures in deep snow.... Remember when we used to get that?

The arrival of a puppy in my life and the fact I felt dogs should not travel in the front of a vehicle, meant the Navara was traded for a rather fancy shiny black Pathfinder- again sticking to my non-mainstream 4x4 ownership. This may be the first vehicle you will remember from a club driveround, when on the Alladale estate run, someone asked me, in disbelief, "*you're not taking your shiny up the hill, are you?*" To which I grinned like a child, and promptly drove up to the top.

The Pathfinder was not safe in my hands, and almost immediately it was lifted on Peddars + 2.5 springs, and I imported the first set of Pathfinder shocks from Jon Peddar himself, in Australia. This was quickly followed by a discreet hidden winch and mount, that I designed myself, tucked neatly behind the bumper.

Financial pressure of £550 a year road tax and only 32mpg finally forced a trade down to my current vehicle, my silver Dacia Duster (£120 tax and 40+mpg).

You will have guessed, if you are still reading/awake that this underdog has been fettled too. Lifted 2" with a kit from Romania, where they have been modding Dusters for years, allows 30" BFG all terrains, and I transferred the winch too, designing and making up a hidden mount again. This has allowed me to play, and also compete. I took part in the 2017 Mudmaster offroad event, and beat 10 Landrover teams, at my first try! The organiser has said if we can go back next year with 4 or more soft roaders (apparently that is what my Duster is) we would have our own class and be coming in 1st or 2nd - trophies await those willing to try! My Duster survived unscathed - so what are you waiting for lets go play !!!

Don't get me started on my various quad bikes and buggies - the Mudmaster was its own superb story - so another time maybe ?

Welcome to the club, Neil, and thank you very much for your fascinating contribution - Ed



HIGHLAND vinyl CRAFT



vehicle livery ~ vinyl graphics ~ garment printing

www.highlandvinylcraft.co.uk

☎ 07799 008503

