



The Scottish Six Days Trial

7th - 12th May 2018, Fort William, Scotland

Scottish Six Days Trial 2018

So that's the SSDT over for another year with an all too familiar outcome. Losing just 8 marks over the six days, Dougie Lampkin took his 12th victory, extending his quite incredible record of wins and matching his number of World titles; but it came close, very close to a different result. Riding with an exceptional precision throughout the week, a five on the slopes of Ben Nevis denied James Dabill his third win finishing on 11 marks lost. Just like 1979, the big boulders on Ben Nevis were the decider after six days of moors, roads and some quite brilliant sections. This time a Lampkin won, in 1979 the late great Martin Lampkin lost out to Malcolm Rathmell on those same sections.



For Scottish Trials, the week did not go without success with Kinlochleven's Gary MacDonald clinching a quite brilliant third place. Looking poised and relaxed the entire week, Gary beat his best observation score losing a paltry 18 marks. Tied with current British Champion Jack Price, Gary's incredible 1 mark ride on his early day in the rain on Wednesday made the difference. Gary is rarely around the trials scene these days and there was no pressure on him to perform, this is a fantastic

result. Additionally, as part of the Scorpa Works Team with Andy Chilton and Tom Minta they took the Best Manufacturers Team Award for the first time as well.

How It all unfolded:

7:30 Monday morning saw Cfn Stuart Mack lead the trial away, waved off by Lt Col Mike Tizzard



celebrating 25 years of Army refuelling at the SSDT. Monday comprised its traditional route of finishing on the big boulders of Lagnaha. James Dabill ended the day clean with 5 other riders Jack Price, Tom Minta, Sam Connor, Andy Chilton and Gary MacDonald. Uncharacteristically, Dougie Lampkin was not with them after a solitary dab at the top of Cameron Hill.

Dabill followed his clean day on Monday with another as the trial

headed to Ardgour on the Tuesday morning, Dougie joining him clean. The main talking point of the

day was the severity of the moor crossings on Ardgour and above Loch Eil at Annat, some additional time was added to the running time but the pressure of time led to a number of riders losing more points than expected.

By the end of a very wet day three the order at the top was well established with Gary MacDonald making up for his Tuesday score of 6 with an incredible 1 mark ride on his early day as the trial headed south over the Mamores into Glencoe and over into Glen Etive and the dread of Big Dars Burn. Big Dars took Dougie for three marks, his biggest loss of the week after some mechanical problems with the Vertigo. Best Ride of the day went to Iwan Roberts with a clean ride on some monster sections.

Sunshine and heavy showers greeted the riders on Thursday as the trial again headed south over Callert to Clachaig and the Chairlift, Ba House sections before heading left to Gorton and over the depths of Rannoch Moor to Fersit. A relatively high scoring day ensued with Dabill, Lampkin and MacDonald losing 2, 3 and 3 marks respectively. Gorton proved the toughest section of the day with only Andy Chilton getting through the group clean.



Riders left Fort William on a cool and breezy Road Race Day following the very traditional route round the Moidart and Kingairloch peninsulas, with rain heading in as the day progressed there was some advantage to getting home early. Scores were low but only Richard Sadler posted a clean day, Pipers Burn and Meall Nam Each catching many of the top riders. As Friday ended Dabill on 5 led by two from Lampkin with MacDonald a further 5 points behind.

The potential for a Battle on the Ben was palpable on a sunny Saturday morning and so it proved as



noted earlier. With reports coming into town of very tough top section only Iwan Roberts went clean all day. Lampkin dropped a dab but Dabill's 5 was the deciding score. A 2 mark day from Jack Price tied him on score with Gary on 18 but the countback gave Gary the podium spot once again. There were muted celebrations from the top riders back in town because no-one really knew the outcome, for the rest the exhaustion and relief at just finishing the toughest trial in

the world was tangible.

SACU Live would like to congratulate Dougie on his victory and to every rider for getting round a tough, tough week. Congratulations too, to the SSDT committee and their raft of volunteers, every year they come up with something different that keeps building the legend that is the Scottish Six Days Trial, roll on 2019.

Report and Pictures by Donald Young