

Mike's View of Portland

Just the drive along the long causeway leading you to the giant rock of Portland with the Cliff rising up into a big black cloud must have unnerved many competitors'. The first challenge of the day, was to drive the 1.5 mile very steep swish back road to finally clear the summit of the Inland. Once at the very top you could not help taking in the panoramic views of this west country, world famous Chesil Beach.

The clouds soon cleared and the sun shone on us all day for this epic race.

Shortly after first light riders had started to arrive to inspect the course, many with the eyes out on stalks in disbelief at what lay in front of them. For some this was sheer heaven but for others this was going to be Hell! I am sure a few must have hoped they were still dreaming! With the paddock bursting at the seams with vehicles packed with bikes. There must have been 40-50 bikes that refused to come out to play.

After the sighting lap another 20 or so bikes went straight back in their vans, with the owners very wisely choosing to go track side on foot to help their buddies out for the lone haul .

With a close to five mile flowing track, with a huge amount of very impressive technical obstacles to overcome the riders said afterwards that the 2.5 hour competition felt more like a 5 hour stint in the saddle. There was a plenty of truck tyres and skips that we could have brought into play but knowing that the natural terrain makes for much better quality events, those and many unused parts of the quarry have been left for the follow years !

After riding the course on Monday and making a short video of the race track I thought the Portland stone had excellent grip and that just maybe the course could do with a little more spice! So

By Tuesday I threw in just the thing, Mikes Diner! An extra loop for Championship, Experts, Over 40 experts and the new trials bike class. Starting with a grassy 30 foot near vertical drop off littered with rocks marked with a skull and Crossbones' sign. Then once at the bottom a flat, sharp left up a steep narrow gully followed by a right hand pivot turn into the bike halting bolder field, a quick badgeur detection form our time keepers, then just the 20 foot wall to scale with a squared off transition. This was more like a world trials round with minders catching flying bikes every few minutes.



Dan Bray- using Portland as practice for his 2012 entry to Erzberg..... hope it helped Dan!

The second a skull and Crossbones' sign was at the top edge of a very intimidating downhill section dropping from the very top of the quarry down a man made goat track, traversing the 100ft drop to the base of the workings. I picked the very experienced and talented Neil Hawker to look after this hill, now known at the Crazy Frog Hill. Neil is now as fit as a butcher's dog after kindly offering to rider many petrified bikes down on the sighting lap, only to

have to clamber back up for the next one. No need to thank us for the work out Neill!!

A number of riders thought that Destination Portland measured up to any UK Extreme event they had competed in. The real beauty of this event was that it was on home turf or rock in this case! Those competing had the confidence to have a go surrounded by their good friends and supporters. I for one can't wait to see what we can come up with next year! One thing is for sure it will still be aimed at our regular riders, who certainly showed us this year that they had what it takes to conquer Destination Portland, some truly amazing riding, a big well done to all of you.

....and they said it couldn't be done!



Chris Curtis seems to think it can!

Paddock Pointers

- It was great to see Bolter back on a two stroke thoroughly enjoying himself and taking his first ever extreme win!
- Aaron Smith was first man into the Diner but lost his lead at the end of first lap as he came in too fast into the timing area and slid into the ropes leaving him tangled and back in last place.

- Jack Twentyman snapped his handlebars overtaking a sportsman: mind you speaking to him at the beginning he hadn't even realized he signed up for a Extreme event!
- Biles was on riding as if he were on fire. He thought it was a "proper, proper event!"
- I am extremely pleased to have organised the UK's first ever youth extreme enduro with riders competing from 9 years old right through to 16, bringing trials and enduro together in the same race.
- All the young riders excelled themselves. One rider who particularly caught my attention on the sighting lap was Todd Kellett, hopping his motor cross bike around on the spot the like of which you would have only expected from someone like Taddy! He won the youth race out right by 2 minutes after starting 2 minutes behind the 125 class and despite having to ride half the race with a flat tyre! I can't wait to see what this lad will be capable of when he reaches the adults.
- On Monday evening the only share prices to go up in the whole of the western world were exhaust manufacturers!

A massive thank you to all the people who made this event possible; the owners of the quarry who have been great sports, all the people who helped put the track up, our fantastic time keepers, and the muscle and determination of the marshals for dragging, pushing and picking bikes up all day long.

Many thanks to you all and to everyone for the great feedback.

Mike and the team.