

**ALMC Multi-Venue Autotest**  
**25<sup>th</sup> October**



Grandfathers dominated the results of this event, filling the top three places and last place. A fifth member of the species finished fourteenth of the eighteen starters.

Keith Slowey, seen here with Trish Denning, started the day well but he was “on call” from work.



Murphy's Law prevailed and, despite not having his services availed of in similar circumstances for about a year, this was his unlucky day and he had to disappear half-way through the morning.

Signing-on was in the City North Hotel at Junction 7 on the M1 to which we returned for lunch after nine tests.



Then it was another six before coming back to the hotel again for results and awards. One of the morning tests had to be called off when the farmer feared that his calving cows would be discommoded. Needless to say, this was at the extremity of the route. However, there was another test very close by, which rendered the journey worthwhile. I'm not so sure that Piers MacFheorais

would agree as he attacked a shed door frame during his run and inflicted some damage to the passenger side of his Starlet.



Piers himself and Declan Hendrick were responsible for the design of the tests. Their endeavours were well received, with the majority being open with plenty of room for manoeuvre. Very little reversing was involved and most of the surfaces were drive-train friendly. The tests were also easy to remember. The format was good, with three tests at each of Bellewstown Race Course and Murphy's Quarry. Both locations were used twice which made the event nice and compact. Tulip diagrams, with distances in km (Retro cars don't recognise these), made getting from one location to another fairly straightforward.

The event was certainly good enough to recommend those multi-venue inclined folk to make an effort to come along next time – a more user friendly date is being sought for this. There seemed to be a huge number of marshals out, with every line and pylon under intense scrutiny.



There were a few faces from the past in attendance, such as Chris McNally and, from more recently, like William Murphy.



Also Dave & Deirdre Popham whose daughter, Dawn, was secretary of the meeting.



There is certainly nothing ephemeral about this family group – they appear in glorious 3D.



Noel Devlin was doing the results, with Deirdre supervising. Noel's son, Matthew, was also there.





Not unlike Noel, he seemed to spend most of the day attached to a laptop, though I reckon he wasn't quite as gainfully employed as his father.



C-o-C Conor Crowley seemed to have everything under control and he deserves credit for masterminding such an enjoyable event.

Frank Lenehan had been over at the Ken Wharton autotest the previous day to perform his role as manager/motivator/winder-up of the opposition (particularly Norman Ferguson!). Given the Republic's victory, he obviously discharged his duties effectively.



He flew into Dublin on Sunday morning and was picked up at the airport by MI steward Tim Faulkner.



Trish Denning had driven his Starlet up to the hotel. The convoluted arrangements were worthwhile as he won quite comfortably in the end.

Dermot Carnegie, still wearing the jumper with the oil stain on its sleeve, was second in his Cooper S.



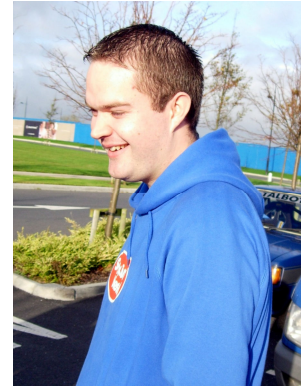
There are no other photographs of him as I was cut to the quick when he remarked that he was delighted to have been placed well away from me in the running order. Dermot had Mark FitzSimons along to navigate.



Clive Peterson was third, also Cooper S mounted.



These three and Declan Hendrick, who was fifth in his Starlet, travelled in convoy for the day. Declan also had a guide with him, Philip Creighton.



Dermot reported that Declan was in such a hurry to eat that he failed to stop astride the finish line of the test before lunch.

I was reprimanded in the last Turbine when I suggested that Mark Doran abused his Escort.



Maybe "he caresses it with gusto" might be a more apt description. Whatever, he drove it to a fine fourth place, beating dad, Joe, comprehensively. Joe's Manta is not quite as nimble – Joe, himself, probably isn't either.



Joe didn't actually deserve to do well as he arrived with his car still covered in IMRC Retro dirt – not a good example to the younger, impressionable competitors. It was reassuring for the elderly among the entry that Mark O'Neill was alongside Mark. His nursing skills



would have been useful had the excitement become too much.

Piers MacFheorais also had a good run, to complete the top six.



His neat and tidy style is obviously very effective.



Damien Doran had Anthony O'Neill along for more navigation practice in his Clubman. Note the very fetching matching roof and interior trim.



The Starlets of John Maher, Owen Whelan and Mark Nugent had a ding-dong struggle which finished in this order.

John McAssey had his Mini back in action.



He had Ger Lawlor along to provide him with a personal battle which John duly won. Ger has a couple of old Minis himself – too good for this sort of thing –

as well as some tractors – “once you have one, you want five”.



Robert Bolton demonstrated once again why he drives and Ian McCulloch navigates.



John Byrne and son, Keith, made the trip from Wexford.



Keith will be sixteen early next year and did sufficiently well in the Junior Cert. for him to be able to look forward to an autotest Starlet for his birthday present.







Trish Denning had a fraught afternoon with six line faults (not all of which she felt were justified) which saw her fall out of contention. Dermot opined that a chill in her kidneys, from the draught through the passenger door that Piers had incapacitated, was the reason for her performance being compromised. Trish did finish her afternoon in a good mood, after setting a very competitive time in the second last test – a thrash around Murphy’s quarry. Incidentally, when Piers was asked if he had beaten Trish, he replied, “With what?”



*John and Declan anticipate*



### Rob relaxes



I am sure the word will be put about and there will be a bigger turnout next time.

*TDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTDCTD*

*More pics*



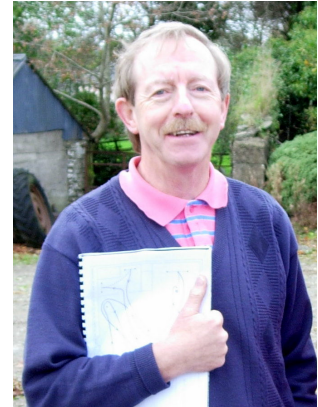
Mark O'Neill and Owen Whelan



*Martin Nugent, keeping an eye on Mark*



*Louise Conaghy*



*Clive Peterson refuses to share his test diagram – it's mine*



*Kiel Moore, navigator for Mark Nugent, and Tim Faulkner, just back from moving his car from its “causing an obstruction” position – not a great example from the MI steward!*



*Piers, just before his mishap. Did the wind power push him over the edge?*

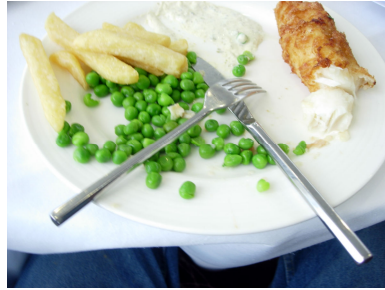


*Mick O'Shea, fresh from his Circuit triumph with Rory Dooley*





*Declan and Philip wait for their tea (and biscuits)*



*Lunch was nice but it was difficult to get a good grip of the cutlery*



*The start of the quarry throw*



*Damien Phillips (getting in the mood for next Saturday) and Kate*



*John Maher looking smug at lunch*



*Joe looks to avenge a Turbine insult*



*Christopher Byrne likewise*



*Mark Doran on the grass at Bellewstown*



*Trish walks alone*



*Trish does bouncing duty for Ian*



*Ger Lawlor is a good boy – nice clean plate*



*Rob still looks relaxed*



*Are Noel Devlin, Tim Faulkner, Martin Nugent & Deirdre Gallagher masters of all they survey?*