



**GH M/cs & G+B Finch MUNTJAC ENDURO - 19 November 2023**  
**Rd. 7 GH Mcs/Husqvarna ACU Eastern Championship 2023**  
**ACU Permit: ACU200843**

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Sunday 19 November saw Diss MCC run the GH Motorcycle/G&B Finch sponsored Muntjac Enduro in Thetford Forest. It was the seventh and final round of the 2023 ACU Eastern Enduro Championship with some 200 riders entered for this forest enduro.

There had been a lot of rain overnight on Friday night and the forecast was for heavy rain during the event so check times were checked and reviewed by clerk of the course, Andy Waters to seek to set a challenging but achievable event for all classes.

The event started at 9:00am and within 5 minutes the championship riders were ready to ride the first of their 5 special tests. With very damp conditions and lots of fallen leaves it was left to 2022 ACUE Enduro Champion Luke Parker (350 Matt Pope GASGAS) to find the lines and, despite a big moment near the start of the test, he set the first time of the day. He's nursing a knee injury, but his time didn't disappoint, he set a stunning 240 second time which was not beaten. As his rivals came through it was Ben Cole (450 GH Husqvarna) who got closest with 244 seconds from Ben Clark (300 Beta UK) on 251 seconds. Steve Holcombe, 2023 World Enduro Champion, was in the mix screaming the 125 Beta into fourth place with 252 seconds with two MX stars, Jake Nicholls (350 GASGAS) on 253, just ahead of Sam Nunn (450 GASGAS) on 256 seconds. Could Parker maintain his initial form? As each of the five tests were ridden he made it clear that he absolutely could. He topped all five tests including the two back to back tests, four and five, with Holcombe getting closest on the fourth test just under half a second behind Parker. Nicholls was just over 0.6 seconds adrift on the fifth and final test. Cole maintained his second position until tests four and five where he dropped to third fastest. With Holcombe wringing more and more speed out of his 125, he just managed to slot into second overall after the five tests, almost 22 seconds behind Parker but just over a second ahead of Cole. With Nicholls getting faster each test he slotted into fourth some 3 seconds behind Cole with Nunn rounding out the top five.



**Luke Parker - Muntjac Winner and  
2023 ACUE Champion**

The last two 14 mile laps would see the championship contenders faced with first a 36 minute then a 34 minute lap. The forecast rain hadn't materialised and the crowd at the finish watched in eager anticipation as the scheduled time for the final lap got nearer. The first man out of the trees was Ben Clark who was two minutes early. Cole was next, but not far behind was Holcombe who was also 2 minutes early but around 8 seconds faster than Clark. Parker was next and a minute early so the win and the 2023 ACU Eastern Enduro Championship was his. That's his fifth ACUE Enduro Championship win, and for the last two years he's also been the ACUE Expert MX Champion – a fantastic achievement.

Eight championship riders stayed clean on their final lap and Holcombe feels that the last 14 mile lap should be run as a special test – that would be a challenge!!! He hopes to return for the Santon which would be great to see.

In the expert class, Luke Meredith (300 DK Offroad GASGAS) dominated with test times that would have slotted him into eighth in the championship class. Steven Cooper (250 Dynamic Water Solutions KTM) was second, almost thirty seconds back with Sam Boyd (200 Beta UK) in third, some seven seconds back with Jack Probert (250 ET James Sherco) and Andrew Bull (250 ET James GASGAS) rounding out the top five. After three tests Endaf Lloyd Hughes (125 Future Moto Yamaha) and Ricky Mair (125 Beta) were tied in sixth place with their combined test times exactly the same to a hundredth of a second.

The expert class included a significant number of experienced national experts and it was left to James Yearley (300 Big Bear Cider Mill Beta) to fly the flag for East Anglia in eighth position after three tests with Lewis Bond (250 GASGAS) next in twelfth.



Steve Holcombe 2023 World Enduro Champion

Experts needed to complete their final lap in 35 minutes and five riders went clean. Meredith was again the fastest, the only expert to do the lap in 34 minutes, the championship target time. Copper and Boyd went clean so maintained their second and third places. Mair stayed clean and moved up to fourth and Matthew Hockenhull (350 Merge Decals KTM) was the last rider to stay on time moving him up from tenth on the tests to fifth overall. Yearley lost two minutes on his lats lap so dropped to fourteenth leaving Bond as the best ACU Eastern expert finishing in eleventh overall.

In the Expert Over 40's Julian Harvey (125 KTM) multiple ACU Eastern Trials Champion, was the clear winner –fastest on all three tests and on time at the final time control. Jonathan Pearson was some 16 seconds behind Harvey on the tests but stayed clean and held on to second. Again, five riders stayed clean on their final lap. Karl Greenall (250 D3 KTM) was third, followed by Shane

Tasker (250 KTM) with John Shirt (350 JSM GASGAS), the current British Enduro Over 40 Champion in fifth. Shirt was second after his first test but tests two and three were not as quick dropping him to fifth, but he was the only Expert Over 40 to clock in a minute early and retained fifth overall.

In the clubman class, Woodbridge club member, Lewis Holmes (350 KTM) was fastest after his two tests, just 0.19 second ahead of James Wren (250 Wren Brickwork GASGAS) with Sudbury's Billy Sargeant (250 Team Dave Roper Yamaha) in third. With yet another five riders staying on time on their last lap Wren took the win from Lee Corbett (250 KTM) with Edward Elkin (300 Beta) in third. Sargeant was the best of the ACU Eastern riders, dropping a minute on the final lap and placing in sixth which means he takes the ACU Eastern Clubman Championship win.

In the clubman over 40's Daniel Rose (350 KTM) was the winner having already secured the ACU Eastern Clubman Over 40 Championship before the Muntjac. He was fastest after the two tests from Matt Willis (450 KTM) and Christian Drane (450 GASGAS). Rose was the only rider in his class to stay on time with Willis and Drane maintaining second and third as the fastest riders losing two minutes.



Julian Harvey Expert Vet Winner

Finally, in the Clubman Over 50's John Hilton (300 KTM) again dominated the class. He was fastest on the tests by some six seconds from Diss club rider, Mark Chapman (250 KTM) who was making a rare return to the woods, racing for his local event. Hilton was the only rider in his class to stay on time with Chapman fastest of the three riders losing a minute. Darren Osborne (249 Yamaha) rounded out the top three in this, the second largest class at the event.

As ever we'd like to express our sincere thanks to the organising team, all marshals and helpers, before, during and after the event without whom we could not put on the event. Also our grateful thanks go to Forestry England for their support and of course, use of the forest, to GH Motorcycles and G & B Finch for their continued sponsorship and to the first aid team, Raynet and 4x4 Response for their support.

With another successful Muntjac completed Andy Waters and the Diss team are quickly tidying up and levelling the forest tracks and as soon as this is completed we will start work in earnest for the Santon Enduro, our first event in 2024. Entries open in early January for the event on 25 February 2024 – hope to see you all there!!!



CoC Andy Waters – the man in charge!!!