



Information for riders in the Sidcup Club's Timber Woods Long Distance Trial



The legal bit:

- The Timber Woods Long Distance Trial (LDT) is run under a Permit of the Auto-Cycle Union (ACU). The Club is obliged to have route approval from the Motor Sports Association (MSA) on behalf of the Department of Transport. Kent County Council Rights of Way Department and Kent Police are sent details of the route and can make comments and advise route changes when necessary.
- 100% of the route is on public rights of way. The unsurfaced lanes are designated as either Uncategorised Roads (UCRs) or Byways Open to All Traffic (BOATs) and can be legally used by motor vehicles. For your information, Restricted Byways, Bridleways and Footpaths may NOT be used by motor vehicles.



The event overall:

- The 85 to 90 mile route uses as many UCRs and BOATs as we can find, connected by roads and lanes. The start and finish are always at the same place, so bikes can be brought in vans or on trailers.
- Around the route are 10 to 15 trials sections. All are on BOATs unless some private land can be used. The sections are designed to suit enduro and trail bikes with their limited steering lock and power configurations.
- The aim is to ride from start to end of the sections between the coloured marker cards without stopping or putting a foot or feet on the ground. Marking is 1 for one 'dab' with a foot; 2 for two 'dabs'; 3 for three or more 'dabs'; 5 for stopping (except momentary), or one or more wheel going outside a marker. Using a tree to prevent a dab is the same as a dab. Each section has an observer who will record scores. These scores are totaled after the LDT to produce a result.
- A Special Test is part of the course and used to resolve ties in section totals. Details of the Special Test will be stated before the event.



Bike and rider eligibility:

- Bikes are Enduro, Trail and Adventure type. Modern trials bikes with no seat and low gearing are unsuitable for LDTs.
- All bikes must be road-legal before the start. All riders must have motorcycle driving licences. Part of the Entry Declaration that you signed states your bike and you are 'road legal'. We do not check documents, so if you are stopped by the Police and you or your bike are not legal, there is no come-back to the Club, and your declaration may be shown as evidence of this.

Bike preparation:

- As stated above, bikes must be fully legal and roadworthy. If chains, cables, brakes, bearings fail on the route, you may be some way from getting help or rescued!
- The Roadbook will state where petrol can be bought, but please have a full tank before you start!

Roadbook holder:

- You can buy a bespoke roadbook holder but they can cost around £100. Most LDT roadbook holders are home made from something like a Tupperware bacon box with a couple of rollers inside and twisting knobs on the outside (usually 15mm plastic plumbing pipe and 15mm push fit plumbing stop ends).



- A bacon box (long and thin) is better than a sandwich box which may cover your speedometer when fitted to the bike. The main things are to ensure the box is over A4 sheet wide (210mm), and that the lid (or the bottom if mounted lid down) is clear (i.e. no colours or embossed wording).
- Put an elastic band round both roller ends to stop the scroll rolling back or forward on its own with road vibration.

- You need some method of attaching the box to the bike. This will depend on the design of the bike.

The Roadbook:

- ***** There is an Information Sheet about reading the Roadbook on the LDT page of the Sidcup Club website. *****
- We are 'old school' with the Roadbook! Neither digital nor an app – it's eleven A4 pages which is added to the Sidcup Club website a few days before the LDT (PDF format).
- Print the pages and Sellotape them together (in the right order!) to make a continual roll from top to bottom.
- The roll is loaded into a Roadbook holder with each end securely Sellotaped to the top and bottom rollers. As you ride the route, you turn the top roller to move onto the next set of boxes thus keeping things flowing.

Miscellaneous:

- It helps if you mark the Roadbook with coloured highlighter pens. Orange on the arrow heads; Yellow on important words (e.g., 'Caution, fast road').
- The first thing to look for on each Roadbook box is the distance to the next junction. If it is very short, you may have gone past the junction before realising!
- Use a Roadbook rather than just following a rider in front. If he takes a wrong turning and looks back, seeing you will (falsely) reassure him that he is on the correct route – then you are both lost!
- Not everyone loves motorcycles! Local residents think we are racing on their footpaths. If you speak to anyone, be calm and polite and point out an LDT is not a race; the route is known and approved by Kent Police and Kent County Council; 'Their Footpath' is a Byway legally useable by motorcycles; riders pass by just once that day.
- You MUST stop for horses. Horses are bigger and more unreliable than motorcycles! Stop your engine and wait until the horses are well clear before proceeding. The riders will thank you.
- Stop and wait or pass by ramblers slowly and only after they step aside for you. Some ramblers are OK with bikes, others are not! Give a cheery "thank you" to all of them.
- Ride slowly and quietly through villages. Don't stand on the pegs when on roads – it worries non-motorcyclists! Byways are often narrow and there may be people including children, horses, cyclists or trail riders just around the next bend. Ride well within your stopping distance!



Timber Woods – the man:



Timber wearing the sash of the President of the South Eastern Centre ACU

Timber Woods is not a place, but a person. Mr R.F. Woods, always known as 'Timber', was a leading light in the Sidcup Club and the South Eastern Centre of the ACU for many years. He rode in solo, then sidecar trials at a time when trials used several areas of land joined up by roads and byways. It was an easy decision in 2000 to name our Long Distance Trial in his honour.

The Club's records show he was Editor of 'The Compass', the Club magazine, for three years from 1960 and Club Secretary for five years until his daughter, Marge took over in 1966, a role she still holds (as Marge Clarke) all these years later!

Timber was Club Chairman, then in 1985 he was elected as Club President. In 1968, Timber became the Secretary of the South Eastern Centre, only handing over to yours truly in 1994. He was awarded Honorary Membership of the ACU for his services to motorcycle sport.