

# Scottish Six Days Trial



Organised by Edinburgh & District Motor Club Ltd since 1911

# So what is a motorcycle trial?

The sport of motorcycle trials is a test of riding skill over observed sections. When competitors ride the sections their feet must remain on the footrests of the motorcycle. They must negotiate steep gullies, slippery rock steps, rocky streams or boulder-strewn gorges. Sections vary in length and severity, and riders are penalised if they put their feet down to help them ride the section, and more so if they fail to negotiate the section in its entirety.



The Scottish Six Days Trial has the additional test of reliability over long distances, with riders completing up to 100 miles each day over a combination of rough moorland, rocky tracks and public roads. Each daily route is designed by the Clerk of the Course to challenge the ability, experience, strength and stamina of each rider. To ride 100 miles and negotiate 30 sections each day for six consecutive days requires strength, expertise and exceptional reliability from both rider and machine.

Scottish Six Days Trial

# Background to the SSDT

**The Scottish Six Days Trial (SSDT) is mainly focused on the Lochar area, centred in Fort William. Each day of the trial starts and finishes at the West End Car Park on the waterfront, providing a major attraction for the town.**

**The trial is limited by daylight hours to around 270 competitors, but entries are regularly in excess of 400, such is the popularity of the event. The majority of riders look forward to the only trial that allows them to compete on equal terms with professional and world class riders. The trial has a reputation for being the toughest in the world, and it is the most prestigious event that a trials rider can win.**

**Competing in the Scottish Six Days Trial is the dream of every young trials rider, and long may that continue.**



**The SSDT is managed by the Edinburgh & District Motor Club, and in association with the SSDT the Club runs a Pre-'65 two-day trial for machines manufactured before 1965. This takes place immediately before the SSDT every year, starting and finishing in Kinlochleven. The Pre-'65 trial celebrated it's Silver Jubilee in 2009 and has proved to be the most important Pre-'65 trial in the UK, with entries for the trial massively over-subscribed each year.**

**The Scottish Six Days Trial attracts over 270 riders who together with their followers, spectators and the 150 Pre-'65 riders, provide a major boost to the economy of Fort William and the surrounding areas.**

Scottish Six Days Trial

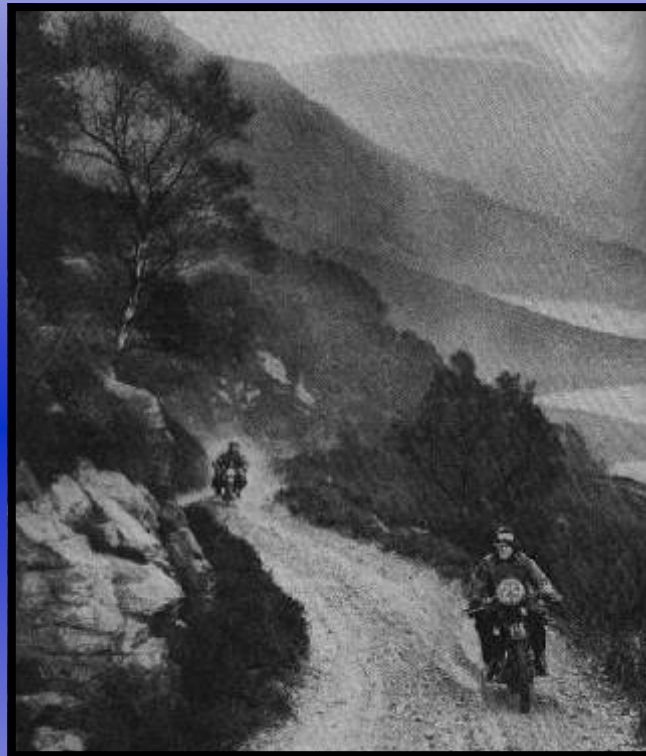
# History of the SSDT

The early history of SSDT runs alongside the history of the motorcycle in general. In the early 1900s early bikes such as Triumph, Matchless, Ariel and Douglas were primitive, and the original SSDT was mainly a test of reliability. Ever since those early days, the SSDT has attracted

factory involvement from the major manufacturers, as the sales benefits of winning the SSDT were, and still are, a major selling point for their

The SSDT originated as a five-day reliability trial in July 1909. It was run by Edinburgh MC and earned the accolade of being 'the most severe motorcycling trial ever held', so in 1910 the event was stretched to six days.

In 1911 the Edinburgh MC merged with a series of other motorcycling clubs to form the current Edinburgh & District MC, and this new club has organised the Scottish Six Days Trial ever since.



In the early years the trial started and finished in Edinburgh, but rather than being a series of daily routes returning to the starting point each day, the trial took in the whole of Scotland. It was a six-day journey from Edinburgh to John O'Groats and back, with designated stopping points for overnight stays throughout the week.

In 1914 the rules changed somewhat, introducing time penalties and deductions for machine faults and in the 1920s light cars were permitted to take part in the event for a short while. In 1938 Fort William was chosen as a new central point for the trial, although the start and finish of the week were still in Edinburgh. This didn't take effect immediately as the trial was halted during the Second World War, but in 1947 the event resumed and grew from strength to strength.

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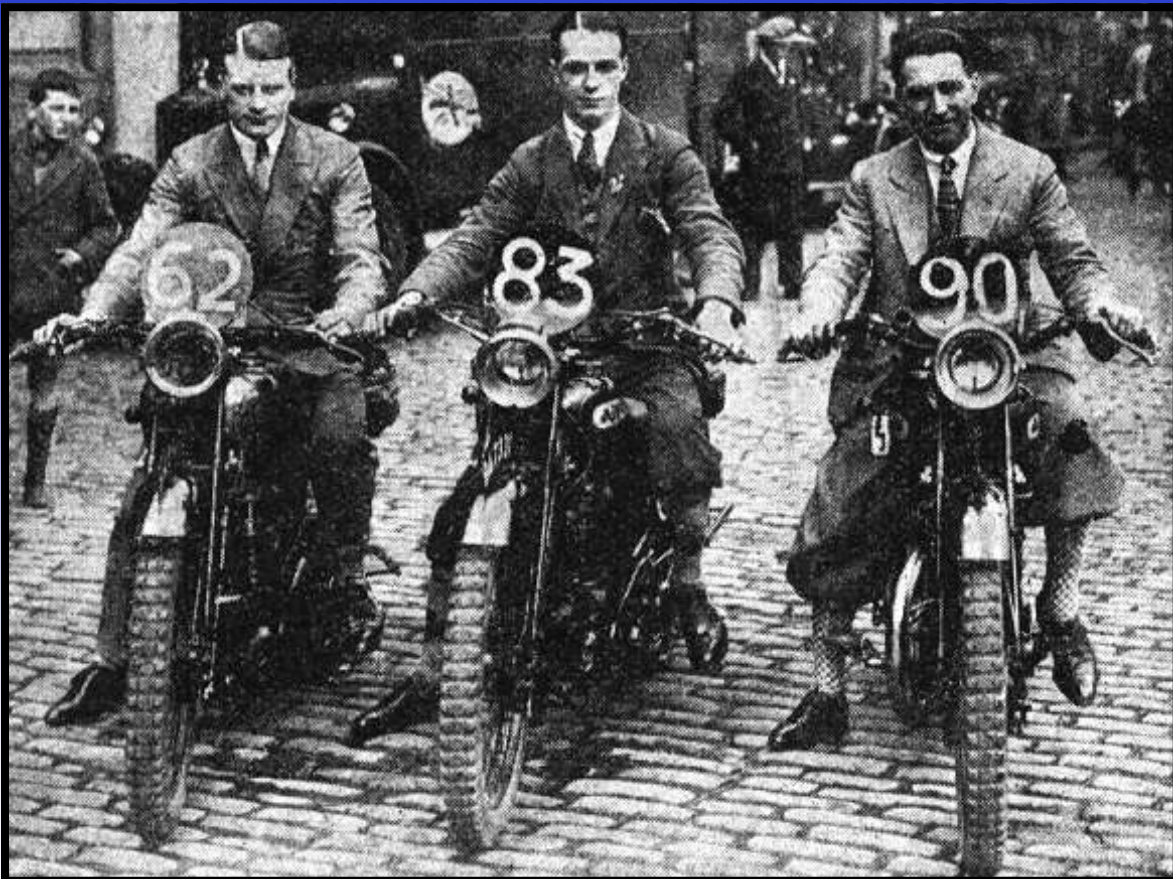
# History of the SSDT

**By the 1970s the popularity of the SSDT had exceeded all expectations and entries had to be limited by ballot as it became impossible for all entrants to complete the daily route within daylight hours.**

**The next change came in 1977 when the link with Edinburgh was finally broken and the event started and finished in Fort William rather than having the traditional runs from and to Edinburgh at the open and close of the week.**

**In the 1980s the international flavour of the event came to the fore, with the first overseas rider winning the event, a theme that was to continue for nine consecutive years. The early 1990s tested the SSDT when the focus shifted to world trials - entries diminished and many predicted the demise of the event, but that didn't last for long and by the time the mid-90s arrived the event was more popular than ever before.**

**The trial has grown steadily in stature and popularity ever since, and continues to grow today.**



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# Friday and Saturday

The Pre-'65 takes place on the Friday and Saturday immediately before the SSDT. It is centred around Kinlochleven and includes many sections which were used in the SSDT during the 1960s. The trial is hugely popular with spectators and competitors alike, and for many enthusiasts it is the highlight of their year.



# Sunday

On Sunday, the competitors for the Scottish Six Days Trial register their entry and present their bikes to be scrutineered, or weighed-in, in the Parc Ferme. Set on the shores of Loch Linnhe, the Parc Ferme attracts a considerable number of visitors to the town and is a fantastic sight to behold. The area forms the secure compound for the competitors machines, the start/finish podium, the servicing areas and a trade village.



Sunday closes with a spectacular cavalcade, where a pipe band leads all 270 riders through the centre of Fort William, another great spectator attraction.

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# Monday to Saturday

The trial consists of six daily routes spread across over five hundred miles, taking in some of the most breathtaking scenery in Scotland.

Competitors leave the Parc Ferme at one-minute intervals and must complete the daily route within a set time. Starting numbers rotate throughout the week to ensure that each competitor has their turn of being out early in the morning.

The routes are laid out one day in advance by the Clerk of the Course and his team, and each route is meticulously planned in association with landowners, Forestry Commission, tenants and environmental bodies.



Competitors are refuelled throughout each day by the club, often with the help of the Army, and lunch is provided mid-way through each day.

Results are provided at the end of each day, both online and by distribution to hotels and press, and the final results are announced at the awards presentation on the Saturday night, when a party atmosphere engulfs the town and traditionally carries on into the wee small hours!

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*The Scottish Six Days Trial.  
Unarguably the greatest motorcycle trial  
in the world.*

**Since its origin in 1909, no other trial has captured the imagination of rider and spectator in the same way.**

**The SSDT lures riders from Japan, Australia and America as well as Europe and Britain, and has the same status to trials riders as the Isle of Man TT has to road racers.**

**In a word, it's spectacular.**



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