

EPIC LE JOG BATTLES THE SNOW



007 fantasy for Frank Appel and Hartmut Grau, but Esprit failed to finish

LE JOG HAS A REPUTATION as the UK's toughest classic enduro, but the 35 crews that signed on at the Land's End Hotel were set for a rally to remember. The first snow in 25 years at the Cornish toe gave a hint of what was to come from 4-7 December, when the clifftop tests were cancelled. Black ice in Devon prompted the first of many route changes for clerk of the course Peter Nedin and his tireless team.

That never-give-up resolve was underlined by Geoff McGladdery and Mark Foster. After brake problems with their Volvo Amazon in

the West Country, they went home but chased back regardless of a severe weather warning to rejoin in Telford. There was also early drama for Tony Sheach and Richard Lambley, who rebuilt their TR4's engine the night before the start.

The most severe snow storms in 45 years across northern England and Scotland didn't deter the Joggers. Despite the cancellation of nearly all the competitive sections over the last two days, entrants relished the challenge and became ever more determined to reach the John O'Groats finish where 28 crews celebrated into the night.

More than half of the entry was from continental Europe, including Germany where Le Jog has a growing following, and Jean-Marie Schmit and Thierry Hilger drove their Singer Chamois from Luxembourg. Just to finish their debut enduro would have been a mighty achievement, but the pair's nimble

Rootes baby came 'fourth' despite suspension problems. There is no general classification, but the unofficial winners with the lowest penalty total were Germans Christian Ruter and Stephan Huber in a rare BMW 2800. Rally baptisms don't come any tougher, and Duncan and John Macleod took a well-deserved novice crew award in their Mini Cooper 'S'.

The exotic Maserati Mistral of Eduard Schorno and Christoph Betschart made the last test, celebrating with lurid powerslides, but sadly not quite the finish.

LE JOG 4-7 DECEMBER GOLD MEDALS

Kevin Haseldon/Michel Gerber
1967 Morris Mini Cooper
Jean-Marie Schmit/Thierry Hilger
1969 Singer Chamois
Helga Helmbold/Selina Helmbold
1983 Mercedes-Benz 280TE

SILVER MEDALS

Nick Jarvis/Jonathan Hancox
1961 Triumph TR4
Tony Sheach/Richard Lambley
1964 Triumph TR4
Christian Ruter/Stephan Huber
1971 BMW 2800

BRONZE MEDALS

Edward Chambers/Matthew Chambers
1981 MGB GT



Mistral of Swiss crew Schorno/Betschart



Sheach/Lambley TR4 splashes to a Silver



Schmit gets Singer sideways on final test

Five questions for...



JEAN-MARIE SCHMIT

Luxembourg Imp fan who won a Gold Medal on Le Jog

Why a Chamois? I'd always wanted a Mini Cooper, but the price put me off. Then a feature on Rosemary Smith in *C&SC* inspired me to buy an Imp. It's my second: I love them.

Did it suit Le Jog? The car has great roadholding and, with the rear engine, the traction is perfect in the snow as long as you have decent tyres. It's always great fun.

Why this event? We'd done a few local rallies but heard great things about Le Jog and we decided to form the British Sports Car Team.

The highlights? I love snow, so this was great. The special test at a farm on ice was exciting. We also adored the long drives in deserted parts of Wales and Scotland.

And the toughest part? Heading up the Scottish coast in a blizzard with 5m visibility was a challenge.