

Adrian Clarke looks determined, Mick Bailey in the chair looks thoughtful. The combination of aggression and intellect took the boys to their first British sidecar trials championship last year — and they look good for a long time yet.



TRIALS PROFILE— ADRIAN & MICK

CLARKE AND BAILEY— THE WINNING COMBINATION...

SHEFFIELD scrap metal merchant Adrian Clarke, passengered by engineer Mick Bailey, won their first British sidecar trials championship last year and assumed the mantle of invincibility passed on by Colin Dommatt and Eric Chamberlain, champs for the three previous years.

Adrian and Mick clinched the 1979 title at the Greensmith in mid-October and ascended to the throne with two rounds still to go. It was a convincing demonstration from a combination which is quite simply the best in the world.

Yet the partnership began as recently as 1976 when both Adrian and Mick, who went to school together and lived not far apart, became disenchanted with a string of poor results in solo trials.

At this point Lady Luck took a hand. Alan Morewood, the former British Sidecar trails champion, also lived nearby (it's the sort of cluster of talent you find in Yorkshire) and he offered to put a chair on Adrian's Suzuki.

And Mick, of course, who had once passengered for Morewood, was a tailor-made partner. Without even bothering to practice they went straight out and won their first event.

Considerably elated, the boys then entered the East Anglian National — and finished second in the mud and sand of Suffolk. And they followed up with an even greater triumph; no less than a win in the D. K. Mansell trial against the best opposition of the day.

Their meteoric start swiftly earned them national recognition, and the Beamish Suzuki organisation stepped in with an offer of support which was gratefully accepted. They carried on their winning way with a string of club, Centre and National victories. They also "won" the British Experts, except that their marks went astray and the decision went to Dommatt — who sportingly agreed that they were the best on the day.

At the end of 1976, and still in their first full year, Adrian and Mick signed to campaign Sammy Miller's 400 Honda outfit. But it didn't turn out to be a successful year and when Sammy and Honda parted company the boys decided that they would retire.

And that appeared to be that until early in 1978 when Mike Wood of the Jim Sandiford set up invited the boys over to have a look at a Montesa outfit they were preparing. They were impressed — and the outcome was full sponsorship for the season.

Even with the backing and expertise of a professional comp shop, however, success didn't come immediately. The outfit was being developed and the boys weren't



The boys blast up a muddy section at the Greensmith Trial in October last year — and a group of their friendly rivals look closely to see how the champs tackle the hazard.

completely happy with its performance. Then Mick broke a bone in his foot at the Inter-Centre team trial and spent the next six weeks in plaster.

But that, really, was the turning point, and between May and December the boys ran up no less than 19 victories. Everyone acknowledged that they were the best chair pair in the business, but even so the national title eluded them. That went to the Old Cornish fox Colin Dommatt who did enough

to hold his crown for the third time in succession.

Last year, however, justice was done. Adrian and Mick put up some blistering championship performances on the Montesa-BKR and took the title with two rounds to spare.

It gave Montesa a second national crown, and Yorkshire another championship. Clarkie and the "bear" rule the three-wheel roost and they look like taking some shifting.