

Chris Davies was Welsh runner-up, 8 points behind Mike Leddy.



Malcolm Cross on his Bultaco in early season action at the Aberystwyth championship round.



Ady Morrison finished fourth in the Welsh Championship on his Fantic.

TRIALS — WELSH CHAMPIONSHIP

LAST YEAR'S Welsh Trials Championship developed into one of the finest and most keenly fought contests of recent years.

The promoting Cambrian Council, anxious to retain interest throughout the eight round series, decided again to adopt the rather outdated 12, 9, 8, 7, 6, 5, 4, 3, 2, 1 points system which, coupled with the non-discard of performances, put the onus on all contenders to contest every round.

The experienced Rhayader Club held the honour of staging the opening round in a snowbound and Arctic January. The main talking point prior to the start was could current champion Mike Leddy (250 Beamish Suzuki) take his third consecutive title or would teenage ace Chris Davies (325 ERW Bultaco) turn the tables and reverse his second spot of the previous year?

It had all the makings of an intriguing contest, but the outcome of this first round was to produce a shock result. Former champion Ian Dodd (325 ERW Bultaco) making a dramatic comeback from semi-retirement snatched a well-deserved victory ahead of all the main contenders. Surprisingly, it was to be Dodd's only ride in the series as he slipped back into retirement.

Round two brought competitors to the black mountains of South Wales where the Amman Valley were the organising club. Matching this championship status a fine natural course and continuous rain on the day really sorted the men from the boys. After taking fourth spot in the first round his lowest placing in the series Leddy bounced back with a win over a determined Cross.

Moving across to Cardigan Bay it was the turn of the enthusiastic Aberstwyth Club who succeeded in maintaining the high standard set in the previous rounds. In fact it brought the first clear cut win and it was Leddy again coming out on top with Davies on this occasion taking runner-up spot. The big revelation however, was the form of third finisher Martin Jones (310 Montesa) from Merthyr. Martin's impressive style, especially in muddy going, helped him gain a fine fifth spot overall in the Championship.

The Dulais Valley R. A. Williams Trial marked the halfway stage of the proceedings and gave youngsters Davies and Morrison a chance to show their skills as they demoted Leddy to third spot. It was Davies best ride of the year and an emphatic win on one of the best closed courses in South Wales. Points positions showed Leddy on 39, Davies 37, Cross 29, Morrison 21 — and already the leading pairs were starting to draw away.

Scheduled for the day following the Mitchell, the Aberaman Trial was to prove a turning point. For this event the lads were joined by a number of works aces and Suzuki's John Reynolds took the top honours, while it was left to Leddy and Morrison to claim top points. For Davies it was a day best forgotten as he was never able to pull back the loss of two fives in the very first group. Young Steven Plain (200 Fantic) had a good ride and deservedly took fourth spot just behind clubmate and next door neighbour Mal Cross.

Following a summer break the battle
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Leddy leads Taffy tussle

resumed with Leddy holding a comfortable lead. Three rounds remained and Davies certainly needed a return to form to bring himself back into contention. His reply was dramatic for following wins at Wrexham and Denbigh and Mold he had whittled Leddy's lead to just our points.

An unfortunate clash with the Manx Two-Day meant both Cross and Morrison were notable absentees at Wrexham, but South Walians Page and Bamford both collected valuable points. Davies and Leddy were in top form at Wrexham where they both sported new machines.

So, just as in 1978, it was all to depend on the final round, and responding to the occasion the promoting Caerphilly Club put together a really tough and challenging course. Davies started in brilliant fashion and took an early lead, but the second part of the event brought a quick change in fortunes. A

tight time limit increased the pressure and produced a comeback by Leddy who recovered from a poor start to eventually claim overall victory as Davies' early lead faded. Most frustrated rider, however, was Cross who, although best on observation, had his hopes of a first win in the series thwarted by the subsequent addition of time penalties.

Summing up, it was a tremendous championship battle highlighted by the sheer consistency of Leddy, which had earned him his third consecutive title, and Davies' fighting comeback in the latter stages.

1979 Welsh Trials Championship Final Results table—Top Ten.

Mike Leddy 80 points, Chris Davies 72, Malcolm Cross 53, Ady Morrison 39, Martin Jones 29, Chris Page 24, Garry Bamford 21, Peter Joseph 19, Phil Richards 18, Steven Plain 17.



Welsh champion for 1979, Mike Leddy at Aberstwyth in March.