

Flying Scotsman 2019

Day 02. Slaley Hall - Turnberry. 234 Miles.

All change please

By day's end, the longest day of the 2019 Flying Scotsman had set up exactly the sort of nail-biting finale that the organisers had no doubt planned from the off.

Going into the third day, Paul Crosby, looking for his second win was pitted against Bill Cleyndert looking for his first, along with Peter Lovett trying to nudge him aside and also move towards the top spot.

It was a long day for sure, and a hard one certainly but, thanks to the good weather, the amazing roads and the of variety of Tests and Regularities the time fairly flew by as the wheels of the rally pounded through the immense Scottish Borders and into the stunning landscapes of Dumfries and Galloway.

Almost the same as yesterday, there were four Tests on offer, five Regularities and a Time Control section to keep everybody sharp but Anthony Preston had also thrown in a bit of off roading for good measure.

An early start was needed in order squeeze in such an amazing programme and so, at 7.31am, Paul Crosby found himself teed up on the first fairway of the Slaley Hall golf course for the first Test, a short, sharp slalom around the grounds where the only club needed was a good driver and, the main aim was to keep well out of the rough.

Once out of the gates of Slaley though, the open road then took us towards the Bewcastle Fells and the first Regularity which featured characteristically narrow roads, dry stone walls and wide-open moorland. New fords, lots of broken tarmac and plenty of timing points were also thrown into the mix which only added to the complexity of the timing. It was hard work but the Time Control in Newcastleton gave the rally a bit of a let up before another short Test at Mainhill Farm and a much longer Regularity over Threip Moor. Through the Forest of Ae, with a couple of long gravel (and mud) sections for the delectation and delight of the crews, before they finally tucked into a welcome lunch in Thornhill.

By now we were well into Scotland, but we were also about to head due south, via another Regularity, towards the Dundrennan Ranges on the coast, for a lengthy Time Control section around Kirkcudbright. The roads here were free flowing and the scenery was vintage Flying Scotsman. After the trials of the Time Control sections there was just a bit of time to relax and enjoy the drive before the final two Regularities through Rusko, Glentool and Changue in the vast Galloway Forest Park which also featured a long gravel section with hairpins, a water crossing and several well placed timing points. The track down from the forest then lead almost directly to the impressive Trump Turnberry resort where we were to spend the night.

After a very good dinner in a mirrored, gilded and chandeliered dining room, there was then just enough time to enjoy a few well earned drinks to wash the dust from our throats before bedding down for a good nights sleep.

How well the top three crews will actually sleep though remains to be seen.

Syd Stelvio