

NARROW GAUGE EFFICIENCY COMPETITION 2006

This was held once again over the last weekend in June, the 24-25th, this time at the much-developed tracksite of the Southport Model Engineering Club in Victoria Park, home to the prestigious Southport Flower Show. The club has recently built a completely new 1700 ft elevated track encircling the old track and the clubhouse and extending to a turning loop beyond a fine new model boating pond. The old track continues in use as a nursery track, and the station has been enlarged to accommodate both tracks. .

As ever, the event is a mini-IMLEC restricted to narrow gauge locomotives, which tend to be uncompetitive in the regular IMLEC. The event was started a few years ago by Bill Tabiner, former chairman of the Northern Association, based on a proposal by Joe Holdsworth of the Wrexham club. Both are pictured below. The aim is to achieve the highest possible thermal efficiency in hauling a train of the driver's choice of loaded miniature slate wagons during a half hour run. Winner this year (again!) was 16 year old James Tilbury driving one of the remarkable Beyer Peacock 0-6-2's built as a pair by Jim Moyle and David Bishop. He achieved success last year driving the other one of the pair, No 10.



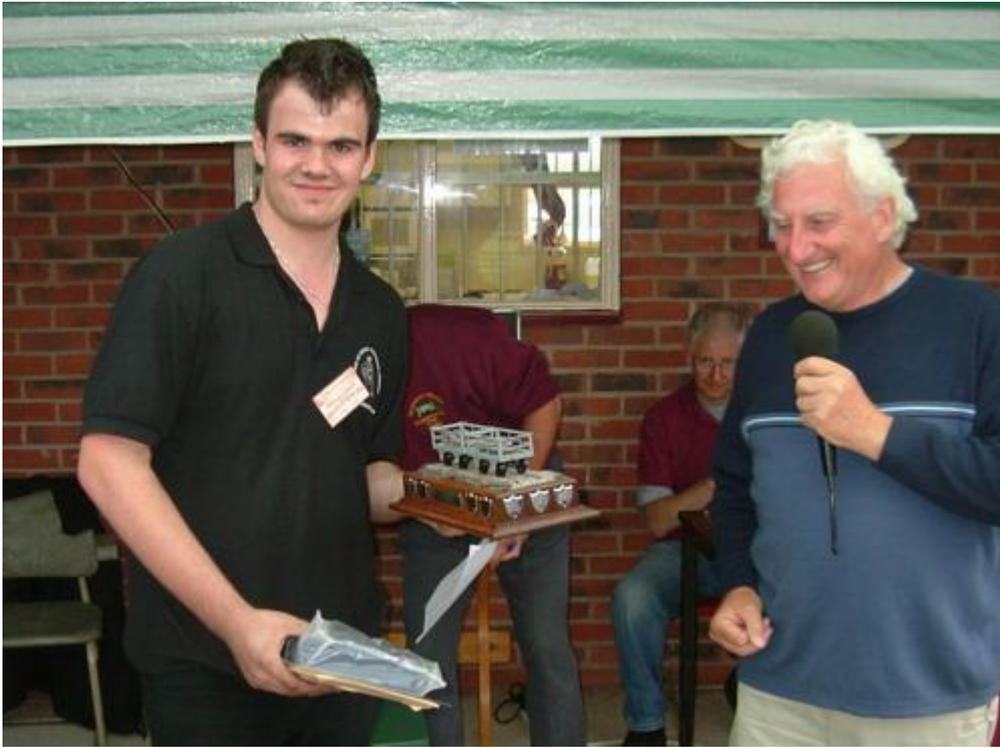
1. Joe Holdsworth driving his Alice Class 0-4-0 Hunslet 'Holy Rose', built to fellow club member Terry Aspin's design. Terry wrote in Model Engineer under the pseudonym of 'Chuck' for many years, and we are pleased to report that he is still very active in the hobby, as well as an occasional ME contributor.



2. Host club member 19 year old John Williams drove the club's own recently completed club loco, a Metre Maid (a three-axle Sweet Pea for the incognocenti). This was John's first competition of any kind, so we wish him well in his new career!



3. Geoff Crank drives his 16 year old 0-4-0 Sweet Pea, named 'Lauren' after his first granddaughter. Geoff's engine has steam operated cylinder drain cocks and hydrostatic lubrication.



4. James Tilbury picks up the winner's trophy from Bob Pettifer, chairman of the host club. The trophy is a rather nice miniature slate wagon mounted on a wooden plinth on which shields are fixed bearing the names of the various winners.



5. Here we see James driving Jim Moyles' Beyer Peacock 0-6-2 No 9 to victory. Note the train of slate wagons stretching out as far as the eye can see. Well, almost! A remarkable engine, very well driven.



6. Recent past secretary of the Northern Association Nigel Thompson's 0-4-0 'Betty' was entered by Bill Tabiner, past chairman and co-founder of the event, who looks all set to start. Betty is another example of Martin Evans' Conway design and named after Nigel's wife.

Pictures courtesy of Southport Model Engineering Club

Promoting the King of Hobbies'

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