

The Stephenson Memorial Miniature Locomotive Association

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Report on the 66th Trials held at South Durham Society of Model Engineers, Hurworth, Darlington, 18th September 2022

This year's host, South Durham, have been on standby to run the trials since 2019, when they were asked if they would run the event if the proposed hosts were unable to do so. Following the lock down of 2020 when we didn't run, they were asked again to be on standby in case the proposed host was unable to oblige. In the event they were not required again, so it was a pleasure to have them volunteer to run the 2022 trials.

The track at Hurworth Grange has always been a popular venue, and this year was no exception, ultimately with thirteen entries, just one less than the maximum of 14 here in 1999.

For the record the track is a large oval 790 feet long with a challenging upgrade on one side through the station and an equally challenging down grade on the back straight which ends in a fairly tight right hand curve leading into the climb back to the station.



Run 1 A patriotic Wilf McHugh sets off with Alice.

Ballast for the trains is short lengths of steel bar set across the passenger cars between the angles that would normally secure the cushions. The coal provided was from Ffos Y Fran open cast mine near Merthyr Tydfil, which depending on the website you access is a bituminous coal, or

steam coal or anthracite, all being advertised as smokeless with a calorific value of around 13000BTU and to my eye looks like Welsh steam but burns without the smoke normally associated with that type. As it is supplied in nothing smaller than small nuts, South Durham had broken it up and graded it into grains and beans for the event, although the beans were a little on the large side. More on that later.

The weather for the day was slightly overcast with a few brighter spells and whilst there was a low risk of showers forecast, in the event we had a dry day in almost ideal conditions.

Run No 1 As we arrived the first runner Wilf McHugh was already in steam in the station being loaded up. Wilf is one of our regular entrants with his narrow gauge Hunslet tank in 5" gauge. We would normally put a 3 1/2" loco from the host club in the first spot, but as there was no 3 1/2" entry from South Durham, Wilf, who has many entries to his credit over the years, was selected to start the proceedings. With a load of 1160 lbs Wilf did a little over ten laps of the track (2650 yards) and burned 24.42 ounces of coal which put him in fourth place overall. Probably the best result for this loco ever.



Run 2 Eddie Gibbons coming down the bank - safety valves just feathering

Run No 2 should have been Sam Yeeles with the 4F, but a small technical problem prevented the loco from being steamed and yours truly had to step up to keep things rolling with my 3 1/2" atlantic. Joe usually runs this engine in this event and we've often seen some spectacularly fast runs with him in charge, but this year we had brought Doug Hewson's 5" BR Class 4 tank which is in my care for commissioning purposes and as Joe has managed to get the measure of it, he was volunteered to run it at this event. Since the only other loco that was serviceable was the atlantic then it fell to me to drive it. We discussed the loading and concluded that whilst it was capable of hauling 850lbs, to be safe with me driving I should take a little less load at 750lbs, mainly because I don't often drive it. For some reason I decided to burn the grains, rather than the beans and had a very satisfying run of 3986 yards non stop, a fete I haven't managed for many years. At the end of the run I was informed the load had not been correctly made up and it was only 657 lbs, would I like a rerun. I decided to decline as it was unlikely a second run would be as good. So this run ultimately placed the atlantic in seventh position overall. It was noted that there was a good deal

of unburned coal in the smokebox at the end of the run and much unburned coal in the ashpan when it was cleaned out at home.



Run 3 Sam Yeeles getting some in as he flies through the station with the 4F

Run No 3. With the technical problem resolved, the 4F was next to run in charge of TSMEE junior member Sam Yeeles. Sam ran at quite a pace completing almost sixteen and a half circuits of the track (4329 yards) our quickest run of the day, an astounding example of consistent running on Sam's second ever trial. Burning 19.65 ounces of coal with a load of 655 lbs Sam was placed third overall and was the highest placed 3 1/2" entrant.

Run No 4 Our final 3 1/3 2 gauge entry was Malcolm Lummas of the York Society with his 4-8-2 "Duchess of Swindon". The load this time was a moderate 664 lbs for what is quite a large locomotive. The Duchess was designed by LBSC as his opinion of what the GWR should be building to deal with the predicted increase of traffic post World War 2. His vision of the future was not realized as the largest GWR build after the war was a further batch of the existing Castle class 4-6-0. The "Duchess" only ran a distance of 1839 yards due to stoppages for shortage of steam, but the fuel consumption was a quite frugal 12.07 ounces ultimately putting Malcolm in 8th position.

Run No 5 The second 5" gauge run was also the first of four "Simplex" tank locomotives in the event's line up. Dave Fuller of Furness MRC, had brought "Sally" and took a load of 1129lbs. Sadly Sally wouldn't make steam and Dave spent most of his run time trying to find some without much success and eventually retired. Based on the distance run of 696 yards and coal use of 13.31 ounces Dave was placed 12th.



Run 4 Duchess of Swindon with Malcolm Lummas



Run 5 Dave Fuller and his Caledonian liveried Simplex Sally

Run No 6 Our second simplex, South Durham's Ronald Stevenson's unnamed "Simplex", was expected to put on a good showing after its last appearance here at Huworth when it ran very



Run 6 Looks like a full boiler on Ronald Stephenson's Simplex

quickly for the allotted time and was placed first to win the Stephenson Cup. This time it was not to be and Ronald struggled to keep moving making several stops to raise steam. The distance covered was 1883 yards with a load of 1005lbs. Surprisingly the coal fired amounted to just 16.83 ounces putting Ronald in the sixth place.

Run No 7 Simplex No 3 was "Furness" driven by Charles Waddington of the Furness Club. This was Charles' first trials entry, so his load was well within the locomotive's capabilities at 1113lbs. Making a number of stops to recover from low pressure, Charles used 17.01 ounces of coal for a distance of 1482 yards run, which translated into 9th place at the end of the day.

Run No 8 was our last Simplex of the day with Paul Stephenson of the City of Sunderland MES at the regulator. It's a long time since we have seen Paul at the trials, my records show him winning the "Rocket" trophy in 1986, being in second place driving a 3 1/2" "Bantam Cock". Today his load was 1213lbs and the running was quite brisk to cover 3832 yards and with a coal consumption of 28.47lbs, Paul's run was good enough to give him second place overall and best 5" gauge.

Run No 9 Daniel Duncan had brought his 15xx pannier tank representing Ryedale Society of Model Engineers. As in previous events Daniel elected to haul a moderate load, this time of 651 lbs. A steady run was made of 2827 yards with a stop to recover steam pressure and with the use of 23.18 ounces of coal and put Daniel in 11th place at the end of the day.



Run 7 Charles Waddington looks to be enjoying himself with Furness



Run 8 Paul Stephenson and his Simplex taking water



Run 9 Daniel Duncan and his Speedy



Run 10 Joe Gibbons waiting for the off on what was to become a disappointing run

Run No 10. Joe Gibbons was running 80080 a BR Standard Class 4 tank engine. This engine is Doug Hewson's own that was used during its construction to illustrate his articles on the build in EIM magazine. We have been privileged to have been entrusted with the commissioning of this locomotive, which Doug has been unable to do since it was almost completed in 2012 due to ill health. We had done some trial runs with loads in excess of half a ton and Joe decided there was room to increase that and loaded the train to 1292 lbs. The engine handled the load very well,

lifting it out of the station in good form and rapidly accelerating to speed and was a fine sight coming through the station at the end of the first lap. It soon became obvious that all was not well as the train rolled to a stop on the climb up to the station on the second circuit. At this point the steam had dropped to a point where recovery was unlikely and Joe retired from the trial. He did think the coal was too large for the firehole door and that he had been unable to build up the fire, but an inspection on air back in the workshop revealed a substantial steam leak on the superheater header, clearly a joint had broken and was the cause of the failure.



Run 11 Royal Scot Kings Own with Simon Newby in charge

Run No 11. Dave Fuller had brought his Royal Scot 46161 "Kings Own" with Simon Newby of The South Lakeland Society as the driver. Last year at Barrow Simon did a very good run despite a substantial steam leak from somewhere beneath the smoke box. This time, with that fault rectified, we were expecting a really good performance, and so it was, with Simon completing over 14 laps with a load of 1300lbs. Unfortunately the coal consumption was the largest of all the locos running this year at 40.19 ounces which was probably the reason for his disappointing final placing of 6th overall .

Run No 12. Our final 5" entry was TSME's Sean Bowler with his BR Class A3 No 60045 "Lemberg". Loaded with 1305 lbs Sean started well and lapped steadily, looking as if this could be an excellent run. Sadly, around about the halfway stage the pace fell and the train came to a stand just after passing through the station area, short of steam. Although the fire looked to be in good shape the pressure failed to recover enough to restart the train, and it became a battle between the boiler water gauge and the steam pressure, which was ended by the clock. The train had travelled 1723 yards and 24.95 ounces of coal had been used, putting Sean in tenth place overall.

Run No 13. Lucky for some and it turned out to be so for Nick Wright of Ryedale with his Caledonian Dock tank. Being the only 7 1/4" entry, Nick was assured of taking the 7 1/4" trophy before he even lit the fire, assuming he actually ran. So the goal was to get the Stephenson Cup

as the overall best performer. Nick had loaded all of South Durham's weights, which with the vehicles and driver amounted to 2796lbs. The loco set off well, hardly noticing the load attached, and proceeded to make the job look easy covering 3665 yards in the twenty minutes allowed, for the consumption of 24.95 ounces of coal. The resulting score was far higher than any other in the trial and Nick was awarded the 7 1/4" trophy and the Stephenson Cup for the best performance of the day.



Run 12 Sean Bowler steady away with Lemberg



Run 13 Nick Wright looks confident as he heads towards winning the trials

So we came to the end of another great day, leaving only the trophies to be presented. Before that I was pleased to be able to announce we had found a new Chairman to succeed Tom Jones who has sadly had to resign due to his wife's health issues. Many thanks to Tom for his years of service and our best wishes for the future. Dave Fuller of Furness MRC has volunteered to fill the gap after a call for nominations for the post produced none, other than a suggestion from Tom that Dave would be a good choice. Dave has worked to bring more cooperation between the

Cumbrian clubs, which echoes the reasons behind the formation of the Association when it was founded over seventy years ago in the North East.

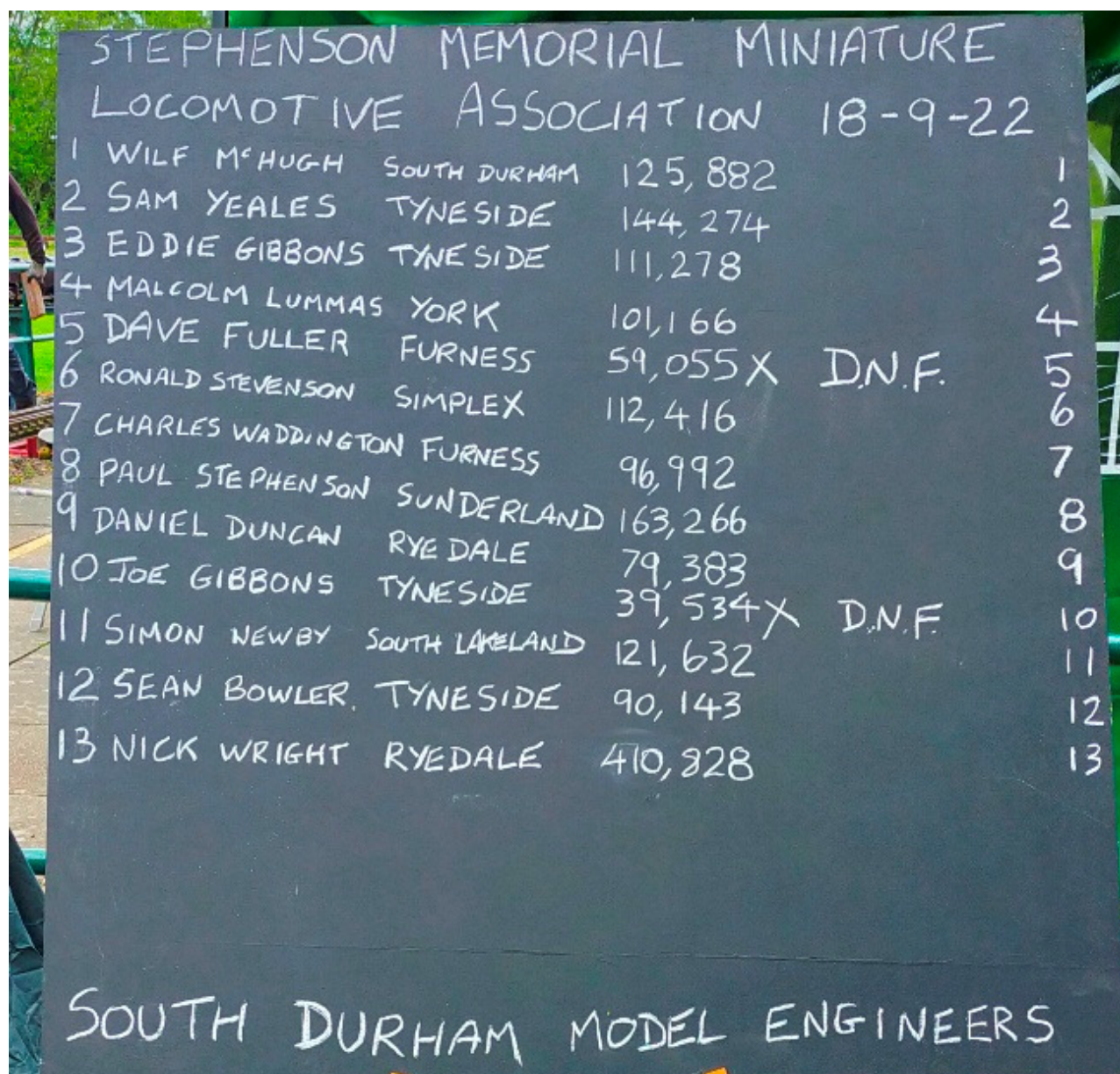
Joan Lowes presented the Trophies as below:

The Stephenson Cup for the best overall performance and the 7 1/4" Cup to Nick Wright of Ryedale SME

The TSMEE Trophy for the second place overall and the Rocket trophy for the best placed 5" gauge entry to Paul Stephenson of the City of Sunderland MES

The 3 1/2" gauge shield to Sam Yeeles of Tyneside SMEE

Lastly the President's Shield for the best placed new comer to Charles Waddington of Furness MRC



STEPHENSON MEMORIAL MINIATURE LOCOMOTIVE ASSOCIATION 18-9-22				
1	WILF McHUGH	SOUTH DURHAM	125,882	1
2	SAM YELES	TYNESIDE	144,274	2
3	EDDIE GIBBONS	TYNESIDE	111,278	3
4	MALCOLM LUMMAS	YORK	101,166	4
5	DAVE FULLER	FURNESS	59,055 X	5
6	RONALD STEVENSON	SIMPLEX	112,416	6
7	CHARLES WADDINGTON	FURNESS	96,992	7
8	PAUL STEPHENSON	SUNDERLAND	163,266	8
9	DANIEL DUNCAN	RYE DALE	79,383	9
10	JOE GIBBONS	TYNESIDE	39,534 X	10
11	SIMON NEWBY	SOUTH LAKELAND	121,632	11
12	SEAN BOWLER	TYNESIDE	90,143	12
13	NICK WRIGHT	RYEDALE	410,828	13
SOUTH DURHAM MODEL ENGINEERS				

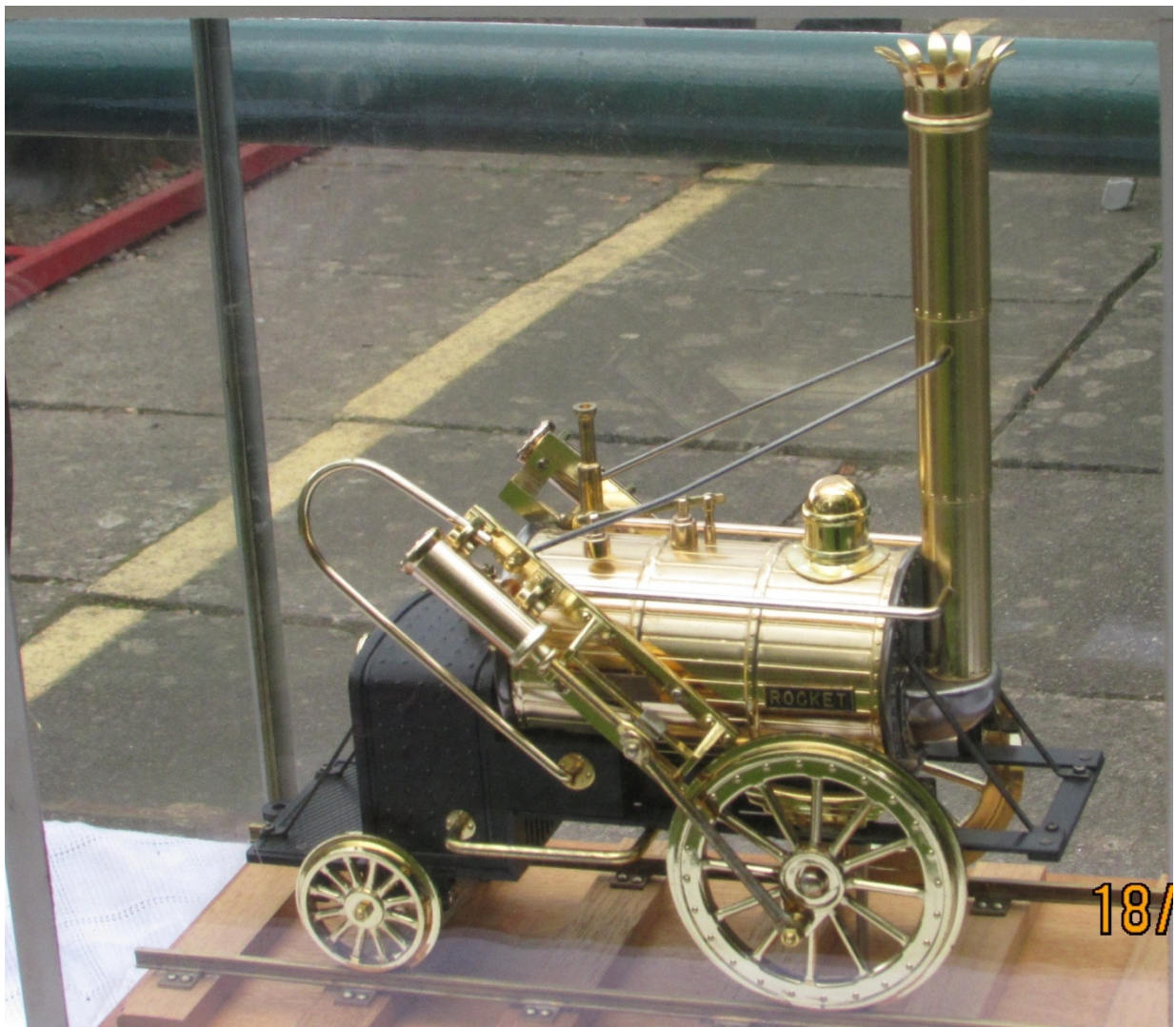
The final score board



Joan Lowes presented the Stephenson Cup and the 7.25 inch to trophies Nick Wright



Paul Stephenson receives the runners up trophy



The Rocket Trophy also went to Paul for best 5 inch entry



Sam Yeeles being presented with the 3.5 inch Shield



Charles Waddington awarded the Presidents Shield for the best run by a newcomer



Some of the Tyneside contingent



Our jolly time keeper



Counting the laps



Doing the Sums

So all that remains for me to do is to thank South Durham Society of Model Engineers for hosting this year's event and for the meticulous organisation which ran as smoothly and seamlessly as we have come to expect here. My thanks also to all those individuals who have contributed their time and effort preparing for the trial ahead of the day and for those who on the day did the stewarding, loading, fuel weighing, timing, lap counting and calculation of the results, and not forgetting those who looked after the refreshments.

Finally my thanks to the entrants who took the trouble to bring their locomotives, some of them from considerable distance, and those who came to support them and those who just came to watch. Thank you one and all. I hope you all enjoyed the day and I look forward to joining you all next year. For that to happen we will need a venue, so if you want the trial at you home track, please canvas your committee and get them to make contact with me on email eddyg.52a@btopenworld.com.

My apologies for the lateness of this report, a lot has been going on here that has not allowed me to sit in front of my computer and write. I won't trouble you with the details, but since it is late it's appropriate for me to wish you all the best for the coming season and 2023.

The results and analysis follow in the attached pdf files.

