“Three Cheers For Charlie”

WMTA Trials Series
32nd 23rd Mosteller Cup
Rounds 10 & 11
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By Ron Pocher
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It would be safe to say that brothers Bob and Ron Dice were rather instrumental in seeing that the Wyoming Motorcycle Trials Association got on its feet, so to speak. The Dice boys were the first trials enthusiasts to corner Charlie Mosteller and inquire about riding on his beautiful Bar-X Ranch just southeast of Casper. Although the club had been in existence since 1974, the first of thirty-two editions of the Mosteller Cup was held in 1978. Bob Dice came out on top in the first five runnings, and the award he received was actually called the “Sheepherder’s Cup”. This questionable title only lasted for four years, before being voted out by the club and changed to the name it’s held ever since. The general consensus was that “since it’s always held on the Mosteller Ranch, why not just call it the Mosteller Cup”? Seems logical enough to me, but legend has it that the Dice boys were none too happy about the name change. One would think that the brothers Dice would have been a little more understanding, because after all, we’ve all heard plenty about those sheepherders and their practices.

Kenny Mosteller told me that he actually got interested in trials by watching the riders doing their thing in those early years. “I went out and watched a couple times and thought – well, that looks easy enough”, said Mosteller. “Once I tried it and realized it was actually hard, then I just kept riding constantly until I got a little better at it.” If you’d seen Kenny riding any time in the last several years, and had yet to give it a go yourself, you would have probably had that same initial reaction because he can certainly make it look easy.

Mr. Charlie Mosteller never really had many outside interests, other than just working outside. Charlie seemed to find all the entertainment he ever needed right there on the Bar-X. After a short stint in the military, Mosteller returned to his ranch where his main title would probably be cattleman, but from what I’ve heard he must have had quite the hat rack, because he was a man that wore many. When not running as many as eighty head, you might find Charlie down in the orchards. If he wasn’t in his greenhouse, the beehives might be a safe bet. Mosteller also owned and operated a fish hatchery right there on the grounds and supplied many local restaurants with tasty trout. Somewhere amidst that daily juggling act, Charlie also found the time to raise six kids. Although he enjoyed being astride a good horse, the man who hosted thirty-one Mosteller Cups never swung a leg over a motorbike.

“As far as I know he never even rode a motorcycle”, said Kenny. “I know he was trying to shoot an elk, because he never had, but I don’t recall if he ever got one or not.” Although he treated himself to a bit of hunting late in life, Poppa Mosteller obviously loved working his ranch as much as anything.

Fred Martins, Dan Straka and Bob Strohman were the event’s Trials Masters, and as always, they came up with two extraordinary days worth of challenging fun. Mary Adams, Barbara Hutchinson, Barry Matlack, Evelyn Peacock and Colleen Straka were handling the scoring with their usual prowess.

The Pro class boasted a fine cluster of fearless contestants. Keith Wineland and Steve Darrow made up “Team Colorado” while Miles Morgan and Shad Petersen were the “Wyoming Wonders” who were hearing the cheers of the partisan crowd. Wineland continues to be “the cat to beat” as he only needed four dabs during his day one scamper. Petersen turned in a fine performance on Saturday and “splattered” his way to second with 19. Morgan rounded out the first round podium with his 22-card. The Gas Gas-mounted Wineland, and his 10-card, wound up perched on top after Sunday’s round and this allowed Wineland to head back home with his third “Mosteller Cup” and second in a row. Morgan turned the tables on Petersen, come Sunday, and came in four dabs stronger – 32 to 36. Darrow could manage no better than fourth on each day, but rolled home just three marks shy of Shad on Sunday.

Keith Wineland
Derek Martinson and Al Duke were the only Expert class gents who made it to the start for Saturday’s contest and after three loops, of twelve sections each, Martinson held the better card. Derek’s brother, Brian, joined the fray on Sunday and his 21-card was good enough for the runner-up spot. Derek only needed seven dabs during his day two victory while Duke was pushed back to third by the Martinson freight train.

Kenny Mosteller was wrestling with a touch of flu, but it didn’t affect him as much as his classmates might have hoped in the Veteran Advanced division. Mosteller snatched the gold on each day with 9 and 1-point rides. Steve Davis turned in a couple of silver medal performances while Mark Franklin wound up on the third step of the podium in each round. Todd Hancock was coming to grips with his new mount and the wide-mouth grin he was sporting all weekend undoubtedly proved that figuring out a “freshy” is a problem we’d all like to be dealing with. Hancock placed fourth on both days.

Ross Stewart figured Darren Youngs needed a little company in the Senior Advanced class and joined him for quite the skirmish. Stewart bested Youngs by just eight on day one but almost doubled that gap on Sunday when he scooted home with a 17 to Darren’s 30.

Dallas Peak and Ron Pocher are having quite the fracas in the Veteran Intermediate points race, but Peak left the ranch with the upper hand. Peak topped Pocher handily on day one – 3 to 12. Clyde Jernberg rounded out Saturday’s podium with his 13-card while John Borg and Dirk Carroll both ended play with 14 marks lost. Jernberg leaped up to the top step in Sunday’s contest with his fine 4-card while Pocher had to again settle for second with his 6-point ride. Peak and Carroll both punched 10-cards, but this time Dirk was the man just a few cleans shy and had to settle for his second fourth of the weekend.
but Ryan had 30 cleans to Zach’s 29. Chapman and Blackmore traded second and third place finishes in the two rounds.

The Vintage class at any WMTA meet is almost always a rather intense affair. Chris Adams and Fred Martinson have had some hair-raising hassles over the years, and this year’s Mosteller Cup proved no different. Adams turned in stellar rides on both days but left for home with just one set of first place points. Adams’ Saturday 2-card handily topped Martinson’s 8-point tally, but Sunday’s scuffle ended with a bit tighter gap. Chris and Fred both rolled home tied across the board – same points, cleans, ones and twos – but Fred got the gold since Chris was first to take a point. Bob Strohman snatched third place on day one while Dan Straka filled the final podium spot on day two.

There was a new but familiar face lurking in the Last Class. Chuck Carruthers made more than just an appearance as he skated away with the best card (of 5) on Saturday and backed that up with a second place finish on day two. Reigning class champion, Clay “Crispy Critter” Hoyt, returned to form on Sunday and also wrapped up the weekend with both a first and second. Greg Stewart finished ares of John Brooker on day one, but came roaring back to snatch third place points in Sunday’s round.

Logan “Cotton” Cundy returned to the scene of the crime, after a brief hiatus, and romped to victory both days in the Amateur ranks. Cundy punched 15 and 8-point cards to win handily. Chase Abbott was able to finish runner-up on Saturday but must have lost focus, as Sunday found him bringing up the rear. Ralph Anaya was his usual consistent self and steered his way to third in each round. Bob Schmidt got all his “ducks in-a-row” on day two and pocketed the silver with a fine 18-point ride.

Matt Matlack talked some poor fool out of the use of their bike for the weekend and proved that he hasn’t forgotten everything, by cruising to the top step in both Novice class rounds. Andy Rickert filched a second on Saturday but slipped down a notch to third come Sunday. Jody Hutchison also posted second and third place scores, but saved her best for last to end up second overall for the weekend. Jody sure is diggin’ her brand new 250cc Gas Gas. Miah Swann was just off pace and rolled home in fourth in both rounds.

Kari Anaya came up with just the right recipe and topped the always hard to beat Kaylene Enloe on both days in the Junior Division. Kaylene carded a couple of seconds while Zach Kukal was rather consistent as well, with two third place scores. Ava Blackmore steered her way to fourth place in each of the highly competitive rounds.

Earlier this year, at the age of 94, Mr. Charlie Mosteller went to that “big round-up in the sky”. I hope there’s plenty of ranching for him to do up there and I hope that he left knowing that he sure put a whole lotta smiles on the faces of a whole lotta trials nuts throughout the years.
“El Gato”