

Trial and

Motorsport at po

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Error

ocket-money prices!

son, Milton Keynes, Buckinghamshire



**Inspired decision by
the BTRDA was to open
the sport up to Juniors
aged 14-17**

*Photo supplied by
James Ibbotson*

What with the current economic climate and petrol prices having risen through the roof, a lot of people are now struggling to find cheap forms of motorsport to compete in.

That's where PCTs (production car trials) come in; they are one of the few truly cheap, competitive forms of motorsport left, and when I say competitive, trust me when you are one or two points away from your rival things start to get interesting.

"What sort of car can I use?" I hear you cry. Well, anything really, from a small hatchback like a Peugeot 106 or a Citroën Saxo to a kit-car like a Liege or a Marlin. Beetles are popular, as are Imps. Both these cars are ideal with the weight right over the rear wheels which aids traction. The Imps do very well in the drier conditions but lack torque sometimes; they also do well in the wet but on wet slippery grass you can end up going straight on at a corner!

A suitable trials car can be bought and prepared for around £500 depending on what type of car you go for. Vital modifications include a sumpguard and raised suspension. Also you are allowed to let your tyres down to give a bigger 'footprint' to aid traction.

From the age of 14, 'Juniors' can compete as well which was great news for me as in 2010 I turned 14 and did a few trials in a scruffy old Imp that Dad (Mark Ibbotson) and I (along with Simon Benoy) paid £50 for about eight or nine years ago.

As soon as my 14th birthday arrived Dad and I found ourselves at Stuart Cairney's house looking at his trials Imp that he had laid up after twelve years of classic trialling. A deal was struck and she was back home being welded, painted and bolted back together.

PCTs are great as they teach you a lot about throttle and clutch control as you try to maintain traction on wet mud or encounter very uneven rough ground. The aim of trialling being to get through as many 'gates' as possible, with number 12 at the bottom of the hill and number 1 being at the top, points are scored according to how far up the section you get or if you hit a post, you will gain points respective to



James Ibbotson, assisted by father, Mark, made a great job of smartening this Imp up. Raised suspension was an early fitment

Photo: James Ibbotson

which post you hit. Lowest score wins.

So far I have competed in seven trials and have won the Junior Trophy once and Best Junior of The Day a few times beating other more powerful and advanced Imps along the way.

An event will cost around £20-25 to enter per driver for a

full day's motorsport which is brilliant value for money and your local motor club will charge you approximately £15 a year for an annual membership.

So come on everyone, I haven't written this article for nothing – I hope to see some more people taking up trialling as a cheap fun motorsport.

A big thank you to Stuart Cairney for all the support and putting up with endless e-mails and another to my dad for buying me the Imp and helping me build it.

James' Imp looks very purposeful though the colour is perhaps an acquired taste!

Photo supplied by James Ibbotson

