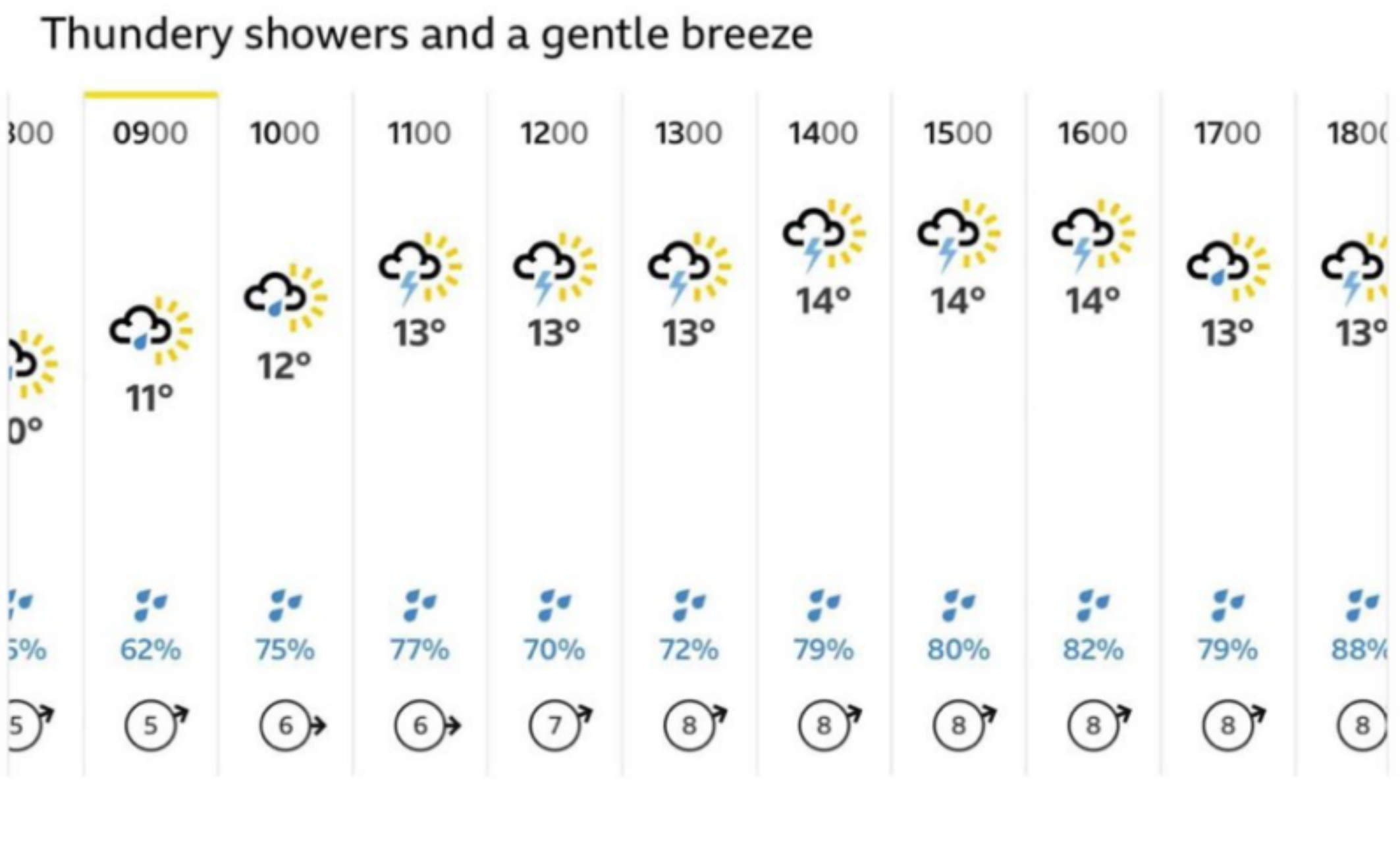
RESULTS – CROFT FARM MAY 2026

By Kevin Dyras | Pictures by Kevin Dyras & Dave Govier

The 17th of May saw the club descend upon Croft Farm in West Malvern on what promised to be a very wet Sunday. The committee had been watching the weather forecast all week with a lot of trepidation, especially Dave Govier, who was laying out with just his trusty 90. With only one 4 x 4 on site he had to be very careful not to get stuck or slide down the very steep slope on the big field.



As usual though the weather forecasters seemed to have got it wrong. Yes, the site was damp, but nowhere near as bad as forecast, so Dave was able to lay out 9 sections without too much trouble. Several club members arrived on the Saturday afternoon and camped overnight. One thing I love about the MOC is the members and their, how can I word this politely, slightly odd behaviour. For example Mark Howell was camping, but not in his camper. Instead he brought his Range Rover Sport, folded the seats down, and put a mattress into the car. Dave and Louis also camped but again, not in their normal camper van. Instead they were in a Discovery. I say a Discovery because from the B pillar forwards it did resemble a Discovery, while from the B pillar back it looked more like a garden shed. Having said that it was practical and a talking point.

Cotty and Louis also arrived on site with a small problem, the water pump on their trialer had fallen off! They had had a problem with it recently so Dave had wisely taken the decision to buy a brand new water pump and fortunately had it with him.

After attacking the problem with various tools the broken water pump was replaced, ready for Sunday morning.

We had just 7 drivers on the day, but that meant we managed to run 11 sections and get away from the site nice and early. This is something I appreciate because due to where I live I don't have a straight route to the site so it takes me just under 2 hours to get home. As everyone had arrived on site early (even Andy Springthorpe) we started 30 minutes early.

Dave Govier had laid out 9 interesting sections and surprisingly, despite the rain on Saturday, the ground was reasonably dry and hard. With only 7 drivers we ran in just one group and set off to the first sections in sunshine and clear sky. Steve Burrows filmed the sections while Dave G and I marshalled.

Dave Burns was the first car on section 1 and managed to collect a 2 as he was unable to climb out of a hole between 2 and 3. Dave was also the last car on the last section, more on that later.

The first section saw Jack Mogg (nice to see you again Jack!) have a couple of problems with his car. The battery seemed to have gone flat and the alternator was not charging either. When Jack went to start the section the car would not even turn over. After various attempts by the other competitors to find out what the problem was, Jack bump started the car and set off on the section. When he also failed at the 2 gate he stalled the engine and tried to bump start it by rolling back on the section. This worked, but then his hazard lights started flashing. Eventually with the help of a jump pack and a few more bump starts the alternator seemed to be putting enough charge into the battery to last the day.

Natalie Govier was demonstrating what a capable driver she has turned into and ended the day with six clears. This was all the more surprising given that Dave G had sat in with her on a couple of sections, offering her his “advice”, which included driving from the 10 gate to the 8 gate via the 9 gate on a different section. Well done Dave.

Craig Hutchinson provided the spectators with some good entertainment with his Freelander. The car is fitted with all terrain tyres and these proved to be a problem on the wet grass, particularly on the steeper banks. A Freelander does not have a traditional low range gearbox, but it does have hill descent control. Craig did very well considering these “features”, but coupled with less than ideal ground clearance there were a couple of sections that he wisely decided not to attempt. The Freelander rear wheels would often have a big wheel lift over obstacles and this meant that the hill descent control was fooled into thinking all was well, so suddenly let the car speed up. Great for the watching spectators, but it must have been very nerve racking for Craig and his passengers.

As we moved to section 4 we were met by our Chairman and his wife. It was great to see Chas and Jen again and to catch up with them both. Chas told me about a Land Rover Lightweight that he had recently seen for sale for £28,000 and said that he might have bought it if only he could get a motorsports licence. When I told him that not only could he get a licence, but that they are free, he was delighted and said he might start looking for a suitable vehicle. I am not sure why but Jen did not seem pleased with me for some unknown reason...

We ran 6 sections in the morning without problems, and by midday we had 3 just competitors on clear, Dave and Louis, and Andy Springthorpe.

Dave G and I discussed this over lunch and decided to lay out two more sections that were a little bit more demanding to try to separate them and, to give the drivers more value for money, we would run one long section, especially as everyone was enjoying the day. At this point we had had just one short shower so it seemed that the weather would not have any effect on us for the rest of the day. Wrong again!

After lunch we ran the last of the three sections that had been laid out on Saturday, with just one score on them, the rest being clears. Dave G had responsibly laid out the sections with the forecast rain in mind, meaning that he had to make then easier than normal in case it did rain. If he had made them any harder and it had rained, then we would have had to completely change the sections. As we moved onto the two sections we laid out at lunch the drivers suddenly started scoring with only Dave and Louis being able to clear them.

The longer section had a sharp, uphill turn, with a couple of tree roots at the top, which proved very difficult to get over. It also showed that if you give the drivers a choice of route between the gates they will all take different options. Some took shorter, more direct lines while Cotty went so far out between two gates he was almost in Herefordshire.

We then moved onto the last section which was an altered section 6, basically some steep downhills and then a steep, uphill zig zag to finish. As the drivers walked the section the rain started, just a light shower we thought. I decided to put my coat and hat on, although I was sure it would not be much. How wrong I was. The first competitors managed to clear the section, but the uphill finish was getting more difficult by the minute as the rain intensity increased massively. Suddenly there was water running down the hill and by the time Dave Burns started his run the last three gates were impossible. So Dave had the dubious honour of not only being the first driver on the first section and the first driver to pick up a score, but also the last driver on the last section and picked up the final score of the day. I am not sure if that has ever happened before.

The event ran smoothly, without any damage or anyone needing recovery, and apart from the storm on the last section, it was a dry day too. All of the drivers helped to collect in the canes as we finished each section and to bundle them up for Steve to store. Despite all of the weather forecasts in the week we all had a very enjoyable day. The next event is at Hatton Park, Warwick, on the 7th of June. We hope to see you all there.

17 May : Croft Farm, Malvern

name	scoring												rank
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H	I	J	K	total	
Cotterell, Dave	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Cotterell, Louis	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
Springthorpe, Andy	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	1	3
Burns, Dave	2	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	5	4
Govier, Natalie	1	1	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	1	0	5	5
Mogg, Jack	2	0	4	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	5	13	6
Hutchinson, Craig	4	5	5	1	1	5	0	0	0	1	5	27	7

note : when totals are equal, rank is determined by the number of clear sections