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DON’T MISS AN ISSUE OF RALLYSPORT MAGAZINE …
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Andreas Mikkelsen and Sébastien Ogier

53.72km and 30.80km in length. On de Corse Rally – the infamous rally of times and in perfect conditions. A chance of victory. That there were a handful of cars in with the right opportunity presents itself.

The AP4 category is still to take a hold in Australia, but there are plenty of drivers keen to take the plunge if the right opportunity presents itself. The Bathurst 1000 once again produced a nail-biting result, with the closest ever finish in the event’s history. Will Davison and Jona "Simmo" Hankey are in the midst of rally fever. The Kiwis are in the midst of rally fever. The AP4 category is still to take a hold in Australia, but there are plenty of drivers keen to take the plunge if the right opportunity presents itself.

By PETER WHITTEN

The growth of the AP4 category continues to gather strength in New Zealand, with more cars being announced for the 2017 season. "Shannon Chambers' Toyota New Zealand supported Vias will be a welcome addition to the NZRC, and with at least two other Toyota teams rumoured, and another manufacturer also strongly tipped to throw their hat in the ring, the Kiwis are in the midst of rally fever. The AP4 category is still to take a hold in Australia, but there are plenty of drivers keen to take the plunge if the right opportunity presents itself.

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Rhianon Gelsomino, Reeves will drive through the competitive stages prior to the rally crews, taking notes on any changes to road conditions and relaying them back to Paddon and his co-driver, John Kennard.

Reeves has been in top form this season, and if all goes well in Spain, he and Gelsomino could be employed to perform the same task for Paddon in next year’s World Rally Championship.

While it’s not the factory drive the Victorian has been hoping for, it’s a step in the right direction, and the association with Hyundai could lead to further openings in the future.

We reckon the VW battle in Corsica was a closer fight than the ‘contrived’ Bathurst result.

The recent postponement or cancellation of many events across the east coast and south coast of Australia highlights just how susceptible rallying is to the power of Mother Nature. From club rallies to state championship rounds, events have been cancelled left, right and centre, as seemingly endless supply of rain drenched parts of our “sunburnt country”.

Despite the hundreds of hours put in by volunteer event officials to get rallies ready to run, the wet winter and spring has left the best-laid plans. It’s hoped that car clubs across the country are able to withstand the financial pressures that a cancellation can bring on, and that rallies can be either rescheduled, or run in better weather conditions in 2017.

Exciting Times

With interest in the AP4 category skyrocketing, we pondered what an AP4 Kia Rio could look like … here’s a couple of possibilities.

BIG BOOST FOR KIWI RALLYING

New Zealand rallying has received a huge boost with WRC star, Hayden Paddon, unveiling a young driver scholarship in association with Hyundai New Zealand. The Hyundai NZ Young Driver Shootout and Scholarship will provide the winner with the opportunity to drive the Hyundai NZ AP4 i20 rally car in two rounds of the 2017 New Zealand Rally Championship, plus the potential for an expanded programme in 2018. The car will be run by Paddon Rallysport, with the winning driver to receive testing and training with Paddon.

"The Hyundai NZ Young Driver Shootout and Scholarship is the first step of a plan created earlier this year. We want to help grow the sport and help develop the career of a talented young driver – to give a leg up to the next potential Kiwi international rally star," Paddon said.

Hyundai New Zealand General Manager, Andy Sinclair, shares the same vision. "It’s incredibly hard for Kiwi drivers to make their way to the higher levels in this spectacular global sport. We were very proud to have helped Hayden right when he needed to take the step up into a WRC drive; now this scholarship will give one lucky Kiwi driver a huge step forward in their rallying career. As a New Zealand-owned company we are very excited to help find the next Kiwi WRC star."

Open to drivers aged 16-25, applicants for the Hyundai NZ Young Driver Shootout and Scholarship need to have contested a minimum of 10 rallies, including four pace-noted rallies. Paddon and nominated personnel from Hyundai New Zealand will choose five finalists who, with their co-drivers, will attend a two-day shootout course in Auckland in December. The course offers the finalists and their co-drivers a day learning from Paddon with theory and advice on fitness, sponsorship, media, car set-up/driving and pace notes. The second day will be in the forest, where finalists will drive the Hyundai NZ i20 AP4 rally car to each set a benchmark time, as well as practical experience writing pace notes with Paddon providing advice in the car. A judging panel of five, including Paddon, will assess each driver/co-driver on all aspects of their performance and participation throughout the shootout. "It’s not just about the fastest driver," Paddon says. "We’re looking for the whole package – personality, motivation and ability to learn and improve, as well as outright performance during the shootout. The winner may not necessarily be competing in the New Zealand Rally Championship at this stage – we are looking for someone that stands out and has the X factor.”

Paddon adds: "I was lucky to receive support through a similar scheme – the Rally New Zealand Rising Stars Scholarship – six years ago, which helped give me a leg up in the Production World Rally Championship. We see this as an opportunity to do the same thing for another young Kiwi driver. In the short term, the Hyundai NZ Young Driver Scholarship will focus on a New Zealand-based programme with the winner. It’s a fantastic chance for them to develop as a driver and all-round competitor, with the potential and goal of winning the 2018 New Zealand Rally Championship title as part of the scholarship," Paddon said. Applications close on October 19.
YARIS AP4 DEBUTS IN JAPAN

Toyota’s first venture into the local AP4 category has come via the Japanese-based Cusco team, with a Vitz AP4 contesting the recent Hokkaido Rally in Japan.

Known as a Yaris outside Japan, Yuya Sumiyama drove the prototype four-wheel-drive Cusco Toyota Vitz, currently under AP4 development.

“This car is a development car and we plan to build an AP4 car in the future because there is a need in Japan for a car like this,” Cusco president Tsutomo Nagase said.

While the car retired from the event on both days, it showed some promising signs.

There are believed to be three Toyota AP4 cars under construction in New Zealand for 2017, while Neal Bates Motorsport are also assessing the possibility of an AP4 Yaris for next year’s Australian championship.

PESTER WHITTEN

2017 ARC CALENDAR

The one-make Ford Fiesta rally series set to run alongside the Victorian Rally Championship (VRC) in 2017 is starting to take shape.

A meeting last Monday revealed a number of people keen to compete and support the series, in which Fiестas as early as 2002 are eligible for the title.

One keen to support this series in his home state is Brendan Reeves. Reeves has agreed to become a patron of the series, and after competing in various Fiестas overseas, will be a valuable asset to the series and its competitors.

Several people and businesses have already indicated that they’d be keen to help new entrants into this series, which provides an ideal stepping-stone for a young aspiring rally driver.

Series organisers are in negotiations with the VRC as to which events will be included. It is understood that a four-event series is likely.

Keep your eye out for the series’ new Facebook page in the coming weeks. Another similar meeting for interested parties will be held before the year is out.

If you are interested in competing, or have questions about the series, please contact series organiser, John Carney, at gunnawyn@yahoo.com

LUKE WHITTEN

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 Provisional Australian Rally Championship calendar:

Round 1 – Eureka Rally, Ballarat March 17 - 19
Round 2 – Quit Forest Rally, WA April 21 - 23
Round 3 – International Rally of Queensland May 28 - 28*
Round 4 – Lightforce Rally SA September 15 - 17
Round 5 – National Capital Rally October 13 - 15
Round 6 – Rally Australia November 16-19*

*subject to FIA approval

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LUKE WHITTEN
TOYOTA CONFIRMED FOR NZRC

Toyota have confirmed they are the latest manufacturer to join the Brian Green Property Group New Zealand Rally Championship with a Yaris AP4 car.

After having the AP4 sub-frames and pick-up points installed by Force Motorsport, the car will be built and run by the M2 Motorsport team, who have been successful with the Toyota Racing Series car and will be driven by Shannon Chambers.

Chambers has confirmed the car will run a 1600cc engine in proper AP4 specification, as opposed to the 1800cc AP4+ cars.

The programme will be backed by Toyota New Zealand, as well Auckland City Toyota. Toyota New Zealand have a great history in rallying, largely with Group A Starlets and Corollas.

Chambers has suggested that although the team will be one car to start with, moving forward he has not ruled out running another driver in a second car. It is understood that a second Yaris will run next season prepared by another team, although specific details and car specifications are not yet known.

Already in 2016, Hyundai and Skoda joined Mazda and Suzuki in running AP4 cars in the series, while Holden and now Toyota have confirmed entries for 2017. There are also strong rumours linking another manufacturer that is highly likely to join the series next year.

- BLAIR BARTELS

NO RALLY OZ FOR WINDUS

Fans at Kennards Hire Rally Australia won't get to see promising youngster, Arron Windus, in action this November. Windus had initially planned to run his Subaru WRX in the final round of the ARC, but budget constraints and the close proximity of the event to rounds of the Victorian Rally Championship have put an end to that.

"I was trying to string together a deal to do Wales Rally GB in the Vauxhall Adare, but unfortunately we ran out of time to finalise the deal before entries closed," Windus said.

"Up next for us is the Akademos Rally, at which I'm looking to extend my lead in the Victorian pacenoted series, if possible.

"Hopefully we can kick off at the Akademos Rally where we left off at the Pyrenees Rush."

The 20-year-old won the last round of his state series, and also set a string of impressive stage times at Lightforce Rally SA last month.

- PETER WHITTEN

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"Sonic Brooke Gets the "Bends" in the Alline... You Did Say... Faster! Faster!"
VAN KLINK’S RX-8 READY FOR ACTION

Marcus van Klink’s brand new Mazda RX-8 has broken cover, and the four-time New Zealand historic champion’s new car looks a beast!

The new car features a 20B triple rotor engine, six speed sequential gearbox and MCA suspension, all wrapped in a large amount of carbon fibre.

All bolt on panels, plus the roof, are carbon, while the engine is a peripheral ported Rotary 20B short block (made up using effectively three 13B style housings and rotors, with a custom crank, as opposed to the factory 20B motors that are quite a bit longer).

The car was on the dyno recently and produced an incredible 370 bhp at the crank, as opposed to the factory 20B motors that are quite a bit longer).

It will run a Quaife six-speed sequential gearbox, the same as those used in New Zealand Super Touring Cars, with AP brakes, and a Motec dash used in New Zealand Super Touring.

The car was on the dyno recently and produced an incredible 370 bhp at the crank, as opposed to the factory 20B motors that are quite a bit longer).

As you can see, the car looks magnificent.

REEVES JOINS PADDON IN SPAIN

In-form duo, Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Gelsomino, are in Spain this weekend (October 14-16) acting as the gravel note crew for Hyundai stars Hayden Paddon and John Kennard. Reeves will drive the stages prior to Paddon and relay any changes in road conditions to the Kiwi. If the new partnership goes well, Reeves could be in line for a contract with Paddon in the 2017 World Rally Championship.

SOUTH AUSTRALIAN RESIDENT AND EX-CANBERRAN, STEPHEN MEE, IS LOOKING FORWARD TO DEBUTING HIS NEWLY BUILT 2008 TOYOTA COROLLA AT THE VICTORIAN ARC NEXT MARCH.

The beautifully built car has enjoyed a long, patient build, but Stephen has enjoyed the support of many people who know their Toyotas, Neal Bates Motorsport included. Having originally lived in Canberra and assisted with the Rally of Canberra for many years, Stephen and wife Fiona McCubbin made the move to SA.

He enjoyed rallying both a Gemini and Mazda Familia, before considering the Fluid ARC regulations and settling on a strong 2WD car.

The Corolla has been built from a sand-blasted bare body shell, and fitted with a very strong roll cage, basically similar to the Neal Bates Group N (P) version of the same car.

The Mee Corolla is fitted with a works-specification 2ZZ (1.8 litre) motor and a Quaife 6 speed sequential gearbox.

Huge 6-pot calipers provide the braking at the front of the car, while it is capable suspended with 60mm MCA shocks at the front, and MCA canisters at the rear. The team has a stock of OZ Racing rally wheels from the Neal Bates Motorsport workshop to rely upon.

With careful attention to detail, some 300 kilograms has been removed from the body, and in fact it will utilise standard subframes and bottom suspension arms.

The team is a true privateer effort, with support from Stephen’s co-driver, Damian Reed, through his company, Frank Reed Conveyancing.

While the 2017 calendar has not yet been finalised, Stephen is keen to debut at the opening round of the 2017 ARC in Victoria, and entries for their ‘home’ event in the ACT and potentially WA are likely.

Photos show the car in construction and highlight the beautiful craftsmanship that has gone into the preparation.

Whilst this is no fire-breathing 4WD monster, Stephen and Fiona look forward to running a competitive class car, counting on reliability to prove that the Corolla is still a contender.

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After running four cars this season (Mazda RX-3, Mitsubishi Evo 10, Suzuki Swift and VW Polo proto), Andy Martin will settle into the VW Polo Proto car campaigned for the past season and a half by Shannon Chambers. Martin had his first run in the car at Waitomo Rally, coming home second.

Darren Galbraith is another with a new car for 2017. After sitting out most of the 2016 season to formulate a plan, Galbraith has purchased the ex-Neil Marshall, Glenn Smith Mitsubishi Evo 8, a multiple rally winning car.

While most drivers are confirming their new cars, David Holder is currently looking for an opportunity to defend his NZRC title after the Stadium Finance Mitsubishi was sold to Timaru driver Keith Anderson.

Marcus van Klink’s new Mazda RX-8 will make its debut on tarmac at Targa NZ, before running in the open two-wheel drive class of the NZRC in 2017. It is expected the Cantabrian will still use his RX-7 to contest the season opening Otago Classic Rally.

Ben Hunt was forced to service for his father at the recent Waitomo Rally after coming off his dirt bike and injuring his knee a few weeks back. It is the second time Hunt has had to hand the reins to his father, Richard (pictured below), for an end of season hit out. Two years ago a go-kart crash with none other than John Kennard left the 2015 national champion with a broken foot.

Kennards Hire Rally Australia will be the closing round of the FIA World Rally Championship on the New South Wales Coffs Coast again in 2017. The rally was confirmed as part of the 2017 calendar by the Federation Internationale de l’Automobile (FIA) world motorsport governing body in Paris, although the date – along with those for up to six other WRC rounds – is yet to be confirmed.

Rally Australia Chairman Ben Rainsford said the event would be the closing round of the season and it was hoped it would be on 16-19 November.

“We’re delighted the WRC has retained Rally Australia for 2017. This will be our 25th WRC event and the sixth on the Coffs Coast,” Mr Rainsford said.

“The rally is secured by strong government, corporate and community support and delivers substantial economic benefit to the Coffs Coast region. For our spectators and competitors, it’s an incomparable World Championship experience.”

The FIA’s World Motor Sport Council announced dates for the first seven rounds starting with the historic Rallye Monte-Carlo on 20-22 January, just nine weeks after Kennards Hire Rally Australia concludes the 2016 season on 17-20 November. Monte-Carlo, Sweden, Mexico, Argentina, Portugal and Italy have been given 2017 dates similar to this season’s, but France moves forward from late September to become round four in early April.

Rally Australia, which will continue to be supported by the government tourism and major events agency Destination New South Wales, and four other rounds – Finland, Germany, Spain and Great Britain – were confirmed on the calendar without their dates being finalised.

The confirmed events total 12, but the official website WRC.com reports it has not been clarified whether the complete 2017 season will be set at 13 or 14 rounds. The FIA has nominated China, Turkey and Poland as candidates for the one or two remaining slots.

The FIA said the final calendar would be presented at the World Motor Sport Council meeting on 30 November.
We don’t see much of him these days, but the former Subaru WRC star is still competing on the world stage ...

RSM: You have recently competed in Global Rally Cross events in the USA. Did you enjoy it, and is it something you may like to do more often in the future?

CA: I really enjoyed it, even though the races are only short, the days go past so quick as you are chasing set up and trying to improve in each session. Each time you go out it’s like a last stage shoot out in rally, and you have to be really on your game. So from that side and the intensity it’s fun. Also the cars are epic, with around 600hp they aren’t easy to drive and it gets your attention every time you get on the gas.

You have driven in many high-class rally cars in your time. Which was the most fun, and is it something you may like to do Rally Cross events in the USA. Did you enjoy it, and is it something you may like to do ...

To be fair they are all fun, any time you hop in a WRCar or now a GRC car, it’s cool. They are so well developed and the things you can do with them, it’s so impressive.

But of course when you are racing and looking for a tenth of a second there, then that’s when you see the differences that driver’s complain about.

I think the biggest difference you notice is the length of the cars, the smaller cars (Fiesta, DS3 Fabia) are more nervous and reactive, and the Subaru or Golf are more stable in the fast stuff.

After Subaru pulled out of the WRC in 2008, you have driven a wide range of cars in a range of championships all over the world. Do you ever see yourself getting back into the WRC?

Of course I would like to have achieved more in WRC, but without the right opportunity it’s a hard game and it’s no fun running around out of the fight.

And by right opportunity, I mean you need at least a season to get up to speed fully and learn a lot of the stages, then another year to be fully competitive.

Because these guys have been doing the same stages for the past six or eight years and in the same cars, the pace is so high that without massive risk (wrecking a lot of cars), you can’t just turn up and be competitive for a whole rally or season.

To be honest, the current WRCars never really suited my driving style, but I would be pretty keen to have a go in the next generation, which is a bit more like what I used to drive.

I am enjoying what I am doing at the moment - I still get to race a WRCar and I would like to have a go at something new that we have a chance of winning (GRC).

You currently compete in the Chinese Championship. What team is that for, and why don’t we read much about it?

I drive for FAW-VW, we run a Prodrive prepared Golf CRC car, which is very similar to a current WRCar, but with a 2-litre engine. We have won 10 of the last 12 rallies and won the championship for the team last year. I cannot win the driver’s championship, that is just for local drivers.

We have a really good set-up and have about eight people from Prodrive on each event, so it’s a bit like WRC in terms of how we approach the events.

There is also good competition, with Subaru (Mark Higgins), Citroen (Manfred Stohl), BAIC (Jari Ketoma).

For me, I have had a good relationship with Hyundai Australia and the PR guys there, who have been fantastic to me, and out of respect to that I don’t go out of my way promoting it in Australia.

Do you have any plans to rally consistently in Australia in the coming years?

It has crossed my mind. Having never won an ARC championship, it would be nice to do that one day.

The pace is so high that without massive risk, you can’t just turn up and be competitive for a whole rally or a season."

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Do you have any plans to rally consistently in Australia in the coming years?

It has crossed my mind. Having never won an ARC championship, it would be nice to do that one day.

I am sure in the future an opportunity will come and hopefully I am able to do it, but at the moment my focus is still internationally, and while there are opportunities overseas, I will continue to do that.

What are your plans for the rest of this year, and are we likely to see you in the car soon?

As you have seen, we will do the remaining rounds of the GRC with Subaru. We are working hard with the team to get into a podium scoring position, which would be a great step forward. I am enjoying that challenge, as well as the challenge of GRC.

Outside of rallying, what is Chris Atkinson doing to fill in his days?

As I am still busy with racing and testing, etc., I am still training hard in terms of fitness and rally preparation. I do a little bit of rally training and work with the Chinese team to help their drivers as well, so that all keeps me pretty busy.

- MATTHEW WHITTEN
CALL FOR SHORTER ARC ROUNDS

Reeves says shorter events means less cost

By PETER WHITTEN

Top Australian rally driver, Brendan Reeves, has called for some of the Australian Rally Championship events to be shortened to ease the financial burden on private competitors.

Reeves has won two rounds of this year’s ARC, the two-day ACT and South Australian events, but also won the single-day Coromandel Rally in New Zealand.

While ARC rounds are two-day affairs that require (usually) a week away from work, the New Zealand event was held over Saturday only, easing the cost on competitors and the stress on cars. Reeves says changes to the format for some of the ARC rounds would reduce time away from work, as well as providing a big reduction in car running costs.

“There are a few changes I’d make, the first of which is to do away with the ARC registration fee,” Reeves told RallySport Magazine.

“Hopefully this will change for next season, and should help to increase competitor numbers at most rounds.”

After several discussions with fellow ARC regulars Simon Evans and Neal Bates, Reeves believes it’s time for a change. He says Rally Australia and Rally Queensland should stay as endurance events, but other rounds could easily be reduced to one-day affairs.

Neal says that he’s been calling out for shorter events for years, right back to when he was running the Corolla World Rally Car in the 1990s.

“The cars are so expensive to run, and reducing the stage distances by, say, 80km per event, would make a huge difference. Components like wheel bearings, hubs, driveshafts and turbines wouldn’t need replacing as often, nor would most other parts.

“Our engine costs $10,000 to rebuild after 1000km of competitive driving, and while I understand fully that motorsport is an expensive sport, that money has to come from somewhere.

“I’m very fortunate to have a strong family business that helps to support my rallying, but I’m also aware that there aren’t any factory drives out there.

“I’ve spent this season trying to chase sponsorship and build my profile in order to keep my personal costs down as much as possible.

“But every time I’m away at a rally, I’m not being paid, and the business is having to pay someone else to do my job. And that’s a situation that many competitors and businesses would have to deal with.”

On average, Reeves spends between $1500 and $2000 per event on accommodation, while the vehicle running expenses are higher again. At $7 a litre, Reeves’ Subaru travels 1.4 kilometres per litre of fuel on stages, and 5km per litre on transport stages. At Rally SA, that accounted for a further $2600.

“That’s a big expense, and reducing event distances by 80km would have a significant effect on your overall budget at each rally.

“We have tried running the car with a 36mm turbo restrictor on pump fuel, but it runs better and is designed to use a 34mm restrictor on the more expensive competitive fuel.”

At $263 each, he says: “Tyres are cheaper than ever, but I think we’re using too many for ARC rounds. We’re allowed 16, but that could be reduced, and for a one day event we could cut that number back to eight tyres.

“If you use four new tyres for testing, there’s another $1000 you need to find in the budget for each event. That’s a total of around $4200 per rally.”

But Reeves is not trying to come across as a whining competitor, as he fully understands the costs involved in rallying, and that the faster you go, the more it costs. He also believes that reducing the timeframe for events, and the competitive distances, will be beneficial across the board.

“It’s not just the competitors who need to commit large amounts of time and money for ARC rounds, it’s the officials and spectators as well.

“Finishing an event on Saturday night means that events could hold a post-event function on the Saturday night, and everyone could then travel home on the Sunday, rather than having to stay over on Sunday night and enroch into another work day.

“The post-event function is something that’s starting to go missing from events, and I believe we’re starting to lose some of the friendship and camaraderie in rallying because of this. A Saturday night celebration after the event would go some way to rekindling this.”

The fifth and final round of the 2016 Kumho Tyre Australian Rally Championship is Kennards Hire Rally Australia, from November 18 to 20 in Coffs Harbour.

Photos: Peter Whitten, Geoff Ridder

INTERVIEW: BRENDAN REEVES

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SA MOVING FORWARD

One of the Australian Rally Championship’s premier events has long been Rally SA, directed by the experienced Ivar Stanelis.

This year’s event, held in September, was hampered by heavy rain in the lead up to the rally and a record low number of entries. RallySport Magazine’s Peter Whitten spoke to Ivar Stanelis about the difficulties encountered in 2016, and what plans are in place for the future of the event.

RSM: This year’s Lightforce Rally SA was threatened by heavy rain, with the cancellation of stages and a total itinerary change. What sort of pressures does this put on organisers, and how did your team cope?

IS: Very proud of the entire team. Fortunately we have an excellent organising team at Lightforce Rally SA, and unfortunately for 2016, a record low number of entries. This put us in a position where we were able to utilise road closure windows more efficiently, given the windows were designed for far more entries.

It was an elegant solution that did not change a single closure window. I think we have discovered one of the very few benefits of low entry numbers!

RSM: The result was an event that seemed to run perfectly. You must be proud of the team’s efforts.

IS: Very proud of the entire team. Feedback from competitors was outstanding, they loved the extra council stages. Our officials rose to the challenge and stages ran mostly on time.

For all of that with an event which was completely rerouted and a new itinerary developed in a few hours on the Friday was really pleasing.

RSM: Perhaps your biggest hurdle this year was a lack of entries, only 13 ARC cars and only 33 entries all up. What sort of financial strain does this put on the event?

IS: A field as small as 33 entries puts significant financial strain on the event. We were in the red pretty much from the get go.

Costs like CAMS permit fees and RallySafe costs don’t significantly decrease with the smaller field, and variable costs - like printing and promotion - are set in place long before the number of entries is known.

It is always my imperative that the event has the look and feel of a major championship, and I think that was achieved. Still, it’s clearly not a sustainable situation.

RSM: Does the trend for less entries threaten the existence of the event in 2017, and will in run as a round of the ARC again?

IS: At this stage the event will run again in 2017 as a round of the ARC, with the same core organising group. Calendars, timing and other factors will be discussed later this month at the ARC organisers meeting.

RSM: A leading ARC competitor has called for shorter ARC rounds, run over just one day (Saturday). Do you see this as being a way forward to help contain costs and encourage more competitors to support the event?

IS: For event organisers, many of the expenses for one day would be the same for two or three - there’s a negligible cost saving.

We consolidated the 2016 Lightforce Rally SA around two days to try and reduce the time competitors spend away from home, and we’re constantly getting feedback from competitors for different aspects of the event.

From the feedback we receive, I’m not convinced one day would help contain costs significantly. Travel costs are the same, vehicle wear and tear is similar, permit fees and other event costs are the same.

To me, one day does not seem adequate to be of championship level. Surely it should be harder? Of course, if a one-day event is considered adequate, then we would look at that.

RSM: In the 2000s you had big corporate sponsors (Coopers and Toyota) and thousands of spectators flocked to Mt Crawford forest to attend the hugely popular spectator points. What has changed over recent years?

IS: Probably the biggest change occurred back in 2007 when the event passed from the SA Government’s Motor Sports Board, the same organisation running the Clipsal 500, to my private RallyOne organisation.

The government funding disappeared and resources available to us became severely more limited. It was a tough transition, but reasonable entry numbers cushioned the shock a bit for a year or two.

RSM: The event is still the most easily accessible for fans, but numbers have reduced (as they have at all events). Have fans lost interest in the sport, or do you feel there are so many other distractions or opportunities for them now?

IS: We actually felt like spectator numbers increased for the 2016 Lightforce Rally SA. Some fans have definitely lost interest in the sport over time, but we have seen some increased interest this year with the increase in outright eligibility.

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When Coffs Harbour’s Mal Keough unveiled his Audi Quattro S1 replica at Rally Australia in 2014 it all seemed too good to be true. Surely this was a sheep in wolf’s clothing. Surely this wasn’t a REAL Quattro. But as we discovered, sometimes ...
It is, without doubt, the most popular car in Australian rallying at the present time. Spectators love it, photographers scramble for the best photo of it, and fellow competitors all want one. Even once-a-year fans are gobsmacked when they see the car blast into view.

The Audi Quattro S1 is perhaps the most incredible rally car ever built, and is the star pupil in the Group B class of 1985 and 1986, despite never reaching its full potential.

So when Coffs Harbour’s Mal Keough unveiled his S1 replica at Rally Australia in 2014 it all seemed too good to be true. Surely this was a sheep in wolf’s clothing. Surely this wasn’t a REAL Quattro.

As we discovered, sometimes seeing IS believing.

Having started his rallying in V8 Commodores, before progressing to a Datsun 1600 and an early model Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, Mal Keough’s rallying turned a full circle when classic rallying caught his eye.

Initially he looked at building a Mk1 Escort Mexico, and even purchased an S13 Nissan Silvia, but at the back of his mind he knew he wanted an Audi Quattro.

“Every man’s dream is a Quattro!” he says, “and I found a long-wheel base car in Tasmania that I ended up buying.”

The problem was that once he got the car home to Coffs Harbour, he discovered that it was a very rare Quattro indeed - an early quad-headlight car and one of the first of the factory built right hand drive cars.

Realising that the car was too valuable to strip and build into a rally car, it remained in his garage untouched, and the search went on, with Mal scouring Quattro forums, websites and, of course, eBay. After much searching, he found an S1 replica for sale in the UK, and before he knew it, he owned it.

While the car looked the duck’s guts, Mal says looks can be deceiving.

“The way I describe it to people is that it was a $500 car with a $15,000 Kevlar body kit bolted to it, and therefore the perfect starting point.

“It was being used as a display car and only had a 10-valve, non-turbo engine, standard brakes and suspension, and a Safety Devices roll cage which was of little use.

“A mate of mine in the UK stored it for me, and after I gave him a shopping list he purchased two six-speed Audi gearboxes, a AAN engine and everything else that I thought I’d need. It was all packed into a container and sent to Australia.”

When it arrived in Coffs Harbour the car sat in Mal’s shed for 12 months while he researched and recovered from the financial burden of purchasing it. Then, over two years, the rebuild progressed until the car finally made its first public appearance at Rally Australia in 2014.

“All 17 of the works cars were different, so what actually is a true replica?”

As you’d expect with a car as rare and as special as an S1 Quattro, the build wasn’t straightforward.

“The big question was, how far do you chase the replica side of things,” Mal explains.

“All 17 of the works cars were different, so what actually is a true replica? No two cars were the same. “For example, the works cars ran big sliding bottom ball joints and aluminium legs. Most of that stuff is unobtainable now, and if you could buy it, the price would be astronomical and you’d never be game to put the car in the forest.”

Having said all that, the replica is about as close to a factory S1 as you’ll get, although detuned significantly to what the cars in the mid-1980s were.

It runs the Audi 5 cylinder 20-valve turbo engine with Audi gearbox and diffs, and all Audi control arms and cross members.

“There are subtle differences,” Mal says. “The works cars ran a castor bar brace arrangement on the bottom...
control arms that mine doesn’t have, but it’s close. And it looks and sounds the part.

That it does, despite being in what he describes as “a fairly tame, very safe tune”.

When the unrestricted engine was last put through its paces on the dyno it produced 325 kilowatts – a staggering amount of power. Now, with a turbo restrictor fitted, it produces significantly less.

Even with the reduced power output, the Quattro is a highly strung piece of machinery. “I spent a lot of time designing how the driveshafts fit, and have designed it so that the left hand front driveshaft out of an Audi A6 will fit in all four corners of the car. That way I only have to buy one type of shaft.”

“The brake discs are off-the-shelf Mercedes units, as they are the same stud pattern as the Quattro.”

Mal admits that he needed to build the car from the ground up with the Quattro as the starting point, and that the car is the envy of fans around the world. “I built the car because I wanted to have a go at it, even though it’s not easy.”

“It was only when I told them that Quattros were never sold in Australia that they started to help. It’s all been built off photos and advice. “To my knowledge there are only about 27 UR Quattros in Australia, so it’s not like there are a bunch of people with much information on how to build them. You can’t pop around to a mate’s and check something like you can with a 1600 Datto.”

With a car worth that much money, Mal could be forgiven for tip-toeing around the stages and keeping the mighty S1 in the middle of the road. But that’s far from the case, although he does admit to trying to keep things on the safe side of flat out.

“I’m driving at a speed where I can hopefully get away without doing any panel damage, while still putting on a show. But it’s hard not to get carried away,” he stresses.

“It’s a balancing act. People want to see it at full noise, but I can’t afford to drive it at full noise because if I damage panels, I’m in a world of hurt. The Kevlar carbon kit is around $15,000 ex-Germany, plus import duty and freight. And that’s without a carbon roof, which mine has.

“Panel damage is my biggest fear. I don’t mind mechanicals, because that’s pretty much the same cost as everyone else and easier to fix than panels. I’m happy in that I think everybody respects that I’m trying to do my best, but when it’s all said and done, I’m not going to stick it into the scenery for the crowd.”

“Terry and the crew. Other than that it all comes out of my pocket. I’m a bobcat contractor with a bobcat contractor with no sponsorship backing, other than the team at GK Denney Tyres Coffs Harbour, who have supported us from the beginning. A big shout out to Terry and the crew.”

“Other than that it all comes out of my pocket. I’m a bobcat contractor with one machine, so it’s not easy. “South Australia was the most expensive rally I’ve ever competed in. I needed to take seven days off work, so that was a big hit financially, even without the event costs. I also try to fly in a couple of guys for each event, so each event costs around $15,000 or more to compete in. Some would say that’s probably cheap.”

Having said that, he’s not hanging around either. “On a nice piece of flowing road that I’m familiar with, I’ll have a real go. In South Australia we were using gum trees four feet in diameter as khanacross flags, so we weren’t mucking around. It’s great fun to hold a big slide and keep the foot into it, and air time is always good.”

The Quattro S1 replica worth? Of course one wants to know. What’s an Audi Quattro S1 replica worth? Of course that’s not a question with a definitive answer. But it’s close. And it looks and sounds the part.”

That it does, despite being in what he describes as “a fairly tame, very safe tune”. “I built the car because I wanted to have a go at it, even though it’s not easy.”

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answer, but Mal says that if he were to sell the car tomorrow, he’d want well in excess of $150,000.

The car that was featured in the June 2016 issue of RallySport Magazine, owned by Dave Thompson and Stewart Reid, was purchased for a similar amount, but as Mal points out: “Mine is a bit closer to the real thing I think. How good would it be if we could get the two cars running a rally together … how about it guys?”

“The car I’ve built is all Audi – it has the radiator in the boot, the short wheelbase windscreen angle, and is pretty close to the original.

“You’d want to be well north of $150k to buy it, but I think it would end up going overseas, as I don’t believe there’d be anyone in Australia who would be silly enough to spend that sort of coin.

“But saying that, I was stupid enough to build one, so somebody else might be as well …” He admits that, financially at least, building your own S1 replica may be a better option than buying one already built, as you can spread the money out, so it’s not one big hit, but he isn’t even contemplating selling his car.

“I haven’t done a lot of maintenance on the car to date, so that’s happening now, as well as working on the handling.

“I’m really happy with the car, and the interest that it has created. Now I just need some more financial backing to do more events.”

On that front, Mal is looking at chasing further sponsors to adorn the windscreen and front spoiler of the Quattro, the most photographed areas of the car.

“I believe that the Quattro would have to be one of the most photographed cars in the field, aside from the top few WRCs.”

And in the meantime, he’s just purchased a twin-cab Isuzu truck to tow the car to and from events. Having sufficed with a dual-cab Ute until now, the new truck will make the long tows more comfortable, as well as providing more room for crew, gear and spares.

“Even while travelling it’s amazing how many photos are taken with people hanging out of cars just to get a shot of it on the trailer,” he beams.

Which, of course, is great news for Aussie rally fans, with the car hopefully set to be a prominent part of events in the coming seasons.

For this writer, who grew up in awe of the Quattro and the WRC events of the 1980s, seeing Mal Keough’s car roaring through the forest is like a dream come true. Who would have thought?

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TECH SPEC:

Model: Audi Quattro S1 E2 Replica
Body Shell: Front half Audi 80 B2 Coupe
Rear Half UR CQ Quattro Coupe
Engine: Audi AAN 2.2-litre 5-cylinder 20-valve turbo
Transmission:Audi 01E 6 speed with sequential shift
Clutch: Spec Brand stage 5 plus with solid plate
Differentials: Front Wavetrac LSD, Centre JHM 4.1 Bias Rear Gripper Plate LSD
Suspension: Custom made 55mm MCAs with remote canisters
Brakes: Front - APs CP6720 4 Pot, Rear - APs CP6760 4 Pot
Wheels: Audi A6 15”x 7”
Weight: 1500kg wet
Thirty years later, the story of the Group B cars remains the most evocative chapter in world championship rally sport. It was an era that I saw through from start to finish, and which will forever remain in the mind. And, it all started quite unintentionally - the Super car rally cars were never meant to happen.

New major “Appendix J” (competition vehicle) rules were introduced at the start of the 1980s, devised as a way to make car preparation for international motorsport fairer and clearer. In this sphere they worked extremely well. For the first time, rule interpretation was changed. No longer were modifications allowed unless they were specifically banned, now only such modifications that this process could permit, thinking the list would allow every type of "facelift" the manufacturer might wish to incorporate on production cars.

They never thought that this would lead to abuse, never realising that collectively the list of modifications could turn a harmless production car into a monster competition machine. While some manufacturers size of 2.5 litres dutifully adopted Evolution rules as originally intended, six manufacturers were interested in taking the rules to their limits - Audi, Austin Rover, Citroen, Ford, Lancia and Peugeot.

All six drew up completely different designs. Audi, Citroen, Ford and Peugeot all had turbocharged engines. Lancia, revolutionarily, had hybrid supercharged and turbo engines, and Austin Rover used an optional rule allowing bigger displacement engines in normally-aspirated form.

All six used four-wheel drive designs, which were also still in their infancy for rally work, and in which there was then no clear way forward as to the way this should work best. Audi and Citroen had engines in the front, the other four had engines placed behind the crew. Audi had five cylinder engines, Austin Rover six cylinders, but the others were fours.

The engine sizes varied. Under FIA rules the super-aspirated engine carried a capacity coefficient of 1.4, and there was a breakpoint at the corrected size of 2.5 litres. Below that the cars were allowed to be lighter, but the wheels had to be narrower. The constantly increasing power outputs meant, however, that the 2.5 to 3-litre category was probable. Power outputs had originally come out around 450bhp, but as development continued this spiralled upwards and upwards.

Only the Ford RS200 design gave any hint of looking like the sports car that Group B was originally intended to represent. The other supercars resembled ordinary saloon cars, looking like sheep in the clothing of wolves, a master promotional opportunity.

Of the six designs, only Audi’s Group B cars represented an extension of their existing cars, demanding special transitional arrangements being made to adapt their old Group 4 Quattro cars into the new Group B rules, but their work was reaching forward, firstly into shortened wheelbase chassis, the Sport Quattros, and secretly into a design with the engine behind the crews.

The Tour de Corse in 1984 was a very memorable rally, the first time purpose-designed total traction Group B Supercars, as opposed to adapted Group 4 cars, appeared in WRC competition, with the Peugeot 205 Turbo 16, in the hands of Ari Vatanen and Jean-Pierre Nicolas.

Vatanen led for nearly half the event before going off the road in a spectacular accident. The first supercar victory went to the Peugeot of Vatanen in Finland on the team’s third outing. Audi took their first Sport Quattro victory two months later on the Ivory Coast Rally.

From the start of 1985 it was clear that old generation cars were no longer competitive in the high performance European style rallies. Supercars won all the major European gravel events, leaving Renault’s mid-engined rear-drive RS Turbo to win the asphalt Corsica Rally.

By now the evolution ticket was frayed with a curious car, the BX4TC, produced with deliberately detuned specifications. The team noted the degree of engineering sophistication of the other cars and decided that a simplier design would be more reliable. It featured hydro-pneumatic suspension systems, a single cam two-valve cylinder head, oversize five-door bodywork and a basic transmission system. They bravely entered three rounds at the start of the 1986 WRC season before the project was abandoned.

One rally later Ford appeared with...
GROUP B MEMORIES

their RS200 model, on the Swedish Rally, after being systematically developed for some 18 months or so before being released for WRC competition.

The RS200 was certainly the engineering jewel in the supercar crown, but also became one of the formula’s thorns, the safety factor. The rally organisers had little idea how the performance of these new generation cars meant their long entrenched security systems had become outdated. Audi were concerned about this and withdrew from regular support for the sport altogether.

Then came the tragedy for Lancia in Corsica, after which FIA President Balestre immediately announced that big engined Group B cars would not be eligible in the WRC after end of the season, and that no more evolution homologations would be handled by the FIA at all.

The tensions, sporting and political, progressively increased to fever point, fuelled by rivalry between Peugeot and Lancia, exploding at Sanremo with just two more rounds to go.

Italian scrutineers pondered the way that the Peugeots had grown protective side pieces which they said looked like giving an illegal ground effect. The Peugeots were excluded mid-rally.

Short term the exclusion gave Lancia a welcome home win, medium term it led to a decision by the FIA not to award any championship points from the event, and cost Markku Alen his provisional world title after only 11 days, in favour of the Peugeot driver, Juha Kankkunen.

And the sudden change of formula led long term to unsuccessful litigation by Peugeot against the FIA. Peugeot did not return to the WRC until 1999.

Ford, Audi and Lancia went on to compete with cars under the replacement Group A rules.

Citroen went home to rethink their strategy, which eventually led to the most successful range of cars in rallying.

Old Group B cars are forever appearing these days in retro events when new drivers discover the emotions they instil, but there was only one driver who competed in as many as three different Group B cars in the active period. This was Stig Blomqvist, who competed in the Audi Sport Quattro, the Ford RS200 and the Peugeot 205T16.

“The original Audi Quattro had such superior traction it did not need development,” Blomqvist said.

“Only with the Sport Quattro, when other four-wheel-drive cars arrived, did Audi develop downforce and their power.

“The Ford was not so powerful, but was the best looking car in the business, while the Peugeot had the best suspension.

“I don’t think these Group B cars went round corners much quicker than the old ones, but everything happened so quickly. Once had an accident in a Peugeot. I never knew whether we had actually been upside down or not!

“My original memories of these new generation cars was at Monte Carlo in 1981. We heard that Hannu Mikkola was making times one minute quicker every stage. The Group B era went on from there!”

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FEATURE. KALLE ROVANPERA

Rallying's Youngest Champion

T

he name Rovanpera has long been well known and highly re-
spected in rallying, on account of Harri, who was a works driver for Ford, SEAT, Peugeot, Mitsubishi and finally Skoda, and notably as the winner of the Swedish Rally in 2001.

Now the name is becoming famous again, for a remarkable reason. Harri’s son, Kalle, has taken up rallying and has now become unbeatable in the national Latvian rally championship. Kalle is now a champion – at the age of 15 years old.

This was not just a Junior beginners’ series title, but the overall national rally title. This is the only country where he can compete on rallies as a driver.

The R5 is not faster everywhere, on twisty and technical roads, but it is in other areas where the roads are wider and faster. It depends what area of Latvia we are in. In some areas there are many different types of road, but overall the R5 is really good.

T

o me it was obviously a big jump to go from the Toyota Starlet and then to the C2, and presumably an even bigger jump to go to the four-wheel-drive Fabias?

"Last year he won the two-wheel open championship category in Latvia, and for him the next step was four-wheel-drive. As he already knew the C2 quite well, Kalle asked if it was possible to try a 4x4 car, so we spoke with Tom Gardemeester, who at that time only had an S2000 available.

"That was a good car to start with, but during the summer time there was the possibility of an R5 for Kalle on some events, so we decide to go with RS.

"The R5 was a new model with many different things, but it was in the same class. For the remaining rounds in the Latvian championship it was possible for Kalle to change cars.

In Latvia the stages are very fast so the S2000's top speed is not enough on some events, even if it was a very good car. He has been able to test the new car and learn all about the differences in the car and engine. Everything was good.

"The R5 is not faster everywhere, on twisty and technical roads, but it is in other areas where the roads are wider and faster. It depends what area of Latvia we are in. In some areas there are many different types of road, but overall the R5 is really good."

The other big recent story for Kalle was driving a prototype Toyota Yaris World Rally Car. How did that happen?

"Tommi (Makinen) asked if Kalle was interested to come and test the Toyota!

Kalle Rovanpera is seen as a star of the future, who perhaps a possible World Champion.

I

t is true. Apart from Marcus Gronholm, a lot of the top rally drivers were guys coming from the Jyskyla area.

"Kalle's first proper car was a rear-wheel drive Toyota Starlet. He frequently practised in that on a frozen lake and elsewhere in the summer as well. We made some videos which I then showed to a TV guy in Belgium.

"He was riding a motorcycle when he was three years old, and he has always played with toys with motors. I gave up professional rallying at the end of 2006. That was the year Kalle turned six, so Kalle has some firm memories of what his father used to do for his living!

"Kalle was always interested in mechanically moving things, starting with riding small quads and small mopeds.

Kalle Rovanpera and co-driver Risto Pietiläinen.

"I gave up professional rallying at the end of 2006. That was the year Kalle turned six, so Kalle has some firm memories of what his father used to do for his living!

"Kalle is his hobby, but he enjoys and does it all."

"Now the name is becoming famous again, for a remarkable reason. Harri’s son, Kalle, has taken up rallying and has now become unbeatable in the national Latvian rally championship. Kalle is now a champion – at the age of 15 years old.

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"He was riding a motorcycle when he was three years old, and he has always played with toys with motors. I gave up professional rallying at the end of 2006. That was the year Kalle turned six, so Kalle has some firm memories of what his father used to do for his living!

"Kalle was always interested in mechanically moving things, starting with riding small quads and small mopeds.

"He was riding a motorcycle when he was three years old, and he has always played with toys with motors. Coming from a country like Finland and living in a city like Jyväskyla, he must have known a lot about rallying?

"Kalle with rally legend Jean-Pierre Nicolas.

"I do not want all his life to be only rally, because he likes doing many different things and that is normal. And then there is school and everything. Rallying is his hobby, but he enjoys and mentally he is very mature.

"He does not have a young boy mentality that you might imagine, not like you and me! He thinks a lot and is very clever."

Kalle and rally legend Jean-Pierre Nicolas.

"He does not have a young boy mentality that you might imagine, not like you and me! He thinks a lot and is very clever."

Yes please, it was very nice! "He checked out everything like any other new car. Getting into the car, from turn-key onwards it was maximum boost and flat out! He enjoyed it, wasn’t frightened of it.

"It all went very well, even if not such a lot of kilometres, 20-30 km, something like that. Good first test with a World Rally Car. The first 15 year old man to go testing 2017 World Rally Car ...

"It all went very well, even if not such a lot of kilometres, 20-30 km, something like that. Good first test with a World Rally Car. The first 15 year old man to go testing 2017 World Rally Car ...

And what do you think is the future for him in rallying?

"We stay very calm, never pushing. I'm listening to his ideas and think what we can do, how everything can go, step by step. Not to hurry.

"I do not want all his life to be only rally, because he likes doing many different things and that is normal. And then there is school and everything. Rallying is his hobby, but he enjoys and mentally he is very mature.

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Kalle Rovanpera is seen as a star of the future, who perhaps a possible World Champion.

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“Smokin’ Joe” McAndrew was one of the biggest names in New Zealand rallying in the 1990s, driving a succession of Subarus. RallySport Magazine caught up with the three-time champion.

**WHERE ARE THEY NOW?**

Joe McAndrew

“Smokin’ Joe” McAndrew was one of the biggest names in New Zealand rallying in the early 1990s, winning the title in 1993, 1994 and 1996. Which of those titles was the most satisfying?

JMcA: The most satisfying during the early 1990s was 1993, especially after missing the win in the 1992 championship after a last rally, last stage crash – all we had to do was finish the rally, but we broke the cam pulley. We all worked well together as a team. Someone once told me: “You have to lose one to win one,” so 1993 was to be our year.

When you got your Prodrive Legacy, it was head and shoulders above the locally built cars. What are your memories of that car?

Our Prodrive Legacy was a truly amazing car to drive. The left hand drive took a little while to get used to, but felt right and I knew I was in a real works car when I was driving it.

On the first rally, Bob (Haldane) said I was very close to his side, the next stage, with both mirrors folded in from the bushes, I said to Bob: “Now we are close”.

The noise it made when idling was very special, the fans buzzing and popping, it had a great sound to it.

How did the purchase of it come about, and was it an expensive buy?

We contacted the Prodrive Customer Department and spoke to David Campion, expressing an interest in purchasing a works Legacy at the end of the 1993 season.

We paid a deposit to start the process, and after selling our right-hand drive Legacy, Bob and I funded our dream car with the help of sponsorship from Shell Oil. We had managed to make it happen.

Australian fans will remember you competing in the Shell Legacy in the 1995 Rally of Canberra. You set the pace early and thrilled the crowds. Did you enjoy the experience in Canberra?

Canberra was great, so yes, I really enjoyed the adventure. Bob and I worked on our notes and checked and double checked stages well, and it gave me the confidence to drive fast.

I loved the racing there, we were clicking well together. We jumped high and the car felt good. While leading the rally, the newly fitted front wheel bearing failed.

The Legacy had an epic Rally New Zealand in 1996. You had many incidents and the car was battered and bent. Tell us about that rally.

On the first day we clipped a hidden tree stump with the left front corner, which also took out other top competitors. We chased the problem all rally and it was a handful to drive. We hit all corners of the car, and had bits hanging off it.

You had some great rivalries with Neil Allport and Brian Stokes, among others. What are your special memories about those years?

In the early ‘90s I started the rivalries with Neil Allport and Brian Stokes. With both of them already being champions, there was something to aim for.

Both were fast in different events. Allport was always aggressive and he wouldn’t talk, and he hated someone who could beat him. We swapped many rally wins.

I’ve been asked to question you about the Silver Fern in 1990 when you drove a twin cam Corolla. What do you remember about this event?
CUNNINGHAM TAKES WAITOMO VICTORY

Lint Cunningham took his first rally win at the Waitomo Clubmans Rally, held not far from Hamilton on October 1. This NZRC regular teamed up with Crunch Bennett for the first time and the pair won four of the five stages to lead home the field by 1 minute 10.8 seconds.

Cunningham led home Andy Martin, who was having his first run in the ex-Shannon Chambers Volkswagen, Martin winning the opening stage and only once setting a time outside the top five.

Just 10 seconds behind Martin was Brian Green in the Team Radiant Mirage.

One of the drivers of the day came from Shane Murland, who powered his BDA Escort to fourth place, just ahead of Perry’s Evo 6, who rounded out the top five.

An early challenge from Carl Adnitt’s four-wheel drive Mazda RX-8 ended when the steering rack mounts broke, while another of the front running two-wheel drive cars, Brent Taylor, went off the road in stage two.

- BLAIR BARTELS

Galbraith wins Spring Rally

Timar’s Darren Galbraith took top honours at the home young gun rally, based from Geraldine on September 24, heading home young gun Job Quantock and Richard Bateman.

Galbraith was the top seed in his new Mitsubishi Evo 8, having his first run in the car to a full NZRC campaign in 2017, ahead of Quantock jnr (job) and senior (David), both also in Evos.

Michael Tall’s Managers were the only non-Evo in the top five, with Richard Bateman the final in the front bracket.

Escort mounted Deane Buist and Regan Ross were at six and seven, ahead of Jason McConnell and David Clearwater, both in Evos, and Tony Gosling in his first steer of the ex-Hawkeswood Mazda 2 AP4 car that won the final NZRC round in the hands of Brendan Reeves.

Foggy and drizzly conditions greeted competitors for a later start that also saw early drama when Job Quantock was late to the opening stage with technical issues. Although it would not affect his speed, the minute and 50 seconds of penalties would prove costly.

In the end was Dave Quantoek who took the opening stage ahead of Tall by 2.4 seconds.

Job Quantock was third fastest, just ahead of Galbraith, while a strong performance from 21st seeded Australian, Justin Walker, saw him fifth fastest and fourth outright after the stage.

Stage two saw Galbraith take the first of three stage wins as he sought to chase down the deficit, which happened on stage four when Quantoek senior rolled out of the lead.

In the end, Galbraith opened up a comfortable gap, which was fortuitous as a broken axle and small off road excursion on the final stage saw his winning margin almost halved.

Job Quantoek would change back to second, largely aided by Matt Wright’s Subaru being caught out on the same corner as Galbraith in the final stage.

But while Galbraith got away with it, Wright lost 50 minutes and fell well back from the second place he had held heading into the finale.

A second fastest stage time on the final stage helped Bateman leapfrog Buist for what would be the final spot on the podium. A strong performance from Keith Anderson saw him take fifth place in his Evo 3.

- BLAIR BARTELS
Volkswagen achieved its 40th WRC victory in the hands of Sebastien Ogier on his fourth win of the 2016 WRC season, as he inched closer to his fourth World Rally Championship title.

He led the Tour de Corse from start to finish, winning six of the 10 special stages and pulled even further ahead of his closest rival, fellow Volkswagen driver Andreas Mikkelsen, who finished third. VWs finished 1-3-4, with second place going to Thierry Neuville's Hyundai.

The only title won in Corsica was the Junior WRC, when Italian Simone Tempestini became unbeatable.

The event was popular with drivers because of the challenge of the uniquely complex mountainous asphalt stages, but less so for supporting personnel, on account that it was based in the north of the island, with lengthy journeys to the start and the finish.

The traditionally mercurial weather, which caused huge disruption last year, only played a marginal role this year, with rain arriving late on the second day. The event was in total not so much as a fight for victory, but many of the uncontracted WRC drivers wanted to show their true talents.

Drivers who impressed potential team managers on this event included Neuville, Breen (on this his first WRC event on asphalt in a World Rally Car), and Elfyn Evans, who led WRCC from start to finish.

There were the full four top manufacturers on this event, but by the end of the event Hyundai were the only remaining challenge for Volkswagen’s hopes of a fourth manufacturers’ title, while only Mikkelsen and Neuville retained the mathematical chance of beating Ogier to the Drivers’ title this year.

Ogier was in a class of his own, receiving endless expressions of admiration from other drivers. Unusually, the challenge of correct tyre choices was not a major factor until the rains came at the end of Day 2. Ogier’s skill was to maintain a steady unbeatable pace, especially through the two long 50km stages that characterised the event.

VW were confident, they did not test their current cars before the event, but not everything worked perfectly. Jari-Matti Latvala suffered brake problems which reduced his self-confidence.

Hyundai were the only serious championship rivals to VW in Corsica though they only won one stage, the last one on Day 2, when the rain came and Neuville and Sordo scored a 1-2.

Neuville was consistent after early handling problems, while Sordo was more cautious after losing a couple of minutes with a puncture. Paddon lost time and confidence with his set-up.

This event saw the arrival of the NG i20 RS car of which there were three taking part. Kevin Abbring dropped out after lying third for
half the event.

Citroen had hoped to have Stephane Lefebvre drive for them in Corsica, but the injuries sustained in Germany prevented that, so the Abu Dhabi Total team comprised of Meeke and Breen as a dream team for this event.

This was Breen’s first asphalt rally in a World Rally Car and he had an impressive event, holding fifth right from the first day. Meeke planned the event as a chance to improve his Drivers’ championship ranking, to assure a favourable running order next year, but all went wrong when he impacted a tree and broke a driveshaft. He made three fastest times when things were going well.

M-Sport were again off the pace, struggling all through the event and their two team drivers and their DMack driver scored only one top six stage time between them, except when Tanak was fourth fastest in the rain.

Ostberg was using the event to develop his asphalt driving style, not helped by brake cooling trouble on Friday afternoon. Until then he was battling with his teammate Camilli, who finished eighth, three quarters of a minute in front of Ostberg, with Tanak almost a minute further back.

It had been a very tiring event. It was the second longest event in stage terms of the year, after Mexico, but it was a much slower event. So it was that Ogier had finally won the event. “That’s just what we really wanted this weekend, we really wanted to win this rally, first time in Corsica,” he said.

“It’s so good because it is an historical rally. I think this weekend we had everything, we saw quite strong place on the first day and then we just managed the rest of the weekend quite perfectly. So very happy, very pleased with everything.”

In WRC2 Elfyn Evans kept his championship hopes alive by dominating the category, leading end to end. It was a measured performance, keeping Jan Kopecky at bay. Kopecky was lying second all the way.

The level of championship driver entries in this category was low, so Evans now has to wait and see whether Suninen (entered on this event in a non-points scoring capacity) can gain enough points in Catalunya and Britain to pass his score.

Kevin Abbring made a promising debut in the new R5 Hyundai, but retired with a water leak. Among the WRC2 retirements were Suarez in the Peugeot Academy car, while Quentin Gilbert struggled to the finish with engine trouble.

Catalunya is going to be the critical fixture in WRC2. Tidemand and Suninen have both entered the Spanish event on a points scoring basis, but theoretically championship contender Kopecky may not start the event, and Esapekka Lappi has not been entered.

Skoda have not formulated their policies, not helped by the distraction of the results of private Skoda team driver Suninen. With a bit of luck, Evans is still in with a splendid chance.

The big news in WRC3 was the title win for Tempestini in the Junior championship, but not quite with the style of a champion. He only finished fourth in the WRC3 category, and his gearbox was stuck in second!

The stars of the show were the two young drivers entered by FFSA (the French federation). For over half the event there were only seconds between Laurent Pellerier and Yohan Rossel. On the final morning Rossel lost time on the 53km stage with serious brake problems, and this meant that Pellerier won the category by around a half minute. Martin Koci was third, the leading regular championship driver, finishing in front of Tempestini. Has the FFSA produced another prospective rally champion? Remember, both Sebastien Loeb and Sebastien Ogier found their careers were kick-started by the FFSA …

Hayden Paddon battled on to finish sixth, improving his speed as the event went on.
So a challenging rally is behind us, and while sixth place is more points in the bag, it was far from the performance we were looking for. However, on the positive side, a change of driving style and approach for the final day did see some improvements, and at least this gives us something to work on as we work towards Rally Spain.

Going into the rally we were hopeful that recent testing, study and lessons would help us be more competitive in Corsica. Throughout the rally I certainly felt more comfortable on tarmac compared to the past, and on the first loop of stages our times were not too bad – starting the rally with a top five time.

However, two afternoon punctures halted our progress, which mysteriously was halted even further on Day 2. Day 2 had the trickiest stages of the rally and while from inside the car we felt we had good runs through the stages, we could not understand how and why we were losing 30 seconds a stage. To be honest, it was demoralising and no matter what we tried, nothing changed.

Saturday night I spent a lot of time reviewing data and onboards and decided to just go back to basics on the final day, and drive my natural style, like I would on gravel.

It certainly was not as efficient in places, but the track we were going down was clearly the wrong path, so by going back two steps means we can start refining again.

Although Sunday is always hard to gauge speed as a lot of people are in more ‘cruise mode’, it’s clear that we made some improvements. Second fastest on the longest stage of the rally, and our first fastest split on tarmac, is progression.

Now we need to keep that progress moving forward to Spain. I’m happy that Day 1 in Spain is gravel, but we then have two days of tarmac where it’s vital that we don’t have another tarmac performance like this one. I’m fired up to make sure we don’t!

For people from the outside looking in, it’s very easy to say “if your times are not good then you’re clearly not driving fast enough”.

However, the art of driving on tarmac is very particular, and it’s not a matter of braking later or being more committed. In fact, we are doing both those things too much. It’s about finding the sweet spot and, of course, by backing off a little to try and find that spot, it’s very easy to go too far. Some of it is experience related, by knowing what is fast and what isn’t in the heat of the moment. For example, on gravel I know exactly if we are having a good stage or corner by the ‘feeling’. We will get there – it’s just taking a little longer than I hoped.

Thanks for everyone’s continued support, even when we are not at the front. But Corsica is already forgotten and we are now focused on Spain.

However, before Rally Spain, we will be competing at Rally Legend with Hyundai Italy and the 2014 WRC car. It’s a chance to go sideways and put on a show for the hundreds of thousands of spectators at this exhibition event, based out of San Marino. Can’t wait!

- Hayden
The FIA has issued an interesting interview with Patrice Davesne, Engine Manager at Citroën Racing, in which a team talks for the first time about their work developing their engines for the new style WRC regulations.

"Concerning the FIA rules, the sole difference is the inlet turbo restrictor. It was 33mm and it becomes 36mm, which means about 20% air flow increase," Davesne explains.

"In consequence we need to change the turbocharger because the compressor side is not large enough and we need to develop a new one to adapt to this new flow.

"We have developed a fully new engine. We decided to change the bore, it was 82mm since the beginning of our time in WRC, and now we decide to increase the bore diameter, and we are now at the limit allowed by the FIA, which is 84mm.

"Also, due to the increase of the flow and the diameter of the restrictor, we need to manage very carefully the ‘knock’ and we need to develop a completely new system. It takes a lot of work on the dyno, it was a very large job and we have arrived to a good system that avoids any overcharge of combustion pressure, and that’s very important for durability of the engine.

"We also developed some internal system to reduce friction and of course to increase global efficiency of the engine. We are very lucky to have great experience in WRC events, so for each problem we have met in the past we have developed a process and adapted our dyno to solve these.

"So now when we develop a new engine we have many, many processes that we use on the dyno to avoid any problem we have already met in the past.

"Also, we are lucky to have a very good dyno that is able to simulate conditions; we can run on the dyno a stage anywhere in the world, except perhaps Sweden. But for example, Mexico, we can simulate altitude with our dyno and it’s a real advantage.

"Concerning the evolutions which will be permitted in the future) "We can make changes, but some parts of the engine are frozen by the regulations for three years.

"For example, bore is not allowed to change, the distance between cylinder and distance between camshaft can’t change.

"But we have three jokers per year and, for example, we can change in the same year the pistons, connecting rods and oil sump. Each year there are three jokers and we can use them as we want - it can be development, increase our power or durability, it’s as we want.

"Concerning the torque on the new engine, there is no evolution. Concerning the FIA regulations we have two constraints; one is the restrictor on the inlet compressor, the second one is the limit of pressure in the inlet manifold. It is not allowed to overpass 2.5 bar, so as this regulation remains the same, the torque remains the same.

"The change of the new engine is only power. With the new restrictor we have more power at higher revs. Concerning the driveability - the feeling of the drivers - it depends on the configuration of the road. If the stage is quick, like in Finland, they said it’s an evolution but not a revolution. On the tricky roads, the increase of the power creates greater acceleration and the feeling of the drivers is ‘wow, it’s another world’.

"It’s difficult to say what fans will say because it depends on the feeling you have, mainly with noise. With the new engine we have much power at higher revs and that means much noise, and the feeling when you watch the car is much more noise.

"Also, the car with the new regulations is larger, so if the car is larger you need more horsepowers to have a big impression."
Toyota has reached an agreement with Microsoft to collaborate in the 2017 FIA World Rally Championship (WRC). As part of the agreement, Microsoft will serve as a ‘technology partner’ for the TOYOTA GAZOO Racing WRC rally team.

Using Microsoft technology, Toyota wants to maximize its competitiveness in WRC, whilst ensuring that learnings from the race course can be used to achieve the company’s vision of designing and manufacturing ‘ever-better cars’.

Toyota President Akio Toyoda said: “I believe that, like Toyota, Microsoft aims to enrich society in meaningful ways. Based on the on-going partnership, we aim to further develop our people and enhance our cars through the use of IT in motorsports.”

There has still been no announcement on the team’s drivers for 2017, although test driver Juho Hanninen and young gun Esapekka Lappi are expected to head the team.

Hyundai Motorsport presented a preview of its 2017 WRC challenger at the Paris Motor Show. The team has been testing its 2017 prototype since April across numerous locations in Europe and in a variety of different conditions.

The car, based on a three-door Hyundai i20, has been developed to meet WRC’s 2017 technical regulations, which have given greater aerodynamic freedom to designers.

Hyundai Motorsport has an extensive testing programme lined up in the final part of 2016 in order to further evolve the car ahead of its debut at Rallye Monte-Carlo in January.

WRC regulations for the 2017 season also offer teams more power, an increase to 380bhp, more downforce, Electronic Active central differential and the ability to compete with longer and wider vehicles. The combined objective of these new technical rules is to create an even more dynamic and spectacular show in the popular WRC.

Looking Ahead: 2017 WRC

2017 Driver Line-Ups....

VOLKSWAGEN  Sebastien Ogier  Jari-Matti Latvala  Andreas Mikkelsen
HYUNDAI  Hayden Paddon  Dani Sordo  Therry Neuville
CITROEN  Kris Meeke  Craig Breen  Stephane Lefebvre
M-SPORT  Eric Camilli  ??
TOYOTA  ??

Potential additions: Two of Poland, China and Turkey
SMART SHOWS HIS CLASS

The final round of the 2016 MRF Tyres Queensland Rally Championship took place with the P3 Solutions Benarkin Rally. It was also the finale of the Novice Championship, with the Yowie Short Course Rally being cancelled.

There were 21 entrants for the QRC prize and a further 13 cars entered for the Novice prize.

The rally was headquartered at the primary school in the small Benarkin community, with the stages taking place in the surrounding state forests. Ten stages were run with a total competitive distance of 126.9km.

The entry list was led by International Rally of Queensland winner, Ryan Smart, who was back with John McCarthy in their white Mitsubishi Evo 9.

Meanwhile, Kent Lawrence was back after his sizeable 'off' at the Border Ranges Rally. His return came after he purchased Tristan Carrigan’s Evo 9 in an effort to remain in the championship and secure the runner’s up position.

Other changes from last time out included Michelle van der Wilk stepping in for Ian Swinbourne, who was unavailable this round, to sit next to Kim Ackworth. Peter Flynn/Dominic Corkeron were back with the Alfa Romeo after missing IROQ and Border Ranges.

Finally, Nathanial Dillon returned after an eight year break in a 1996 Suzuki Baleno and would be guided by his brother Andrew.

The first stage - the 14.5km New Sandy test - got underway in the warm mid-morning sun.

It was immediate pain for Champion-elects Rob Bishop/Neil Woolley (Evo), who rolled a tyre off the rim resulting in losing more than five minutes in the opening stage. It was worse for the Toyota of Jeff and Holly Killbride, who retired with an engine fault.

Smart/McCarthy staked their claim for the win, being the only team to dip into the seven minute barrier, and their time of 7min 43sec was 25 seconds faster than the next best of Ian Menzies and Robert McGowen.

It was a challenging stage for the Evo 6 duo of Peter Kahler and Claire Buccini who came across a herd of cattle at 140km/h. They threw the car sideways to avoid the cattle, almost hitting four. They were able to continue, but curiously none of the other crews reported cattle on the road.

Menzies/McGowen struck back on SS2 - the 14km test of Opossum, taking the win by 10 seconds over Smart/McCarthy.

The third stage was the short 5.9km Pinida stage and it saw a narrow win by Marius Swart/Peta Davis in their Volkswagen Polo S2000, just edging out Smart/McCarthy.

Stage three was the end of the road for Kahler/Buccini who had a fuel pump failure. This was after their scare on SS1 and having to replace both drivers’ side tyres after SS2.

The first loop came to a close with New Yarraman’s 14.5km test. This test took three minutes longer to complete than the similar length SS1 and 2, with Smart/McCarthy duo taking the win in a touch under 10 minutes.

But Bishop and Woolley would not make it out of service after the end of the first leg, with a broken oil cooler ending their championship season.

The teams also reported that the roads were challenging. Many of the roads were narrow with many jumps and bumps along the way. This meant that many would improve their times on the second loop, being more aware of the road conditions.

Ryan Smart showed his class by taking all four stage wins in the second loop. He would stretch his lead over Menzies/McGowen by a massive 37 seconds on SS5, improving his SS1 time by 24 seconds.

He would continue, taking SS6 by 18 seconds, SS7 by 5 seconds, and was the only competitor to break 10 minutes on SS8. He beat Menzies/McGowen by 23 seconds with a time of 9min 53sec.

The second loop took its toll on the field with a number of retirements including Jamie Yule/Kirstin Winarta (Mitsubishi Mirage) having a broken axle; Allan Clunes/Gavin Wieland (Mazda) with a broken gearbox. Ian Reddick/Mike Mitchell’s Toyota and Rodney Reid/Belinda Reid’s Mitsubishi would also retire.

The final two stages would take place at night and while there was concern about dust, the cars ran at two minute intervals and the dust problems proved to be not as bad as feared.

Smart/McCarthy would take both stages to take a comfortable win, winning by 3min 26 seconds from Menzies/McGowen, with Smart/Davis in third.

Kent Lawrence would take fourth, which was enough to grab second in the championship behind Bishop, and just ahead of Menzies.

After missing the title this year, he will be back for another title shot in 2017.

The P6 category was taken by Todd Webster/Ryan Preston’s Subaru, with Peter Flynn/Dominic Corkeron taking P4.

In a strange quirk, Webster/Preston finished on exactly the same time as the Subaru of Melinda Bergmann/Larisa Biggar, both taking fifth place.

Upon their return to the stages, the Dillon brothers took P3 - and last of the classified finishers, despite suffering from delaminating tyre issues, resulting in them only having two clean stages.

Clay Weston/Brendon Wrigley took P2 class in their Ford, with Keith Fackrell/Tony Best’s BDA Escort taking the Historic class.

An interesting side note was that Weston and Fackrell were competing for the 2WD honours. Fackrell took night at Benarkin with Weston ninth - which could have tied them on points.

That battle wasn’t confirmed at the time of writing.

The Multi-club event took place over eight stages with Glenn Mitchell and Peter Claydesdale’s Escort taking Historic, John Keen/Ray Priest’s Subaru taking P5, and Steve Allmark/Chris Miller’s Subaru taking P6. Finally, Allan Arney and Matthew Ror in a Torana would take the Novice prize.

Despite their bad rally, Rob Bishop and Neil Woolley took out the 2016 MRF Tyres Queensland Rally Championship, and will look to defend their title in 2017.
One of the outcomes of the latest of the FIA’s quarterly World Motor Sport Council meetings, held on September 28th, which was quite expected was confirmation that the FIA was in a mess regarding the 2017 WRC calendar. No surprise there, then.

What was surprising was the declaration of which events remained candidates for possible inclusion in the 2017 calendar.

One of these was to be a revival of the Turkey WRC event. On six previous occasions the finest of the rally world made their way to the other side of the Bosphorus, firstly to the region around Istanbul, then to a location close to Istanbul. They paid the cost, accepting that our car ran out of fuel. By good luck we were cruising in neutral gear right past a long line of cars into a garage forecourt. We headed for the nearest pump.

There was another major deviation from our plan. We discovered the local airline did not operate on Sundays. From Athens to Rome and back to Turkey were closed at that time. The stress with Greece and Turkey were at their expense. I was to send them the bill.

There was an unexpected problem. The borders between Greece and Turkey were closed at that time. The only way to make the trip was to go from Athens to Rome and back to Istanbul. They paid the cost, accepting this was the price of falling out with their neighbouring country.

There was another major deviation from our plan. We discovered the local airline did not operate on Sundays. We found that our car had run out of fuel. By good luck we were cruising in neutral gear right past a long line of cars into a garage forecourt. We headed for the nearest pump.

When Mumtaz Tahincioglu made it his personal mission to bring the WRC to Turkey, he invited various people to come to Istanbul for talks to offer suggestions for his project. The guests included me. We had an idyllic sunset meal beside the Bosphorus, and on the journey back to my hotel I was asked if there was anything I would like to do before I went home in the morning.

By now I was full of wine. I foolishly said I had never seen a belly dancer. That was said to be absolutely no problem. I was whisked to the biggest and most famous night spot, but it was closed. Then to another. Closed again. Then another and another until we found an absolutely disgusting hovel that was open.

I was told it wasn’t the season for belly dancers in Turkey. I vowed never to want to see a belly dancer again.

The days when the WRC event was based at Kemer were memorable.

Visitors were really made to feel welcome. People were friendly and helpful. Every village where we stopped, local people would offer us a cup of tea.

And strange things happened on the rally. The most strange was on the WRC event in 2003 when a very famous future world champion took a wrong turn. His team looked horrified, aghast as they saw Loeb and Elena on the tracking system heading off in the wrong direction.

Finally they contacted him by radio and put him wise, but too late. He hastily back-tracked, hoping not to be late at the next control, but the extra distance took its toll. His Citroen ran out of fuel and he had to retire!

Daniel Elena, fortunately, kept his job. He didn't matter. Their teammate, Carlos Sainz, won the rally on behalf of Citroen, and Loeb won the event in the next two years.

The last two times (2008 and 2010) that the WRC went to Turkey the rally was held in a different region, still on the Asia Minor side of the Bosphorus, but now much closer to Istanbul itself. The rally was based at the harbour town of Pendik. A special boat was chartered to take the rally cars, plus their crews, plus anyone who fancied what turned out to be a fantastic evening afloat, going to Istanbul for the ceremonial start and back.

It was a delightful occasion. Food, and even a performing belly dancer, were provided for the delegation of all onboard.

2010 was the last time the WRC went to Turkey, and as if to make the occasion absolutely unforgettable there was something else completely unexpected. We could not travel home! The airlines, ash cloud had grounded all the flights in Europe. As soon as the rally was over, it was panic! Some stayed on for an unexpected holiday.

Several British journalists begged a lift in a coach rented by M-Sport, which for them turned out to be a horrific experience, over the worst main roads that Romania could offer.

We lashed out and helped pay for a small rented bus, whose driver had a licence that entitled him to use the better quality roads in Serbia. Our bus drivers took turns, making stops every two hours. What a motley collection of stranded travellers we were!

The fellow passengers included a WRC driver from Finland, a WRC co-driver from Austria, two of the main organisers of Rallye Deutschland, some people from Holland. The passengers peeled off the journey when they had to head in a different direction, leaving more room for the people remaining.

After about 36 hours we reached the safety of Holland, but the ash was still in the air. No flights were operating out of Schiphol. We were fine, but those poor bus drivers then had to drive home again. We slept the night in Rotterdam and then sought out the delights of the Eurolines international coach company to bring us back to Victoria Coach Station in London.

There remained a train trip to almost deserted Gatwick airport. Our fear now was financial, how much excess would we have to pay to the airport car park to collect our car and finally go home?

“Did you pre-pay?” the man asked. Yes! “Don’t worry, nothing more to pay. It wasn’t your fault you were late!” Good heavens! Gatwick was being generous...

Once again, Rally Turkey brought us good luck. I really hope the FIA allow the WRC to go back to that country again. Things happen in Turkey!
Rhys Pinter at the Pirelli Carlisle Rally, 2016. Photo: Chicane Media

To be a part of ‘Rally Mates’ contact Dominic on 0499 981 188

Rhys Pinter plans UK return in 2017

Canberra’s Rhys Pinter has put the Junior British Rally Championship back on his agenda for the 2017 season.

Pinter, 23, will be using the upcoming Kennards Hire Rally Australia to propel his credentials again to be able to link up with a team for the 2017 Junior BRC season.

After contesting two of the first three rounds round this year that netted disappointing results, Pinter is determined to be back for a proper crack.

Rhys will be driving his own Ford Fiesta R2 and paired up with experienced UK co-driver, Phil Hall, for the second consecutive year. They will look to defend their WRC class title from Rally Australia in 2015.

“This year in the UK was quite disappointing for a variety of reasons, however I have learnt as much on track as I have off it, and I am really excited to have Phil run with me again. We get along quite well and he knows my notes,” Pinter said.

Rally Australia will also be Pinter’s first Australian Rally Championship event after electing to sit this year out.

“I have been watching the ARC this year and although it looks fantastic to have 4WDs back, I just feel that for my career and where I want it to head, the BRC is the best pathway.”

Pinter has already put a ‘tentative’ deposit on a new R2 machine for the BRC next year, and is currently in talks with teams to run the new car.

“I have a car at the moment that is an R2, but after competing in one (Ford Fiesta R2) and seeing results and feedback from Guy Tyler and Steve Fisher, I believe I need a car with some better updates to go for wins, and unfortunately it is a quite expensive exercise to change my car from a Fiesta 1600 to a Fiesta R2T.

“I have put a tentative deposit on a new R2 which is quite exciting. But for this to happen I need to sell my own car to have the funds to purchase the new car.”

If the UK deal does not eventuate, Pinter will be looking at competing domestically, but is unsure if the ARC is on the radar.
sorts of promotional functions for the Ford promotional event prizes in the parks and everywhere a crowd given out at spectator points, service cigarette lighters! sponsorship came not in cold, hard major sponsor. Colibri, manufacturers of cigarette twisting to try and secure funding, company who were prepared to back further afield until they found a factory team assault. the funding required to mount a full-on alone would not be able to supply all Great Britain, they realised that Ford their entries for the 1974 RAC Rally of Escort in the Lombard Timo Makinen in the Colibri sponsored Ford Escort in the Lombard RAC Rally in 1974. Would you believe?

Jeff Whitten looks back on some of rallying’s lighter moments

Seeing the light(er)

When Ford of Britain were planning their entries for the 1974 RAC Rally of Great Britain, they realised that Ford alone would not be able to supply all the funding required to mount a full-on factory team assault. So they started casting their nets further afield until they found a company who were prepared to back the three-car assault on the event. After much door knocking and arm twisting to try and secure funding, Colibri, manufacturers of cigarette lighters, decided to come on board as major sponsor. Unfortunately for Ford, the sponsorship came not in cold, hard cash, but in the equivalent value of cigarette lighters! Thousands of Colibri lighters were given out at spectator points, service parks and everywhere a crowd gathered, and partially explains why Ford promotional event prizes in the form of lighters were handed out at all sorts of promotional functions for the following couple of years.

Bigger isn’t always better. “For the same event, the 1974 RAC Rally, Ford had contracted Timo Mäkinen to drive one of its Mk1 Escort RS1600s. Mäkinen was well known for trying to individualise his particular car, endlessly chopping and changing the car’s set-up, seat position, tyre choice, gear ratio and more. The Finn was used to driving on snow and ice and had spent a lot of testing time swapping around with tyre and wheel size in his belief that the car would be faster and more competitive running on 15” wheels, instead of the regular 13s, in what was expected to be a snowy event. He was so persuasive and persistent that Ford finally gave in and allowed him to have 15” wheels on his car. As a result, Dunlop arranged for quantities of both sizes to be available for fitting at Timo’s wish. The trouble was that there was so much confusion at the time that at the start of one stage, Timo’s car ended up with 13” wheels on one side of the car and 15” on the other. The story goes that the Finn didn’t realise the mistake until one of the mechanics pointed out the anomaly. It wasn’t until Roger Clark, in another team Escort, was consistently two seconds a kilometre quicker than Mäkinen that he finally gave in and reverted to the smaller wheel and tyre combination. It was only then that he ate humble pie and conceded that the smaller tyre combination was, in fact, quicker.

Down to the wire

We’ve all bought cars from previous owners who have fiddled with a car’s wiring system, or have actually tried to add an accessory – a gauge, a light or a switch ourselves. Usually we can get away with a bodged-up job. However, a car wiring system is an intricate piece of work that’s not to be taken lightly and manufacturers spend enormous amounts of time in designing and manufacturing a wiring loom to suit their particular vehicle. Rally cars have become more and more complex over the past 50 years, thanks to the amount of electrical equipment and computerised functions required. A typical factory rally car loom takes around 270 hours to manufacture and uses approximately 400 metres of wire. Which is as good a reason as any to only let a competent auto electrician work on your rally car.

Tyred out

It’s often been said that if you hand a Frenchman a clipboard and a piece of paper you’re looking for trouble. So when the regulations for carrying the correct number of spare tyres and wheels in events such as the Monte Carlo Rally were released back in 1963, British teams were dismayed. French scrutineers had already excluded the works BMC Minis from the results for minor lighting infringements the previous year, which allowed the big Citroen DS to win on a technicality. The regulations for the following year also played into the Citroen’s favour – a total of four spare wheels and tyres had to be carried in the car at all times, not an easy thing considering the Mini’s meager dimensions.

But the French insisted – the requirement stood and it was up to BMC to get around the problem, and if between the long-range fuel tanks, so they were mounted on the roof in a roof rack that did nothing at all for the aerodynamics. Inconvenient and ungainly it might have been, but it satisfied not only the regulations, but the clipboard-holding scrutineers as well, and the Minis went on to win!

Mastering the Quattro

“Timo was the worst handling car I ever drove.” So said Malcolm Wilson, M-Sport boss, of the Audi Sport Quattro. “On the other hand it gave you the greatest satisfaction in trying to get the most out of it. It took me quite a while, but once I did I found it most rewarding. It was the sheer power, torque and response that I enjoyed the most.”

Out of breath

Long distance endurance rallies come and go, but one of the important ones, the London to Mexico Rally, that was timed to coincide with the World Cup soccer championships, was held in 1970. Most of the major manufacturers had entered and spent a lot of time pre-event going over the route to find out the most difficult parts of the 16,000 mile route. There were “Primes” (special stages) of up to 500 miles long, but the most difficult sections were over the Andes mountains where lack of oxygen and fatigue were two of the major hazards. Leaving no stone unturned in ensuring that its crews were capable of lasting the distance, Ford’s director of motorsport, Stuart Turner, is said to have instructed his leading driver, Roger Clark: “Roger, we need to find out the effects of the lack of oxygen at 14,000 feet. Find a local girl at 14,000 feet, make love and report back.”

In due course Clark’s reply came back: “Unable to find a girl at 14,000 feet, but no problem with the oxygen as I was able to make love to 14 girls at 1000 feet.” There may be no truth in the story, but it has been repeated so many times over the years that it has almost become folklore. And it’s always good for a laugh.
Rangiora’s Matt Summerfield took his third consecutive victory at the iconic Ashley Forest Rallysprint, held on September 18-19, but it was Rotorua’s Sloan Cox who stole the show as he smashed the course record, set by the late Kim Austin in 1999.

An event that has seen almost all of New Zealand’s top rally drivers taking on the challenge since it debuted in 1979, this event has it all with a fast run into a technical section heading up the hill, around a tight hairpin at the top of the course, before the near flat out run down the other side, with cars reaching speeds as high as 180km/h through the finish.

Both Summerfield and Cox were lining up in different cars to their normal NZRC weapons; Summerfield in the Team Ralliart Mirage he won the Tauranga Rally in (without a turbo restrictor), while Cox brought his specialised ‘Hillclimb Beast’, a spaceframe with a wide-body Evo 8 carbon fibre silhouette.

Other contenders included the older Mirages of Michael Tall and Neil Webb, both running Evo running gear, Summerfield also in his NZRC Subaru complete with restrictor, Brian Green (who was sharing the Mirage with Summerfield), and Richard Bateman. Saturday would see four qualifying runs with a further qualifying run on Sunday morning. With the fastest qualifying time, the field would then be cut to 32, 16, 8, 4 and then just 2.

Tall set the early pace, but Summerfield was the first to break the ‘magic minute’ barrier with a 59.67 on the third qualifying run, before Cox set the fastest run of the day on the fourth and final run, his 58.04 edging out Summerfield by just 0.07 of a second. Tall was third overnight on a 1:00.26, ahead of Summerfield again, this time in the Subaru, Webb, Matt Penrose, Bateman and Green.

Crews returned the following day and with fine overhead conditions, talk of the 56.57 second record falling was rife. The large crowd didn’t have to wait long, when Cox recorded a 56.19 second pass to not only make a strong stand heading to the eliminations, but also re-write the history books.

Summerfield was the next closest, exactly a second and a half behind, while Webb went third fastest, close to four seconds back.

There were no great surprises in the top 32, Cox going faster again with a 55.82 against Summerfield’s 58.64, while both Webb and Tall got ever closer to the minute barrier, engaging in a massive battle for third, with 0.07 of a second separating the pair.

The top 16 saw Summerfield strike a blow back, his 56.84 edging out Cox’s 56.99, while Tall’s 59.00 again put him ahead of Webb’s 59.07 by the slimmest of margins.

Summerfield in the Subaru, Bateman, Penrose and Green were the remaining drivers to reach the pointy end of the field as things really started to get interesting.

As expected, when the eight was cut to four, Cox, Summerfield, Webb and Tall survived, with Summerfield’s 59.7 time in a restricted Subaru a second away from making the grade.

While there were no surprises in Cox and Summerfield being the two to advance from the top four round, the surprise came in Cox lowering the record again, this time to 55.23 seconds, putting all the pressure on Summerfield, who recorded a 56.66. Webb’s 58.49 was just enough to edge out Tall (58.52) for the final podium spot.

Cox would go into the final run as favourite, but with past times counting for nothing the pressure was on.

In the end, it would not be Cox, but his car, that would succumb, with a rear differential failure off the start line a gut wrenching blow.

However, Summerfield took the opportunity to win with both hands and a blistering 56.72 second pass ensured he would become the first driver to take three wins in three years, a massive honour for the driver who grew up a matter of minutes from the iconic road.
What ever happened to RALLYING?

Story: DALLAS DOGGER

It’s been 40 years since I attended my first rally. I was lucky enough to see Roger Clark and Timo Makinen at the start of the 1976 Southern Cross Rally. It’s been a love affair ever since. The romance of witnessing high performance cars through the bush at impossible speeds is worse than any addictive drug.

I look back now at these cars and most road cars are now far faster and safer. And after 40 years, you would hope that automotive technology would have improved the cars we used to see that rallying has played a big part in these improvements.

Has our thinking about rallying evolved along with the changes in society and cars, and the acceptance of rallying?

We stubbornly hang on to certain conventions, whilst many aspects of the sport that made it what it was in the first place – exciting – disappear around us.

Many of us have worked over the years to help rebuild interest in classic rallying and I will leave others to judge how that has worked, but I fear there are many factors, but the primary one is conspiring against competition, not only for classic competitors, but most crews.

Costs - It’s always been expensive to go rallying. You don’t need me to remind you. The sad fact that increased safety compliance, along with acceptable WHS compliance and the general cost of living, have made it harder to compete. Most complain about entry fees, but they are only one component of the myriad of rally costs.

Preparation - Very few want to rally near-standard cars. With the advent of front-wheel drive cars, the fun of sliding around in a rear-wheel drive car that was relatively new and low cost is now not possible for many reasons. For example, an RS2000 Escort in 1980 was $6000. You could fit bits to it to make it faster and more reliable, and it was a very satisfying car. Today you would need a Ford Fiesta and it won’t be less than 30k, and possibly more. And it’s not rear-wheel drive.

Time off work - A Queensland state rally is a three-day activity for most. An Australian Championship event is, in most cases, more than a week. Who can spare three days to do 120km of rallying? I can’t, and many others cannot either. It may be too time to do Saturday/daynight rallies again.

Competition for your time - Family commitments, mortgages (which now suck a whole lot more of your cash), internet, kids sports, etc. Who has the time to rally?

These points are only part of the reason why competition has reduced and there are plenty of other factors, so rather than just list out a few problems that prevent plenty from running, why doesn’t our sport have a mature and frank no nonsense discussion about the future of rallying for the majority?

I will start with a few ideas.

1. We need to reset all thinking when it comes to the sport’s future.
2. We need to look at what defines what we want from our sport.
3. We need to earnestly be prepared to change long held views about every aspect of what we do as a sport.
4. We need to work together as one team: organisers, officials and competitors.
5. We need to accept and be realistic about what our sport does cost, and how we can reduce cost and increase competition.
6. We need to communicate far better than we do now.
7. We need to determine if rallying is really what we want to be part of, and once decided, be on-board and supportive of the process.
8. We need to recognise that rallying is not for everyone, from fans to landholders to administrators and authorities. There are plenty of groups who would prefer if our sport disappeared.
9. We need to prepare for the time that many of the roads we hold close to us are not able to be used.
10. We need Rallying 2.0, a new way to be part of this great sport.

We should always remember our DNA, but if we don’t adapt as a sport, in my opinion we have a very limited future. It’s not the same world I rallied in the 70s and 80s, and we can cling to the past, but we cannot recreate our past glories. We need new ones. We can only remember our past with fondness.

It’s gone. We have moved on.

There are key elements of rallying that attracted me as a competitor, and if that means I have a car in a shed and I can’t run it because of X number of reasons, then I am not participating. And the sport needs me (and you) to be participating regularly. It’s our livelihood.

We need to rethink our rules, and we need to accept that we must change.

There are a number of organisers who are very concerned about the lack of entries from all levels of competition, and it’s easy to blame someone else – however, we are all part of the problem and we all need to be part of the fix, and there is no one easy pill to fix it all.

If we could start by recognising the fact that the sport is costly and we all need to make changes to suit today’s market, whilst retaining the essence of the attraction, then we will be on our way to a much healthier and sustainable sport.

We have panels and CAMS State Council. When it comes to electing reps, someone from most clubs is pushed into the role. Rethink your delegate. This is not a seat-warming job.

My view is your club’s delegate is the most important role in your club, by far. He is your Senator when it comes to the crunch with CAMS. Elect a person who will be active and take an interest in your club members’ views, and he/ she should be able to prosecute those views on your behalf.

Tell rally panels and ARCom what your views are. I have been a member of most of these panels over the years and they are always looking for input into how they can help improve the sport.

Anyone who thinks the members of rally panels and state councils are out to actively wreck our sport have been taking the wrong drugs. They all give their time freely to improve and to administrate a complex sport with many issues.

It’s so easy to CAMS bash, but that hasn’t worked either!

No sport can make any changes to the time frame if you sit back and do nothing other than complain that “someone should do something”.

It’s your call, not theirs. They are there to deliver what you want, and if you don’t like what we have now, then it’s up to you to be part of the solution, and that goes for all, not just CAMS.

Every club needs support, and events need your support.

For me, there has been no greater pleasure than competing with the best. It’s the ultimate test of your own skill. Equally, competing in club events is also very rewarding.

I never competed for trophies, nor ever said “Well, you have changed the rules so I can’t be competitive”. I have heard that one plenty of times from those who would only be competitive in a one-car event!

I did what it took to be there, worked three jobs to pay for my rallying, it was expensive then and it is now. Fancy that?

We can wait for the rules to change, or we can wait for costs to reduce, and we can wait for everything else, but the sport may be approaching that even if you line up all your ducks, there may be no pond to play in.

Ponder that. It’s over to you now!
For two decades, Greg Carr was one of Australia’s stand-out rally drivers in both the local and international rally arena.

From inauspicious beginnings in a Mark 1 Cortina and graduation to a Datsun 1600 in the early 70s, Carr was then recognised early for the talent that would make him a household name in rally-mad Australia in the late 70s and early 80s (and beyond).

Winning three Australian Rally Championship titles is an amazing achievement.

Displaying consistency, speed and longevity, Carr also finished second in the ARC on three occasions, third in one year, and fifth on the scoreboard twice – over a period of 12 years from 1977 to 1989.

Unlike some of Carr’s compatriots, however, he showed diversity and skill to adapt to an incredible range of vehicles of various technologies and styles, and yet remain incredibly competitive.

While other great Australian rally drivers stayed loyal to a limited number of manufacturers for much of their career, Carr took the bull by the horns and proved his speed in both 2WD and 4WD cars, from various Japanese, European and Korean manufacturers.

In 1976, Carr was thrown behind the wheel of the legendary Gerry Ball Datsun 180B SSS, winning four major events and showing his capability in an era when factory support was present in Australia, and the Southern Cross Rally was still an event that drivers from all over the world aspired to contest, and hopefully win.

It wasn’t long before Colin Bond, then boss of the newly formed Ford Australia Escort Rally Team, brought Carr into the two-car team to drive the initial works RS2000 and in 1977, Carr took his first Australian Rally Championship win in the Bega Valley Rally.

Proving this was no fluke, Carr led the Southern Cross Rally that year until alternator failure on the last night of the event forced his retirement.

1978 saw Carr win the Australian Rally Championship in the Mk 2 Escort RS1800, clashing constantly with not only team-mate Bond, but also the Datsun factory team cars of Ross Dunkerton and George Fury.

As part of the Ford factory effort in the 1979 Repco Round Australia Reliability Trial, Carr was lead driver for another most unlikely rally car, the 6-cylinder Ford Cortina developed by Colin Bond to combat the then-new Holden Commodore team, sent out by GMH to win the event at (almost) any cost.

Against the might of the GHM team, Carr finished fifth in the 6-cylinder Cortina (with Dave Morrow and Fred Gocentas), the best of the factory Fords.

In recognition of his extraordinary abilities behind the wheel of the Australian Escorts, Ford UK provided Carr the opportunity to drive a Boreham-prepared Group 4 Escort in 1978 in the Burmah Rally (where he finished sixth), and 1979 in the RAC Rally, bringing the car home in tenth place, much to the amazement of the local British press.

In 1980, Carr took second place in the final running of the traditional Southern Cross Rally, behind Datsun’s Ross Dunkerton, Finnish World Champion, Ari Vatanen, guest-driving in a locally prepared Ford Australia Escort, took the third podium position.

It was also in 1980 that the now legendary battle with Ari Vatanen occurred through the forests of Canberra during the Castrol International Rally. The rally-long battle provided a brilliant script for the now-famous rally documentary ‘Forty Split Seconds’.

With the Ford Australia team winding up at the end of 1980, Carr was left to find his own way and it was seven years before he achieved his second Australian Rally Championship title, in 1987, at the wheel of the unlikely (for Australian conditions) Alfa Romeo GTV6.

Carr and his team ran the exotic Fiat 131 Abarth from 1982 to 1984, and in the 1985 Australian Rally Championship year he appeared in an immaculate Mitsubishi Starion.

Returning to Italian machinery, his third and final Australian Rally Championship came in yet another different vehicle – the Lancia Delta Integrale – in 1989.

Carr appeared in Harry Mansson’s Mitsubishi Galant VR4 in the 1990 FIA International Rally of Canberra, and also took the wheel of a factory-prepared Suzuki Swift GTi Group A car at Rally Australia as team-mate to “Monster” Tajima.

As part of the factory 4WD Proton team, Carr travelled to Malaysia for the Malaysian Rally Championship, as team-mate to Proton factory driver Karamjit Singh.

He also drove the second Hyundai APRC team Lantra alongside Wayne Bell in Rally Australia in 1991, and proved competitive in the class, as expected.

While Carr retired quietly from competition, he has never been far from a car, often working as a driving expert, and he often filled roles as a very reliable and trusted course-car driver on major events.

Effectively retired these days, and focusing on cycling and lifestyle, Carr is a member of the Australian Rally Hall of Fame, inducted in 2015.

That recognition alone is testament again to the skills of a man who, arguably, dominated the sport for most of the 70s and 80s, at a time when technology had not yet overtaken the need for pure driving technique.

While some of the vehicles mentioned in this story survive, where are ‘Carr’s Cars’ now? Drop us a note if you know: news@rallysportmag.com.au
Indian driver Gaurav Gill scored his third outright victory and his fourth successive maximum points score in the 2016 Asia Pacific Rally Championship season when he won the Hokkaido Rally in his Team MRF Skoda Fabia R5.

He led home his teammate Fabian Kreim and Subaru driver Michael Young. With two more rounds to go, Gill has the chance to clinch the title on the next round, in Malaysia.

For his first time in Japan, Kreim made a cautious start and only passed Young into second place when Young punctured during the second runs on Day 1.

Recent typhoon storms created a lot of damage on the roads before the event and there were considerable amounts of water on the course.

New to the championship was a development version Toyota Vitz AP4, but the car retired on both days. 49-year old Toshi Arai won the national championship support event, in front of his old rival Fumio Nutahara.

Top 5 APRC results:
1. Gill/Prevot: 2h00m23.9s
2. Kreim/Christian: +1:50.6
3. Young/Read: +3:54.4
4. Takayama/Takeyabu: +4:48.9
5. Iwashita/Takahashi: +13:16.1

Elfyn Evans won his fifth event of the season in his Fiesta R5.

Twice lucky, Elfyn Evans won the final round of the MSA British Rally Championship at the Isle of Man, his fourth successive victory in the revamped series, and fifth of the season, this time benefiting from two major strokes of luck.

The only one of the DMack team drivers, his Fiesta RS was fitted with the more suitable longer ratio transmission on this very high speed event, and when struggling at the end of the first full day of the event with driveshaft problems, he found the last stage of the day was cancelled through organisational delays.

Evans eventually finished 5.9 seconds in front of guest DMack driver Mark Higgins, the pair having easily outpaced the opposition, headed by Tom Cave in another Fiesta RS.

A disappointment was the retirement on the second stage of Craig Breen in the Citroen DS3 RS in which he had won the Circuit of Ireland earlier this year. He had engine failure, as did the Swedish driver Fredrik Ahlin in his Fiesta RS.

The only other major incident was an accident for Rhys Yates (Fiesta RS) which led to the cancellation of the following stage, and Evans’ rally-winning good fortune.

Fourth placed Desi Henry (Fabia RS) was the highest placed driver eligible for FIA European Rally Trophy points in the Celtic division, Robert Duggan won the junior category in an Opel Adam, while Donnie McDonald (Evo IX) won the national category.
Podium for Arai, Macneall
Toyota Gazoo Racing
Rally Challenge Program
driver Hiroki Arai and
Australian co-driver, Glenn
Macneall, finished third
in the final rally of the
Finnish Rally Championship,
the Pirelli Rally.

The event consisted of
120.59 special stage kilometres,
in nine stages in total.

Driving a Ford Fiesta RS
in the SM1 class, Arai held
his nerve and clinched third
place in the tough rally,
setting fastest times on
no less than three special stages
along the way.

He finished 9.6 seconds
behind winner, Juha Sala,
and fell only 1.8 seconds
short of second place.

“I’m feeling pretty good.
We made some changes to
the pacenotes during last
week’s testing, and that
really worked,” Arai said.

“The next step that I need
to take is to focus on getting
my driving more natural –
at the moment, driving is
a lot of work and I need to
concentrate hard. It needs
to come naturally, without
trying too hard.”

Rallysprint near Armidale
Entries are now open for
the Johnson & Kennedy
Freight Services Rallysprint,
the last round of the
Simpson Safety New South
Wales Rallysprint Series,
on October 22.

The event is based at the
Echinda Gully complex, near
Metz, 18km from Armidale.

Competitors will have
six runs over a fantastic
6km shire road that is
smooth and fast. Entry fee
is $240, with a discount for
registered crews, and limited
to 30 cars.

The event has $1500
in prizemoney available,
thanks to Paul Kennedy
from Johnson & Kennedy
Armidale.

Further info is available
at www.nesco.com.au, or by
contacting Richard Ope on
0418 68174.

US victory for Gelsomino

Fresh from her victory
with brother Brendan Reeves
in Lightforce Rally SA, Rhiannon
Gelsomino has taken victory
in the United States on
October 1st.

Co-driving for Ryan
Millen, the Californian son
of former Kiwi Rod Millen,
the pair won the Prescott
Rally, a round of the NASA
series in the American Rally
Championship.

Millen and Gelsomino
(pictured above) won of the
factory Toyota USA team,
and drove a two-wheel drive,
automatic Toyota RA4V to
victory. The car has a 2-litre,
4-cylinder engine.

They won the 11 stage, 120
mile event by 55 seconds,
with positions two to four
filled by all-wheel drive
Subaru Impreza WRXs.

This was Millen’s first
overall win in just his second
season of rallying. Until now
his main form of motorsport
has been desert racing.

Drama in NSW
New South Wales rallying is at crisis
point after the forced cancellation
of the last round of the NSW
Championship, the Stout Road Smash
Repairs Rally at Oberon.

The decision to cancel the event
was made by director Graeme Humphreys
after police insisted that the entire
length of the route of the rally (on both
sides) be bordered by vehicle-arrester
barriers.

The order came from the Western
Region office of the NSW Police,
based at Dubbo and was relayed to
Humphreys the week prior to the event.

The official notification advised that
the region requires from the organisers
“a 12 metre run-off with no obstacles,
or full motor vehicle-arrester barriers
for the entire length on both sides of
the roadway.”

The requirement was to “reduce the
threat of serious injury or death to
competitors, officials, spectators and
other members of the general public.”

Pine Forest Ban in Victoria
Victoria is the second state to be
affected by a restriction on rallying
activities after Hancock Victorian
Plantations invoked an almost
unworkable policy that could see the
end of the sport in the state’s softwood
plantations.

The new policy, proposed by
Hancock Victorian Plantations’ Ovens District
Manager Neil Churton, makes it almost
impossible for clubs or individuals
to run events in forests under their
jurisdiction.

In one sweep, it has prohibited
the use of softwood plantations in
the north east of Victoria for rallying
or testing use unless a number of
restrictions have been
made by director Graeme Humphreys
after police insisted that the entire
length of the route of the rally (on both
sides) be bordered by vehicle-arrester
barriers.

The order came from the Western
Region office of the NSW Police,
based at Dubbo and was relayed to
Humphreys the week prior to the event.

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the region requires from the organisers
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The next step that I need
to take is to focus on getting
my driving more natural –
at the moment, driving is
a lot of work and I need to
concentrate hard. It needs
to come naturally, without
trying too hard.”

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POISON’S SIXTH SENSE
Subaru made a clean sweep of the
AustinDuct Rally of Melbourne, as both
Possum Bourne and Cody Crocker
retained their Australian Championship
titles. It was Bourne’s sixth straight title.

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DEFENDING CHAMPS WIN
It was a day for
defending champions
when the 2001 Australian
Safari finished in Darwin. First in the
auto division were 2000 winners
Bruce Garland and Harry Suzuki in an
unlimited category (modified) Holden
Jackaroo, their result giving them a
record fourth victory. Andrew Caldecott
(KTM 660 Rallye) took out the moto
division for the second year.

They had covered more than
4000km during eight days of competition,
running from Alice Springs to Darwin.

ARC ROUND FOR SYDNEY
New South Wales looks certain
to regain a round of the Australian
Rally Championship Super Series in
2002 after being given the nod by
the Australian Rally Commission (ARC).

The proposed new event, which will
replace the Coffs Harbour round lost
two years ago, has been awarded
to a company to be formed by Rally of
Melbourne Clerk of Course, Glenn
Cuthbert, and will most likely run in
March.

To be called the Harbour City Rally,
the event only needs ratification from
the Board of CAMS to get the green
light. Insiders see this as being purely
a formality and plans are already
being drawn up by the Victorian
team to get the rally up and running.
Robert Duggan was the best placed junior driver on the 2016 Manx Rally in his Vauxhall Adam R2.
The ex-TTE Freddy Loix Celica GT-Four that is now residing in Australia.

- Akademos Rally
- Rally Catalunya
- Wales Rally GB
- Rally of Malaysia
- Targa High Country
- and much more!

FULL PREVIEW
* Driver profiles
* Entry list
* Rally Australia memories
* and much more

AVAILABLE NOVEMBER 10
at www.rallysportmag.com.au or www.issuu.com