

Rally News

* Winter Alcan - Rallymaster Jerry Hines considers the 2008 event to be a great event. His staff not only was competent, but stepped up with the right actions when required. That took a load off of him. Somewhat mixed feelings about how the rough-and-tumble image has been tamed by the excellent equipment available and road improvements over the years. Families - father-daughter and husband-wife - made up a high proportion of the teams.

All 24 rally vehicles finished, although Kevin Barrows (Sweep) had to head home when his Dodge's front differential had bearing failure. The Breazeales' Audi croaked its transmission, so they selected a rig from Jerry's fleet to replace it, only to discover a leak that couldn't be fixed in time. They switched to a Forester that was OK until the turbo failed toward the end.

There were a multitude of winners. The pencil-and-paper folks trying to beat each other and hoping to top the computer crowd. 2WD vs. AWD. Most of the memories (and urge to return) will be based on the good group that participated. They all took pictures, too. Links available at <http://www.alcan5000.com/>. Probably 2000 pictures if you wade through all the links.

* Thunderbird Rally 2008 by Ron Sorem

Merritt-Kamloops-Merritt, British Columbia.
February 9-10, 2008.

The West Coast Rally Association and Rally Master Paul Westwick presented Round One of the BC TSD (Time-Speed-Distance) Rally Championship. Quoting from the introduction: "The Thunderbird Rally is a winter driving adventure through snow and ice covered back roads in the British Columbia interior. Following the Thunderbird route is simple, but staying out of the snow banks is not."

Teams competed with the weather and "just getting there"; due to the avalanche danger on BC's Highway 5, The Coquihalla Toll Highway was closed.

Adversity struck at last year's winners, Satch Carlson and Russ Kraushaar, slated at Car 1, as mechanical difficulties prevented the team from getting to Canada. Car 2 was the returning 2003 winning team of brothers Lee and Rod Sorenson from California. Car 3, Glenn Wallace ('04, '05), this time with R.Dale Kraushaar, intent on another win, but also in preparation for their run

in the next week's Alcan Winter Rally. Car 4, fresh from their Totem 2007 win, were Jason Webster and Brandon Harer, our Oregon Team on Fire, from the Portland area. Car 5 was former Pacific Coast Challenge champion team of Jeff McMillen and Marvin Crippen.

The rest of the field was packed with former Thunderbird winners. Of the 39 starting teams, fewer than a dozen have not been on Thunderbird before -- a testament to the draw of this prestigious event.

Our route was north, climbing out of the valley. Twisting along 97C to Logan Lake and the start of the first regularity. "Tunkwa Lake" covered 46-km with conditions ranging from wet pavement to shaded bank-to-bank snow. At 33-km a lazy-T-left took teams along a scenic winding gradual climb, before an acute right and the steep drop down to Savona.

A short transit west, then the hairpin climbs up and down Sabiston Creek Road, for "Red Lake Regularity". Tranquille to Kamloops was covered by melting snow, a bit "slippy", and a bit narrow when meeting the big Kenworth gravel trains.

Fuel and snacks before "North Kamloops Transit" -- along the Thompson River plateau. "Westside Regularity" climbs gradually, to finish with a drop through hairpins, ending in a very tight acute-left at Barriere.

40-km later, with conditions ranging from bare to snow-covered, a crossroads marked the beginning of "Adams Lake Regularity", climbing above the lake, with the occasional hairpin crossing a creek. Speeds increased to 65-km/h at pavement, slowing again for Adams Lake village and the end of section.

36-km "Loakin Bear Regularity" climbs quickly, then spends 8-km twisting through a narrow cut in the forest. The road opens to two lanes and follows Loakin Creek to the Thompson River. At 19.63-km the speed drops to 36-km/h and the road drops through a series of icy hairpins (collecting customers for Sweep along its route). The remainder of the section follows the river to Pritchard's one-lane bridge.

At Highway 1, competitors continued through Martin Prairie and the 14-km "Duck Range Regularity" with its early CP and hairpin. The speeds increased as the road changed from paved

to gravel (of course!) with the last 7-km at 60-km/h.

A short run down Highway 97, then 26-km of "Robbins Range Regularity". As in past years, there was plenty of snow -- back roads or main roads. Finally, bare pavement on Highway 1 to Kamloops and dinner.

The addition of "Time Allowance" requests is new to Thunderbird -- several creative writing workshops must have been held during transit sections. The result slowed scoring -- eventually Saturday results listed Webster/Harer with 7 points, followed by the Sorenson brothers with 11, and Wallace/Kraushaar with 17. Paul Eklund and Kala Rounds led Calculator class with 22. Gil Stuart and Chris Peake led Historic with 64. Gavin Aitken and Todd Dunlop led Novice with 127. Father-Daughter team of Alan and Emma Perry led Paper (SOP) class with 217.

Day Two got off to a rousing start north of Kamloops, on deep snow, through Lac du Bois, Walking Creek, O'Conner Lake, and Jamieson Main roads. Snow depth was ever-increasing, with radio chatter including the phrase "is the emergency exit road passable" referring to a pending last-minute option around deep, impassable snow -- fortunately the answer was "yes" although the emergency route was not needed...

Our CP allowed us to backtrack into Kamloops to leapfrog the rally for our next location. A misprint in the routebook was "caught" by the rallymaster as Course Opening, and an impromptu "Route Control" was set up -- something not defined in BC rallying. We took over R/C duties and succeeded in stopping all but one running competitor with the updated information. As a result, we assumed "Fast Sweep" duties as the Sweep Crew was "busy" and over an hour behind.

"Twig Creek Regularity" covered 55.46-km of snowy twists and undulations, with a couple of photo-op hairpins. One hairpin "named" for a Seattle driver. We followed the last car through the section until the first big hairpin, an acute-left -- the car went straight. Expecting this to result in an "off course" at best, an "off" at worst, with no Sweep, we followed, attempting to gain their attention -- which we did, just short of the spot where this shortcut regained the rally route at a checkpoint -- both of us continued onto the course. Unfortunately, as we stopped to pass the time-of-day with the CP, the Novice Crew took

another off course excursion for several more minutes. They did recover and rejoined the rally.

"Peter Hope Regularity" covered 32.72-km. Five CP greeted 32 teams, assessing very few overall points.

"Minnie Lake Regularity" covered a varying route -- tight and twisting uphill, then deep-banked snow undulating through the area of "mini lakes" (in warmer conditions) and bright snowfields, becoming wide, fast, but slippery two-lane at 63-km/h, out to gravel and hairpins dropping to Nicola Lake.

Results at Merritt put Webster/Harer (OR) in First Overall/First Unlimited with 20 points; Sorenson/Sorenson (CA) Second with 25; Wallace/Kraushaar (WA/AZ) Third with 31. First Calculator to Josh Keatly and Christa Monasch (AB/AB) with 64, followed very closely by Eklund/Rounds (OR) with 67. First Historic in the 1967 Volvo 123GT was Stuart/Peaks (BC). First Novice to Karl Nylund and Shane Annandale (BC/BC) with 220. First Paper (SOP) to Perry/Perry (WA) with 327. Full results and photos at www.rallybc.com

<http://www.tsdroadrally.com/>

* DooWop Rally Series 2008 by Ron Sorem

Aberdeen WA. Feb 23 & 24, 2008. Team Vanquish and the Pacific Rally Group presented Doo Wop 1 & 2, a pair of regional rallies sanctioned by NASA Rally Sport, in the woods of the Quinault Nation, the Montesano Watershed, Grays Harbor and Pacific counties.

Winter storms left a path of downed trees and deep snow for the Crane Creek "mountain stages", causing a revision of the Saturday schedule, similar to 2007. Access was limited to less than two miles from the Start, and less than four from the Finish. "Taholah" would be all of Doo Wop 1. Two runs to the clockwise loop and one reverse, each separated by Service in Taholah.

For the first time in recent memory, the rain wasn't coming at you sideways! In fact, as the tide ebbed in the bay, a calm and warm (relatively) feeling blanketed the village. Raincoats and parkas gave way to light sweats and tees. Very un-Doo Wop. Competition was very Doo Wop -- rockin' all the way to near 10-minute-flat times for the freshly graded, but soon to be rutted web of roads through the reservation.

The Car Zero Chronicles continued, with Lee Sorenson bringing the Impreza RS Wagon up from Sacto, and Ron Sorem bringing down the old white Leggy Turbo, fresh from [Alcan Winter Rally](#) work (leaving the caged RX at home). We ran as "0" and "00" joined again by semi-permanent co-drivers Walt and Zoe Wendolowski from Salem. We managed to get every stage opened without "our" delaying anything -- some administrative delay put one minute on Taholah One that couldn't be recaptured. Allowing the spectator circus to trickle into Taholah Spectator caused another 20 minutes or so for Taholah Two. A "local from nowhere" delayed Taholah Three, arriving from within the stage only seconds before Car 0 was to leave. The search for his access to the stage delayed us further -- still no one knows from whence he came, and he didn't stick around to explain.

Jay Woodward used Jason Grahn's local knowledge to fly his Mazda Protege AWD to fastest time on Taholah One. Dave Hintz, with John Ford aboard the WRX, broke mid-stage and limped to Service, missing the second running, but setting fast time on T3 at 10:19 -- taking a DNF for the Day. Peter VanBogart and Mike Barber took the Cascade AutoSports PGT WRX to second fastest on T1, and fastest on the T2 run, at 10:09, chased closely by the Burress brothers Group 2 Rabbit at 10:34. VanBogart would follow Hintz on T3 by 14 seconds. John Lane teamed with Ray Damitio in the Group 5 Volvo 262, pushing the "Blue Brick" to third best time on T1, only one second back. Mark Tabor and Ben Bradley (still getting the feel of PGT, still with "tunes cranked up" in the car) took the Silverstone WRX to third best time on T3, only 7 seconds back of VanBogart.

For the first NW rally of the year, the shakedown took seven cars to the trailer. Exhaust, suspension, tires, road rash... First Overall, First PGT was VanBogart/Barber in the new black Subaru. Second OA, First Open was Woodward/Grahn, 42 back. Third Overall, First G2 -- with a 10-second road penalty keeping them from 2nd OA -- Tom and Don Burress. (Who says baby-blue isn't tough?). Lane/Damitio took Fifth, First G5, exactly one minute back of the leader. The lone Production entry, Ian MacPherson and Mark Nelson were thwarted on T3 in the Mister Two and DNF'd.

Good pizza, good stories, and good friends were plentiful at the party.

Doo Wop 2 brought the usual "How do we get crew cars from Aberdeen to Oakville without the drive back on Sunday night" exercise, for rally cars and workers alike... We did it by driving from the motel to Montesano Service then back tracking to Blue Slough Start. We would later move from Service to Oakville Grange, before Brooklyn.

Blue Slough started one minute late for some unknown reason, and one car withdrew between the Headquarters Start and Blue Slough ATC. The chicanes were tight but the tarmac was still fast. The first run wasn't marred by corner cutting gravel spread across it -- second run saw one spin on the marbles. (Being careful not to "Race through the Woods", I kept the Legacy at a sedate 80 for Car 00). Not bound by the same tenants, the Burress Brothers Blue Bunny flew through Blue Slough at 3:18 and 3:14 -- beating Open Class Hintz/Ford by 4- and 3-seconds. Fast average speed with five tight chicanes, 4.16 miles flag-to-flag, was 77.196 mph. "Slow Pace" averaged 58.047... not racing.

Pico Left and Pico Right were in great shape. First run was Pico Left, the 9.42-mile counter clockwise loop, with the opening downhill twisties very fast, although the entire route was covered with fir boughs and a bit surreal, as if driving on grass. The second run (clockwise) was quick, 9.51 miles, with the long flat stretch from Start allowing good speed before the first twists. The hairpins (in the shade) were rutted from the first run, but not anything unusual. "Spectator" however was originally the 3-inch "Weyerhaeuser pea gravel", but now was just rutted very deep into the clay, and very slippery. Dave Hintz took fastest time on both "technical" runs with 11:02 and 11:19 (51.23 and 50.42 mph).

Brooklyn West started without any further delays, and was very fast as usual. The first run was uneventful and great fun... Again I kept "Slow Pace" under 80. We had to reposition a couple of Marshal vehicles, but in general this was a walk in the park. From the feel of the road, the record of 6:33 might be in jeopardy. Fast time West was Hintz's WRX with 7:03 -- looks can be deceiving. The Burress's 7:05 was a new Group 2 record!

Smith Creek West was fast too. A driver bulletin was issued for "Very slippery in the shaded areas", per the Event Steward, John Forespring. The freshly graded sections were smooth, but loose. The turn-around stage went off on schedule, with fairly good radio

communications, finally, via one relay at mid-point. There was one mechanical DNF which was swept to a safe spot and left to spectate...

Smith Creek East had some confusion over the Start location (sign in the wrong spot -- odo from ATC to Start was short -- corrected by Course Opening). Communications again needed a relay, but Course Opening was allowed to finish before anyone started cars this year. John Lane and Ray Damitio set fastest time both directions in the Group 5 Volvo.

Brooklyn East was delayed, for Public Safety. As a result of the delay, nearly all cars were backed up outside the control zone and Co-Drivers walked in to declare their times. Once the road was re-opened, "Advance", Car 00, and Car 0 left quite close together. 00 had to stop several times as Advance cleaned up debris and banner, and moved the same Marshal from the earlier run. We had to stop once for banner down, probably windblown, and 0 had to wait just above the downhill hairpins. We reached Flying Finish about 20-seconds apart, with "Stage is Hot" emanating from the radio. Dave Hintz and John Ford put down a 6:57 as top time, to finish the day with 54:30 total, but John Lane and Ray Damitio presented a 7:06 record Group 5 run to take First Overall for the Series. Josh vonAhlenfeld and Tim Wright took the 2008 Novice Class Overall Championship in the Group 2 VW GTI.

Complete stage times, and final results at doowoprally.com with further information on [The Historic Brooklyn Tavern](http://TheHistoricBrooklynTavern.com) site.

"00" out....

* The Rallymaster's Perspective: Raindrop Rally, by Steve Richards

Why would someone from a club that favors brisk snow or gravel TSD rallies want to design a trappy event? Raindrop is traditionally an all-paved rally, using suburban roads where kids, dogs, Sunday drivers, and other local activity tend to transform the kind of driving we normally enjoy into what one might arguably categorize as anti-social behavior. Furthermore, a high percentage of the suitable roads within a 100-mile radius of Seattle have been used so often, that to lay out another low speed tour just didn't appeal to me -- not this year anyway. So, with that in mind, I set out to try my hand at a somewhat tricky event although using the section

instruction format that is most familiar to all of us that run the TSD Monte-Carlo style rally.

After some effort, I believe that all of the more challenging traps have been designed to be self-correcting, i.e. you should find yourself back on course... sooner or later...with some time error, of course, just to make it interesting. All being said, I don't think that Raindrop will be any more difficult than your average Friday Nighter, just a bit longer. (But then what do I know? I haven't run a Friday Nighter in years.)

Another deviation from the standard theme this year is to make extensive use of the Do-It-Yourself (DIY) checkpoint. Yes, I can hear the moans. DIY checkpoints certainly have no place on the brisk "loose surface" rallies where not only precise navigation is the order of the day, but also skilled and accurate driving plays a major part and there is much satisfaction in being timed across the line with a zero. But on a tricky rally, where many an intersection must be carefully considered before proceeding, a certain element of the aforementioned anti-social behavior can quickly come into play. Believe me -- I've been there.

So, with that in mind, I feel that liberal use of the DIY concept will allow the ralliest to take whatever time is necessary to decipher the route and allow for lost time when determining the correct passage time for checkpoints, all the while avoiding the kids, dogs, and Sunday drivers. This also precludes the need for the dreaded time allowance ("dreaded" is my word, not RASC's). In order to keep the rally schedule under control, only the first checkpoint in each section will be manned and very obvious.

So we will see how it goes and a poll will be taken at the event's finish. We hope to see you there. A flyer will be released very soon and registration will open in early April.

Club News

Dues remain the same as last year: \$30 for a Family Membership, \$25 for Single.

Trivia

* Arguably, most used item in your first aid kit is aspirin or some other painkiller. The other items come under the heading of "If I have it, I won't need it". Check the expiration dates on those pills in your kit.

* Mike and Gretchen Jones are considering "retirement life" this summer. Steve Richards may catch the same bug.

*Kevin Barrows did an excellent job cutting reflective "snowflakes" for Alcan. He'll be cutting graphics for new RASC CP signage if he can get a good price on blue material.

For Sale

* Nokian HakkaQ for sale. NEW, never mounted, one never out of the bag... 205/55-16. Fits Subaru Impreza RS 2.5. Two for sale, perfect for 2wd car. Studless snowtire. Top of the Nokian line, but replaced by the WR. \$100 for the pair, to a good home. 206-954-3173

ronsorem @ [gmail.com](mailto:ronsorem@gmail.com)

* '04 Forester XT, Blizaks, 76K, \$11,300. Also with Blizaks, '88 Audi 80, black, \$14K. Jerry Hines, 206-227-6343

*Jerry also has an Outlander available, but its in Jasper.

2007 RASC Calendar

* Check out the on-line magazine for local rallyists. Its part of the NWRC website.
<http://www.nwrally.com/>

Stage Rally

Apr 17-20- Olympus International, RallyAmerica, Olympia WA
Apr 19- John Nagel Memorial Regional Stage Rally Olympia WA
Apr 20- Gene Nielsen Memorial Stages, Regional Stage Rally Olympia WA
May 16-18- Oregon Trail, RallyAmerica National Stage Rally, Hillsboro OR

NWRC scheduled 8 Friday Nighters

Second Friday in March through October.

March 14 is ORCA

April 11 is PSRC

May 9 is ORCA

June 13 is NWRC

July 11 is PSRC

August 8 is ORCA

September 12 is NWRC

October 10 is RASC

Major rally events

Aug 2 Great Race World 35,000km Rally New York-Vancouver-Shanghai-Berlin-Paris (150 cities with stop in Kelowna BC, and familiar points en-route to Vancouver BC)

WASH and BC TSD

March 29 ? Precipitation Falling by the Soggy Bottom Rally Club, Gig Harbor WA

Apr 6 Flapdoodle Express, Chuckanut SCC,

April Fool's Gimmick Rally, Bellingham WA

Apr 27 Raindrop TSD, by RASC, Everett WA

Jun 5-8 ? 16th Annie and Steve Norman

Classic Motorcar Rally, (TBA) WA

Jun 7-8 No Alibi by RASC, Ellensburg -- Walla Walla