

Rally News

Raindrop Rally 2006 by Ron Sorem

Clinton, WA. April 23, 2006. Rainier Auto Sports Club presented a nautical themed Raindrop by Rallymaster Steve Richards. No foul weather gear needed for this event, under blue skies with spectacular views, setting course around Whidbey Island, loosely following the route of the HMS Discovery, with Captain George Vancouver at the helm in 1792.

Instructed to "Cast Off", rally teams embarked on another Rainier tour, looking forward to moderate speeds on great roads (with only a brief and slow section of gravel). Leaving Clinton's Dan Porter Memorial Park, above Possession Sound, the 11.51-mile Odo Check runs a zig-zag (tacking) course across the southern tip of Whidbey to Dave Mackie Memorial Park.

Overlooking Admiralty Inlet, the rally moves north along Useless Bay, with a detailed explanation of the Compass Rose, so called for its "resemblance to the petals of a rose". Rallymaster Richards also explained the naming of this body of water, deemed "useless" as an anchorage. A brief run along the Island Highway, east, then north again at moderate speeds to Langley, on Saratoga Passage, overlooking the south tip of Camano Head and Pebble Beach. The TSD continues along Saratoga passing Bells Beach, looping around to Fox Spit and East Point, before a brief 4-mile Transit south to Freeland, with views of the Cascade Mountains to the east, and the Olympic Mountains to the west. This 1900-era experiment in socialism and "free land" provided a welcome break at another of Island County's beautiful parks at the south end of Holmes Harbor.

Speeds remained in the 25-, 35-, and 45-mph range with just a couple of brief sections at 50 of under two miles and under one mile. Lighthearted route instructions pointed out one of many Whidbey vintners, Greenbank Cellars Winery's turn-of-the-century trademark barn, "off your port side". Surely they have Port among all their labels; on the left for all the lubbers.

Continuing past North Bluff, then west to the Island Highway for a .92-mile run at 50, then west to the "beach" on Admiralty Bay and a bit of history about Admiralty Head Light, Fort Casey activated in 1900, and the Crockett Blockhouse circa 1857. The TSD continues to Ebey's Landing Park where Port Townsend can be seen approximately 4 miles to the southwest, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, due west. Ebey's Landing National Historic Reserve was the first historic reserve established by the National Park Service.

Transiting north, the rally enters the oldest town on the island, Coupeville, with a brief history lesson on settlement attempts versus "those pesky Skagit Indians" as early as 1848.

"Rosario Strait" TSD skirts Penn Cove, leaving Coupeville, then a fast .30-mile stint on the highway at 35. Bearing north, then to the water at West Beach and a brisk 50-mph section to Joseph Whidbey State Park and skirting Naval Air Station Whidbey Island's Ault Field. This base is home to the Grumman E-6 Prowler electronic warfare squadrons, Naval Air Reserve training, and Naval Search and Rescue. A sign on the highway reads "The Sound of Freedom" referring to the "very regular" departures and arrivals of Naval aircraft. A few miles south and east of Oak Harbor the rally overlooks the Naval seaplane base in Crescent Harbor. A thorough explanation of "Ships Bells" timing, points out that Car Zero begins the next section at 4 bells plus 5 minutes (14:05).

"Skagit Bay" TSD keeps the water off starboard beam early, then through the woods, including "old-growth" demonstration forest for wetlands research and forest management. Skirting the water again, Skagit Bay affords great views toward La Conner, Mount Vernon, and snow-capped Mt. Baker before looping south and west to Highway 20 and north for the crossing of Deception Pass bridge, nearly 180 feet above the water.

North of Deception Pass, Rosario Beach Road takes crews to the start of "Fidalgo Island" TSD. This 6.15-mile Regularity provided the last opportunity to "add to one's score" with two hidden controls. 2.44 miles later, the rally reported to Village Pizza in Anacortes. No one was forced to walk the plank.

Congratulations to Pat Biggar and Jack Heppes as First Overall and First Unlimited with a total of only 14 points. First Equipped and Second Overall with 34, to Don Gibson and Mike Workman. First SOP to Hal Dittman and Susan Everett with 51. First Novice to Derek Mitchell and Mathew Brucker with 138.

Raindrop 2006 covered 116.37 miles in 5 hours 5 minutes, with 31 finishing. A bit more than a "three hour tour", but a good time was had by all.

Complete results at www.rainierautosports.com

Raindrop, by Dan Comden

The rally went very smoothly, esp. considering the large number of novices. There were lots of not-Subaru's present, including some roadsters that got double thumbs up from the shortest CP worker, my 6 year old.

The only car that regularly had trouble staying on course was one of the Canadian entries, and they'd arrived too late for the novice talk. But at least they seemed to be smiling at the end of the event.

Steve must've sacrificed extravagantly to the rally gods, as the weather and scenery could not have been any lovelier for this time of year. The only downside was the large number of tourists at the Deception Pass bridge taking up all eleven parking spots.

Vince did an amazing job wrangling the workers and providing detailed route and travel information (including multiple photos of each CP location) that guaranteed crews would be where they were needed with plenty of time. With limited CP opps, we couldn't hide well, though I think we did ok in our first location, a wide gravel spot/driveway on a corner. Our second CP was on a dike so we didn't try to hide at all.

Right on the water, we had a stunning view across the strait to Mt. Baker. Even better, we were under the approach lane for Whidbey NAS and got to watch a variety of aircraft swoop overhead.

The finish location was Village Pizza in downtown Anacortes. They had *just* enough room for us all, and mostly managed to get everyone food in a timely fashion.

Thanks to the Raindrop 2006 Workers: Steve Willey & Kim Prater, Mark & Suzie Weber, Kirk & Terry Simons (and family), Eric & Diana Horst (and family), Dan & Fritz Comden, Doug and Vicki Breithaupt (and family), Ken & Sue Lingbloom, Marvin Crippen & Jessica Fleenor, Vince Plancich, Steve Richards, Mark Nolte, Mike Jones.

* Oregon Trail (April 22/23) notes- Ron Sorem and Mark Nolte were the only RASC members present. Ron was Car Zero, following Rich Olmstead (advance car). Then a faster car (00), and finally Pace Car. Apparently Ron did his best to throw some rocks at the Spectators, so they'd know what to expect when the competitors started throwing boulders. Applause is good!

The Washington contingent made up of one of the 3 stage crews. 59 starters, which became about 42 finishers. -MN

* Coast-to-Coast (Vancouver Island) April 29-30 (from Brian Carriere, Chair of the event) "At last count I was aware of 7 flats affecting competitors, checkpointers and sweep, I'm sure there were more. After a bit of Sunday morning welding on car 14 and a couple loaned tires to car 16, everyone got home on their own power! "

1st Overall Satch Carlson / Russ Kraushaar

2nd Overall Jeff McMillen / Marvin Crippen
3rd Overall Jason Webster / Brandon Harer
1st Calc Martin Chung / Christa Monasch
1st Novice Jay & Alyse Young
1st Paper Steve Perret / Kathryn Hansen

* No Alibi (June 3-4) Ten entries on the Website as of 5/3/06.

* Alcan: The entry list still looks like 14+ cars and 43+ motorcycles. But that was hours ago...

* Olympus May 20/21: The rally starts off on Thursday (18th) with a Press Stage. Friday is devoted to recce, a new concept in these forests, with the foresters wondering what to expect, as well as the rallyists. The idea is to let the stages be driven by the rallyists, with dark threats about what can happen if caught exceeding very slow allowed speeds.

RASC been handed a stage off of Highway 8, about a half-mile east of the ORV park. It runs twice, at 11:07 and 13:03. That has it alternating with the ORV Park Superstages. From there, the rally does the old Summit Lake stage (access from Hwy 101), and "something" south over the hills to get to the HQ at the Little Creek Casino.

Sunday features the long Nahwahtzel stage. Tom Palidar is looking for workers to join Team Seattle. It also runs in the morning. In the 26-mile version, it takes a long time to get set up.

Club News

* Check the RASC website for exciting updates.
<http://www.rainierautosports.com/>

TRIVIA

* Wholesome road food? Ron Sorem offered me some sliced apples at a rally last fall. Very good, but then, he spends time in Wenatchee where the good apples live.

It later dawned on me that sliced apples are brown. They turn brown before the knife is put away. These looked fresh and wholesome!

Ron had discovered a new product! Marketed under the "Crunch Pak" name, an outfit in Cashmere is processing apples and selling them mostly in lunch box size bags. Now available at Costco in big (what else?) 8-pack bin, they keep as well as fresh apples, so long as refrigerated.

On a mission, I got some under the "Chiquita" brand at QFC (packed with caramel dipping sauce) and saved them for Oregon Trail. Unfortunately, they were past their due date, and tasted it, although looked good. -MN

RASC Calendar

Stage events in italics

- May 7 ORG SCCA 2006 Rally Cross #2 of 8,
Oregon Rally Group
- May 12 Friday Nighter -ORCA Bellevue
- May 13-14 Heart of Darkness, BC Regional TSD
over-night Coquihalla region
- May 13 The Oregon Trailblazer, Cascade, Road Rally
(Course), OR
- May 18-21 Olympus International Rally
NASA/USAC/FIA, Shelton WA*
- May 26 Friday Night Road Rally, Portland OR
- Jun 3-4 No Alibi - RASC (Wenatchee-North
Central WA)**
- Jun 8-11 13th Annie & Steve Norman Classic
Motorcar Rally, Lk Crescent Lodge, WA
- Jun 9 Friday Nighter -PSRC, Bellevue
- Jun 11 ORG SCCA 2006 Rally Cross #3 of 8
Oregon Rally Group
- Jun 11 Nooksack Nonsense, CSCC, TSD,
Bellingham
- Jun 16 Night Road Rally, Portland OR
- Jun 16-17 Mountain Trials, WCRA, BC Regional
Stage Rally*
- Jun 23-25 Performance Rally Driving School
Washington County Fairplex, Hillsboro OR*
- Jun 23-25 Columbia Gorge Classic Rallye, Columbia
Gorge MGA Club, Portland OR
- Jun 24 Rallycross, Team Vanquish
location TBA near Olympia WA
- Jul 1 Grand Prix Imports Rally Against Parkinson's,
SCCA Regional Tour, Portland
- Jul 2 SCCA 2006 Rally Cross #4 of 8 with all club
party @PIR ORG, Portland
- Jul 8-9 Golden West 2005 (PCC series) Yreka, CA
- Jul 14 Friday Nighter -ORCA, Bellevue
- Jul 15 or 8/26 Mountains To Sea, Cascade, Touring
TSD, Portland
- Jul 15 Sno-git NWRC Monte Carlo Series
ORCA, Marysville
- Jul 21 Friday Night Road Rally Portland, OR
- Jul 22 Gold Digger (BC Regional TSD) (may move
to late Aug/Sept) Pemberton, BC
- Jul 29 Brooklyn Bash Rallycross, Team Vanquish,
Rallycross, Brooklyn, WA
- Aug 4-6 Performance Rally Driving School
Thurston County ORV Park, Olympia, WA*
- Aug 5-6 Rally Worker RallySprint, Pacific Rally
Group, ORV Park
- Aug 10-13 Monte Shelton North West Classic
Motorcar Rally, Portland, OR
- Aug 11 Friday Nighter, Bellevue
- Aug 12 Ray's Rambler Pacific Rally Group Rally
Worker's Rally Sprint Party, Montesano, WA*
- Aug 13, Janice's Jaunt, PRG, Rally Worker's Rally
Sprint/ Party, Montesano,*
- Aug 12 Beaver Goes to Mars SCCA National Road
Rally (Course), Centralia/Chehalis
- Aug 13 Bob Goes to Town SCCA National Road
Rally (Course) Centralia/Chehalis
- Aug 14-22 Alcan5000, Kirkland-Dawson-
Anchorage**
- Aug 18 Friday Night Road Rally, Portland, OR
- Aug 19 Tsunami, IRC TSD night, paved, Vanc. Is.
Series #3 Naniamo, BC
- Aug 26 or 7/15 Mountains To Sea, Cascade
Touring TSD, Portland, OR
- Aug 20 Western Whatcom Wobble, Chuckanut
Sports Car Club, Bellingham, WA
- Sep 8 Friday Nighter - NWRC, Bellevue
- Sep 8-10 Wild West International Rally
NASA/USAC/FIA, Shelton, WA*
- Sep 15 Friday Night Road Rally, Portland, OR
- Sep 17 Ketchum Again II, Monte Carlo Series,
Puget Sound Rally Club (location tba) WA
- Sep 22-24 Performance Rally Driving School
w/RallyX, Portland, OR*
- Sep 24 "Churn and Turn" Primitive Rallycross,
Portland, OR
- Sep 30 -- Oct 1 Maryhill Loops Hilleclimb,
Goldendale, WA
- Oct 7 Night on Bald Mountain, ORCA night TSD
- Oct 8 ORG SCCA 2006 Rally Cross #3 of 8,
Oregon Rally Group
- Oct 13 Friday Nighter - RASC, Bellevue**
- Oct 21 Mt Hood Rally, ORG Regional Stage Rally
(Hood River) Odell, OR*
- Oct 27 Friday Night Road Rally, Portland, OR
- Oct 28 Ghouls Gambol XL, Cascade
Halloween TSD Portland, OR
- Oct 28 Midnight, night gravel TSD, Vanc. Is.
Series #4 Duncan BC
- Nov 4 Armageddon XXIV, TSD, Bellingham WA
- Nov 10 Friday Nighter- ORCA Bellevue
- Nov 18-19 Totem, WCRA, (PCC series)

Rainier Auto Sports Club

will meet this coming Monday, May 8 at 7:30 PM at Café Veloce at the Totem Lake shopping center. Best way I can think of to get there is north on I-405, take the "NE 124th" exit, then keep right under NE 124th and straight at the signal. This puts you on Totem Lake Blvd, not whatever the frontage road is next to I-405. Then right first poss, with the Café on your right at that point. Monthly meetings are the second Monday of each month. Past Members, visitors, and spectators are welcomed.

Agenda: There will be some Raindrop stories, as well as kudos to Steve Richards, and (in this group) thanks to Vince Planchich.

Less than a month to No Alibi. The WAG staff hasn't heard anything, so this meeting will be the best source.

Ed Millman can supply some details about Olympus.

Marvin and Jeff might be able to give some pointers on how the Coast-to-Coast is such fun.

We need to locate the RASC Banner, both for Olympus, and for No Alibi. Jones doesn't have it.

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