

## Rally News

Raindrop Rally 2008 - This year Raindrop departed from the usual Monte Carlo style TSD tour of previous years.

The 2008 Raindrop was a hybrid event, combining the familiar instruction format of the Monte Carlo tour (TSD section / Transit section) with the route-following challenges of the Friday Nighter or trap rally. This was perhaps a more difficult event than past Raindrop Rallies, yet the novices did okay. This was a great opportunity to test your chops on a more "trappy" event. The rally ran approximately 110 miles and 3-1/2 hours in length. Trophies were awarded in Unlimited, Equipped, SOP and Novice classes.

Yes, there were traps, however, only the first checkpoint in each TSD section was manned. All remaining checkpoints in that section were of the Do-It-Yourself variety reducing the urgency to make up lost time caused by careful route following. Traps were designed to be self-correcting. Mileages were given only sparingly and (when shown in parentheses) were to be considered as reference only due to the possibility of you having been on an off-course loop. The written instruction will always prevail.

Scores posted at  
<http://www.rainierautosports.com/events/2008/raindrop/>

### **2008 RAINDROP SYNOPSIS**

Section 2: The first occurred within sight of the checkpoint on Silvana Terrace Road and you may have been distracted enough to miss it and not do the speed change in the right place.

NRI 28, left after "10 FT 5 IN". If instead you went left after 10' - 5", you cut approximately 3 miles off the route and even after pausing 2.0 minutes, were still 30 seconds early at the Miller turn, and thus, most likely early at S&T Espresso.

S&T Espresso came up just after the turn ONTO Marine Drive and could easily have been missed if you weren't paying attention. The 0.25 minute pause should have given you time to look right and see it about 50 feet up the road.

If you forgot you were ONTO Marine Dr. you went straight immediately after the 24mph speed change (NRI 36) very little time penalty resulted either way.

Section 4: This section was fairly straight forward and had no route following traps. You needed to look carefully for the Camano Island Inn DIY but at least it was large. Also NRI 66 had you change down to 15mph from 33mph about 0.10 mile before the Speed Limit 15 sign so if you waited for the SL15 sign you would be about 13 seconds early to the Park DIY. This sort of "early" speed change also occurred at NRI 45 but the time penalty was slight.

Section 6: After leaving the park, you were directed TOWARD Highway 532. If you failed to follow Highway 532 by going left at the STOP (NRI 75), then you went straight and short-cut the route by approximately 20 seconds to the Driftwood Shores DIY which would have carried through to the Horse and Rider sign and "306" as well.

This was followed by a number of Right turns that might have been confusing if you didn't keep careful track of the turns.

Also, one of the rights was forced and shouldn't have been counted. If you missed the Horse and Rider sign the first time but saw it the second time around, and didn't put two and two

together, you would have been a little less than two minutes late here.

The last DIY in this section was a house number sign 306 right at the edge of the road, and while on the small side (maybe 18" x 6") and from a distance was slightly hidden by the greenery, should have been easily seen as you got within a couple of car lengths.

Section 8: As in Section 2, if you were distracted by the manned checkpoint in the 90 degree left curve, you may have missed the first and then as a result missed the railroad underpass 0.25 minute ITIS pause at 9FT 5 IN. You would have taken the next road to the left after and got back on course without realizing it at NRI 102. The rest of this section was fairly straight forward except for having to look carefully for DIY signs and count "left-right squiggles" The checkout crew implored me to make this easier as missing the first squiggle caused you to drive a long, long way off course. Therefore, I put in reference mileages.

Thank you all for participating and special thanks to the workers: from RASC; Eric Horst, Marvin Crippen, Dan Comden, Ron Sorem, Mark Nolte, and our good friends from the Chuckanut club; Ken and Sue Lingbloom and Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen.

Steve Richards, RM

\*No Alibi (June 7-8) The route is falling into place. Much more important is lining up motels - you heard it hear first. Ellensburg may be full, so try Cle Elum. The Tri-cities is 3 cities, each with motels, if you pick out motels with the Internet.

\* Olympus (April 19-20) The temperature in Pomeroy hovered around 33 degrees, unseasonably cold for that part of Washington in the spring. But it was dry, even dusty, so warm clothes combined with avoiding the breeze made it tolerable.

48 starters dwindled to about 40 finishers as mechanical ills intervened in the joys of open roads with very few trees to bump. Just as forest roads get compressed by the weight of heavy logging trucks, several decades of hauling wheat have made the surface hard and solid. When the breeze died on late Saturday afternoon, the later-running teams complained of visibility issues.

An odd rule came to light- no car can get a time faster than 80 mph average for a stage. The last stage scores had 22 cars with identical times. 79.98 mph.... Yes, it was fast.

Another odd sight was seeing the farmers driving across their field to get a better view of the rally. Then being joined by a neighbor.

All in all it was a pretty cool place to run a rally.

\* WE GO TO AN MGRALLY

By Dee Dahlke (driver) and Duncan Johnson  
(navigator)

Saturday, April 26 we attended the 27th annual Tulip Rally put on by the MG Car Club, Northwest Centre (<http://www.mgccnwc.com/>) We did not win. It's a gimmick rally similar to the All City Rally sponsored by our own club, Corvettes de Olympia. Indeed, we've never gone before because of date conflicts between the two rallies. The Tulip Rally ran through Skagit County, Washington, it was part of their local Tulip Festival, and drew 250+ cars, pretty amazing for a club that celebrates a marque which flunked out of the car business 30 years ago. We drove Dee's Miata, mostly because it hadn't been to a Sports Motoring event yet this spring and it is sort of a "Japanese MG." We hadn't pre-registered, arrived at 9:30 AM (first car out time) and we were car number 238!

Nearly every entrant was a Cool Car, primarily classic European sports cars: MG (of course, going back over 60 years,) Austin-Healey, Triumph, Morgan, Jaguar (XK-E plus the massive/elegant old "Mark" series sedans,) Porsche, Alfa-Romeo (including a way-cool "Junior Z" coupe which was never officially imported to the USA,) Fiat, old Mini, Saab Granturismo 850 in full 1963 Monte Carlo Rally trim (recall, Saab won overall that year) complete with vintage Halda Speed-Pilot rally computer and sounding like a chain saw with its ring-a-ding 2-stroke engine, and on and on. There was a fleet of their modern successors, too: Corvettes, Miatas, new Minis, Sky/Solstice, etc. We saw one mini-van, one Scion, and the only SUV present was an original Land-Rover "90" which was so old it looked like it might have fought against Rommel at El Alamein.

Duncan stepped out of the Miata and onto a huge fresh oil spill, slipped, and nearly sprained his ankle. The hazards of Olde English car meets! ("Why don't they manufacture stereo equipment in England?" "Because they haven't figured out how to make it leak oil.") Anyhow it was GREAT to see all those classics in action out on the road (and also smell their full pollution exhaust and other old car odors.) Much better than static displays at some cruise-in or show. Took us back to any sports car meet we'd attended a half-century ago, and that is goodness. Kind of like Civil War re-enactors doing Pickett's Charge, only with real bullets.

The route was fairly straightforward, scenic (Lake Samish, Chuckanut Drive, Fairhaven, etc.) and easy to follow, but many areas were a bit too "built-up" for sporting driving. There was a LOT of traffic in the historic areas and tulip-viewing areas, including bicycles. The roadside gimmicks were easy, although some were described with outrageous puns, quips, and plays on words, real "groaners." There were also "trivia question" gimmicks, which become a giveaway to those nerdy navigators who stop and Google on their Blackberries to get the answer. (Not us, we were Motoring.) The whole route took us 76 miles and a time of 3:15 to run. It was not a "long" rally because it was scenic and the gimmicks were easy. That included a stop at the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve where we had to answer clues about the scientific displays and other local details.

The finish was at some casino near Anacortes. You could picnic on the lawns amidst the car show if you brought lunch (we did) or eat inside. There was the usual raffle (one ticket per car) for the usual door prizes; we won a set of screwdrivers, thank goodness not the Hillary Clinton nutcracker, a monument to poor taste no matter what your

politics. Griot's Garage was there demonstrating their products to keep everyone entertained.

Now, exactly how DO you process 250 rally cars without a total organizational meltdown?

1. You don't take things too seriously. These people were as casual as their MG-driving grandparents were when their cars were new. Quite a change from the grimness of certain other marques' enthusiasts.
2. The start was in a disused corner of a shopping mall parking lot in Burlington. The registration table had 2 lines, pre-registered or not. If you preregistered, you were handed your materials such as GIs (one page!), car number, and a free Griot's product. If you hadn't pre-registered you filled in a short form, handed it in with \$15, and got your materials.
3. The loudspeaker was always announcing what car numbers should be on the starting grid, who should be getting into the pre-staging line leading to the grid, and who should be finding their keys to go next after that.
4. The impressive starting grid was FOUR LANES WIDE, straight and well coned-off. As you came down the pre-staged line a marshal waved you into one of the 4 grid lanes (not in any numerical order.) In EACH of the 4 lanes, another marshal handed you a clipboard and you signed the liability release. Then he painted your car number on the windshield with shoe polish. Somewhere along here we got our route instructions. At the start line another marshal told you your starting time (to the second) and told you to write it and your starting mileage on your score sheet. (The times and mileages were to be used for tie-breakers later.) Some lane launched a car about every 15 seconds and all 250+ cars were launched in a bit over an hour.
5. There was no tech inspection. One might presume that any vintage English car that started up and got to the staging area was as technically healthy as could be expected! Checking performance of electrical things would be impolite and a breach of faith. Side note: We did not see anyone welding on any of the vintage Jaguars; old Jaguar people are usually always welding something to get back into the action. We would prefer you didn't ask us how we know that.
6. As you might expect, the streets were FULL of rally cars at the start (what a sight!) but then the routes diverged into multiple courses, and we got spread out. Thinking back, we suspect there were no roadside clues in the areas where the routes were separated (instead you were answering gimmick trivia questions), but where there were roadside clues, that meant all cars were on the same route again in that area. There were no clues in the heavy traffic areas (like the tulip fields.) Great way to manage a lot of rally traffic.
7. There were no checkpoints, other than that stop at Padilla Bay. No fun-n-games there. No fake checkpoints. We kind of missed the checkpoint experience, but not having them helped the flow.
8. Scoring and awards. At the casino finish you wrote down your arrival time and mileage, handed in your paper, and proceeded to picnic and/or gamble. You had to finish within 3.5 hours of your start time or by 2:30 PM latest. There was a table with a lot of scorers, and we know things were double-checked. By about 3:00 PM everything was done and awards were announced. There were no overall placings nor scores

that we noticed. Instead, any club that pre-registered at least 3 cars was eligible for a trophy for its one car that did best.

There was an "open" class for non-club entrants. One trophy per winning car; MG has always celebrated the car, not the occupants. The trophies were very nice hand-made wooden plaques in the shape of an MG knockoff spinner for a Rudge-Whitworth wire wheel. That procedure eliminated the need to break massive ties.

Enough for the lessons learned. Would we do it again? You bet! (And we'd plan an alternate route home to dodge the traffic jams from masses of tulip viewers.) It was a fine rally, and everyone was happy. Plus, when you are suddenly immersed in a fleet of classic cars that you knew when they were new, you gain a new perspective of how significant those sports cars were when compared to the ambient junk sedans of their day. And you see how much cars have evolved; the old cars are so small (an MG-B is smaller than a Miata!) so slow, such hopelessly poor quality and reliability, and so primitive by today's standards. But in parallel we have lost something along the way. The old timers carry no excess junk that detracts from the sensations of driving the car, especially in sports motoring. No rain-sense wipers, no backup radar, no satellite radio, no GPS, no dorky windblockers (heck, no windows!) no air conditioned seats, etc. Hang the comfort, we LIKE rainwater in our ears!

Editor's note: Dee Dahlke and Duncan Johnson live in Puyallup, Wash., and enjoy restoring, driving, and showing their fleet of eight vintage and modern sports cars. They are active in Corvettes de Olympia, Puget Sound Miata Club, Club Miata Northwest, and are charter members of the Harold E. LeMay Museum.

### Club News

\*All 6 of the RASC Alfa clocks seem to have come home to roost in the clock box. In the process, the "synch" cable suffered a terrible amputation, however.

### Trivia

\* Since 1989, Ken and Sue Lingbloom have produced the "Howling Transmissions" newsletter for CSCC. The retired couple are refocusing their life to drinking beer and yardwork. The WAG staff wants to thank them for providing some of the best material worthy of reprinting!

### For Sale

\* Blowout Spring prices on Winter tires. Get them now before the price inflates: Nokian Hakka Q's. 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. \$100 for the pair, to a good home. 206-954-3173 ronsorem [@gmail.com](mailto:ronsorem@gmail.com)

\* '04 Forester XT, 76K, fresh turbo and windshield, \$10,450. ...or...

\* Fresh from Alcan, 2007 Outlander, pearl white, 22,000 mi. (38,000 still left on warranty), \$16,300 Jerry Hines, 206-227-6343

\* Goodyear Wrangler LT215/75R15 Tire (fits a Jeep Comanche), worth every bit of \$10. Will deliver for addn'l \$50. Mark Nolte, (425) 226-3155.

## 2007 RASC Calendar

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

### Stage Rally

May 16>18- Oregon Trail, Rally America, Hillsboro OR  
June 16>18- Mountain Trials, Merritt. B.C.  
July 11>12- Idaho Rally, Mountain Home, ID  
Sept 25>28- Wild West, probably Pomeroy  
Oct 16>18- Pacific Forest Rally, Merritt, B.C.  
Oct. 18- Mt Hood, Odell, OR

### Major rally events

Sep 13-20- Targa Newfoundland, St. John's, NL

### WASH and BC TSD

May 9- Friday Niter by ORCA, Bellevue  
May 11- Tsunami Rally, Duncan (?), Vancouver Island, B.C. (school on Saturday)  
Jun 5-8- 16th Annie and Steve Norman Classic Motorcar Rally, Port Ludlow, WA  
**Jun 7-8 - No Alibi by RASC, Ellensburg > < Tri-Cities**  
June 13- Friday Niter by NWRC, Bellevue  
June 21-22- Replace "Coast to Coast" with "Crestline Trail Rally" still IRC, but off-island... Osoyoos and the Kootenays.  
July 11- Friday Niter by PSRC, Bellevue  
July 26- Gold Digger TSD, Whistler, B.C.  
Aug 8- Friday Niter by ORCA, Bellevue  
Sept 12- Friday Niter by NWRC, Bellevue  
**Oct 10- Friday Niter by RASC, Bellevue**  
Nov 8- Monsters Revenge (previously known as: Armageddon), Chuckanut SCC, Bellingham

### Oregon TSD

Jun 6- Friday Niter, Milwaukie  
Jun 21- Columbia Gorge Classic, by Columbia Gorge MGA Club, Portland  
Jul 5- Rally Against Parkinson's, Portland Int'l Raceway  
Jul 11- Friday Niter, Milwaukie, OR  
Aug 15- Friday Niter, Milwaukie, OR  
Aug 16- Mountains to the Sea, Milwaukie, OR  
Aug 2-3- The Road Not Taken, McMinnville, OR (under the full moon, like it should be....)  
Aug 7-8 Monte Shelton Classic, Portland  
Sep 5- Friday Niter, Milwaukie  
Oct 3- Friday Niter, Milwaukie  
Oct 31>Nov 2- USRRC SCCA Nat'l rallies, Portland

**Rainier Auto Sports Club** will meet this coming Monday, May 12, 7:30 pm, at Canyon's Restaurant, 15740 Redmond Way in Redmond, 425-556-1390.

<http://www.canyonsrestaurant.com/locationsredmond.html>.

Agenda: Steve Richards will report on the Raindrop rally. Maybe some discussion of 16-car events.. No Alibi rally plans will be presented and discussed.

**2008 Board Members:**

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 **The Wishbone Alley Gazette**

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