

Rally News

* 2010 Alcan 5000 Rally, by Ron Sorem

Kirkland WA to Anchorage AK (the hard way)... August 16 to 24, 2010. Seven cars and fourteen motorcycles departed Kirkland, in near record high temperature weather, heading north to the border and beyond. Jerry Hines and the Rainier Auto Sports Club presented Alcan 5000.

For 2010, Steve Brown and I had been paired in one of the Legacys, until a late change regarding other staff. Three who couldn't convince their doctor that sitting for twelve to fourteen hours wasn't good recovery therapy. So, Steve moved to the front of the rally with Jerry. I was moved to Sweep 2 with Joe Gardner. "Sweeps" on summer Alcan are the "backup plan" for the motorcycles. Unless there is a serious "off", the cars can fend for themselves -- alone, on a bike, in the middle of nowhere, could be trouble with just a minor repair.

The Mosquito Lake TSD was revised this year, as the single lane bridge is under repair and the scenic, twisting, narrow drive was lost to easy meanderings into Acme, Van Zandt, and along Highway 9 to Sumas, and the Canadian Customs crossing. Long waits for some at the border, then East on Trans-Canada Highway 1 to Hope, and north through the Fraser Canyon. An easy trip to Williams Lake, except for the construction. As Sweep, we did checkpoints then followed the route north, watching every gas station and restaurant for "our" bikes. We were getting later and later with every stop, and every road project. It became clear with the last road closure for construction that we weren't going to make our checkpoint assignment, so I called on the radio and had another crew switch location with us. From years of TSD rallies in the area, I knew the back way into the section and we were in place with three minutes to spare before first car. It was getting very smoky from nearby forest fires, and by the time we were ready to go, there was ash on the car and the sun was just an orange dot in the sky. We got into Quesnel very late and had dinner, then off to sleep.

The second day was Quesnel to Dawson Creek BC, just west of the Alberta border. Early in the day the smoke was so bad your eyes hurt and visibility was about a quarter mile. The RCMP and the military had roadblocks at one intersection on Blackwater that we've used on prior years, but this time we turned right and went on our way. Coming into Prince George one bike developed an oil leak and we stayed with him, and two others, until a dealership

was located. The rider elected to try for the dealer; we followed, then handed off to Sweep 1 (with a bike carrier) to wait for repair info. The dealer was able to fix a cracked oil line and only add about a two-hour delay. With all the road construction we were still pretty late getting to dinner. On the bright side, somewhere north of Prince George, the skies became noticeably less smoky -- pale blue, with small white clouds. Around Rally Mile 765 we crossed Pine Pass with views of huge formations of solid rock, folded here and there by geologic forces, then worn away by past glaciers.

Day Three was Dawson Creek to Watson Lake, Yukon Territory -- about 620 miles -- through the Rocky Mountains and two large Provincial Parks, all very scenic if not for the torrential rains. "Old Alaska Highway" was the first TSD of the day at RM 918. Along the way we crossed the only remaining wood trestle bridge from 1942. A grading crew was working in the TSD -- very smooth gravel, somewhat deep in spots -- and then there was the grader! Square left, square right, then narrow 6% drop, hairpin, and a slippery little hillclimb to a checkpoint -- Car 4 was the only "0". Back to the "new" highway, into Fort St. John (founded 1792). "Looks like Kansas to me, Toto" was the next TSD, and the rolling hills were a contrast to the previous days mountainous terrain. Starting in town, dropping and climbing on the narrow old concrete ribbon, then more square corners on gravel along the fencelines. Throw in an occasional long sweeper, a tight acute, and a hillclimb -- pay attention -- there were checkpoint crews hiding along the way! Onto the Alaska Highway again, Pink Mountain, Sasquatch Crossing, Buckinghorse, more construction and lots of RCMP. North to Fort Nelson, last guaranteed fuel and food. Conversations with eastbound travelers reported the "road covered with hail, safe speed 20 MPH" and to the bikes with us: "Lots of places have closed, and the boys are having a hard time finding gas". The reply from Tennessee's Jeff Brisendine: "As long as we stay ahead of that big blue Dodge, we'll be OK".

A random radio report from about the middle of the pack reported heavy rains, but no more hail, 40 miles ahead, with darkness settling in early. At RM 1254 we have a view of an unusual rock outcropping, Indian Head Rock, resembling a chief in full headdress, hanging off a replica of Yosemite's Half Dome. At RM 1283, in Stone Mountain park, we pass Summit Lake and the highest pavement on the Alaska Highway, at 4247 feet elevation, with reports of caribou here earlier in the day.

A favorite and sometimes necessary fuel stop is Toad River Lodge, at RM 1315, with its collection of pastries, and thousands of caps donated by visitors. A nearby sign warns that the highway is the runway, so keep a sharp eye. If you happen here on a clear day, the peaks immediately south are Mount Socrates and Mount Aristotle -- keep a sharp mind also.

We are calculating fuel range for the bikes. The KTM is safely 200 miles, the other two with us a bit more. There will be fuel at Northern Rockies Lodge (an Alcan Winter Rally stop) in 81 miles -- probably spendy. There might be fuel at Liard River, Coal River, and Contact Creek. Our destination of Watson Lake is 323km -- 200 miles. The bikes switch to something a bit closer to fuel-economy-mode.

RM 1338 a Mama Moose and calf along the route. In Muncho Lake Park, the bighorn Stone Sheep are out for most of the rally -- hidden from us in the rain and darkness. RM 1374 black bear, RM 1375 bison herd, with calves just slightly smaller than the bear. Liard Hot Springs is well populated as we loop through the park to reset odo and wait for the bikes at the start of a DIY section. Just up the road, bison have blocked the highway, stopping the bikes and cars (seems the pavement holds some daytime heat into the evening). The photo-op is interrupted by the big highway rigs -- exhaust brakes rattling a low staccato, slowing, big bison yielding to the bigger trucks -- then all proceed, for now. We'll have more photo-ops, if the light holds, at 1402, 1406, 1420 and 1445 -- with the big solo bulls ignoring traffic, the cows and calves a bit more wary. At Contact Creek (where northbound bulldozers and earthmovers met southbound in the building of the Al-Can) we find our three bikes -- station closed. "I've gone 30 miles with the reserve light on"... It's 40 to Watson Lake -- all three made it -- all with reserve light on for most of the distance.

The brief morning Watson Lake TSD points up how well the bikes are doing -- three cars took "0" at our checkpoint, along with two of the bikes. There are options from Watson Lake -- straight to Whitehorse for R&R, with a time penalty -- or the Campbell Highway to Ross River and the South Canol. Nearly all chose the gravel. In Whitehorse most wished they'd taken the shortcut -- the roads had deteriorated substantially in the two months from survey to rally. Tire shops were busy.

Whitehorse brought more choices. The bikes chose the overnight camp on the North Canol to MacMillan Pass and the North West Territories. Too far for fuel, the only way bikes can get to the NWT is with the Sweeps for support. Both trucks

and one staff car made the trek (might be a first car for Alcan). The only mishap on North Canol was Dan Watt from Vancouver BC. His big BMW Paris-Dakar lost its footing and caught a rock with the valve cover. Sore but willing, Dan made it to camp and the "First Aid" began for rider -- bike would get a ride on Sweep 1, for parking lot repairs in Whitehorse: A Coca-Cola can, cut to shape, lots of prep work by John Isenburg, and several layers of epoxy produced a new valve cover. Some super glue rebuilt the taillight lens and Dan was ready to continue -- several stops in the first few miles got the mud from the spokes and reduced the two-inch wheel hop to something manageable.

Cars, and six of the bikes chose a TSD in Whitehorse, then 340 miles to play tourist and an overnight in Dawson -- a bit more plush than Joe's elegant elk camp on the North Canol. A brief TSD up to Midnight Dome gave a great view of Dawson, the confluence of the Klondike (clear) and the Yukon (muddy) rivers and the Top Of The World Highway -- which was closed in Alaska, and necessitated our long detour back to Whitehorse, then west again.

In the two days, the separate routes afforded ample opportunities for wildlife sightings: North Canol -- grouse, grizzly, porcupine, wolf, wolverine, and caribou; Dawson and sidetrips -- bear, bobcat, silver fox and grouse or ptarmigan -- which prompted two simultaneous renditions of the origin of Chicken Alaska -- they couldn't spell "ptarmigan"...

The long run from Whitehorse to Fairbanks began early for all. 392 miles to Tok Junction and a 2PM TSD. Haines Junction (mostly closed), Destruction Bay on Kluane Lake -- Talbot Arms Motel for gas and breakfast. RM 2950, electrical repair to one of the bikes, then as briskly as the frost heaves would allow to Beaver Creek YT and 30km later to US Customs "Mile 1222.8 on the Alaska Highway". The line was just us, and the interview was about 15 seconds.

Alaska is attempting to repave The Highway, but the long waits and the pilot cars are cutting into our arrival in Tok. Sweep 2 hits Fast Eddie's as the radio announces "all accounted for" at the last checkpoint -- the time was do-able on bikes, not so much in a big Dodge Ram. 195 miles to Fairbanks, dinner, and sleep. At Delta Junction I do more repair on the trailer while 4 bikes fuel up and stretch. Fatigue and boredom are setting in. This will be eased a bit by the gorgeous hotel and dining facilities. Just west of town the first of the "North Pole" signs, 82 miles from here, then we cross the Tanana River and get our first view of the Alaska Pipeline, Prudhoe Bay to Valdez.

South from Fairbanks, the morning's 12 mile TSD overlooks the city, then a regroup for coffee and snacks before the 150 mile Parks Highway run to Cantwell, passing spectacular scenery, rushing river canyons, then placid pools. Near the Denali Park and Mount McKinley center, the long excursion train clings to the opposite side of the canyon and traverses long wooden trestles.

Alaska Highway 8, the Denali Highway, is a 135-mile east-west connector between Cantwell and Paxson, 110 miles of gravel. Terrain is similar to that traveling west into the National Park, but hunting season has opened and wildlife is sadly very cautious. We saw exactly one caribou at about 13 miles east of "Seattle Creek". The only other sightings were numerous swans on the tiny little reflection lakes along the way. About 90 miles into the gravel, the Maclaren River Lodge, with fuel food and repairs, followed after a long climb by Maclaren Summit at 4086 feet, with a sweeping panorama to the west, north, and east. At pavement we enter the Tangle Lakes Archaeological District -- 455,000 acres, covering 400 recorded sites, believed to have seen human occupation 12,000 to 15,000 years ago, supporting the Siberian Land Bridge theory. Nearing Paxson we see a family picking berries -- 15 minutes later it is raining so hard I can't read the road signs for the DIY TSD.

Passing Glenallen, enroute to Valdez, Mount Wrangell and Mount Blackburn (14,000 and 16,000) are shrouded in storm clouds. Further south several crews take a break at Worthington Glacier before cresting Thompson Pass, and great glacial views dropping toward a Valdez sunset, and the rally's last night on the road.

Valdez sunrise, over the peaks, slowly illuminating the harbor -- and the rally. Left out of the hotel to start the first of three TSDs for the day. Twenty one miles in 26 minutes, then 102 miles, with more mountains and glaciers in much better weather, to Glenallen TSD. Fifteen miles in 17 minutes, then 199 miles to Palmer with grand views of Tazlina and Matanuska glaciers. The final TSD covered 6 miles through hayfields, gardens, and orchards -- temperature at our checkpoint was 66 degrees. 4065 miles or more north of Seattle, with better weather.

The banquet honored all the winners, the workers, and those who have passed. Congratulations to the Arctic Challengers Team of Glenn Wallace/R.Dale Kraushaar/Jenne Pierce for 1st overall in the Forester. Jeff Brisendine rode his KTM 950 Adventure to 1st motorcycle and 6th overall. A "new" first prize went to Kit Toevs who became the first sidecar motorcycle rider to complete the Alcan

5000, with her dad Roger. Maybe not a "first", but all entrants AND staff completed the rally intact! Alcan scored 87 checkpoints and 10 DIY checkpoints, with 18 staff along, part way, or recruited from Alcan alumni.

Results, photos, blogs and archives found at www.alcan5000.com and now www.alcan5000.net (beta)

* New rally **driving school** is opening shortly in Snoqualmie, WA. -By Ed Rachner

So lucky to be living in the great NW! I was fortunate to get out there today with a small group of Subaru enthusiasts for a tour of the site.

We went out to the DirtFish Rally School facility today in Snoqualmie. Great site for playing and they are moving toward being ready to open the school to students shortly (although they are already getting advance students in now). Lots of potential here and they plan to use all of it.

The 300+ acre lot has tons of fun looking areas including a gravel skid pad, slalom course, awesome through-the-trees rally passages that can be linked up in different combinations and a very spacious classroom/office area. They're even putting in an indoor go-kart track inside one of the old warehouses!

They are currently re-furbishing the main building of the previous Weyerhaeuser owners for classrooms and potential meeting halls for clubs and perhaps a joint start/finish location for TSD rally and other motorsports activities.

They toured us around their garage and we got to inspect some of the cars they use for the school. Also drove around the grounds for some of the rally roads they are currently using for the school. Lots of land for expansion for that purpose.

We watched the slalom exercise with some current students and two of the instructors came by and offered a few of us a ride around the slalom course. Fortunately, I had brought my helmet and was lucky enough to sit next to Forest Duplessis for a couple of runs around the shortened course.

I found it doubly interesting since I had co-driven stage rallies in my youth and never had the chance to watch the driver's technique since I was too focused on the route book, mileages, time and so forth. Today I had the opportunity to watch the driver's technique from the perspective of a learning rallycross driver. It was great fun. Thank you Forest!

More information at their website:
<http://www.dirtfish.com/>

The school is looking for publicity and perhaps a number of our members would like to take the tour. If anyone is interested in that, I'd like to take names and see if we can do this some time during a weekend before the weather gets really bad.

* Wild West stage rally was Cancelled three weeks before the September 23 date. The lack of experienced, Puget Sound area volunteers was cited as a safety concern.

Club News

August meeting notes: Secretary Comden sent his regrets for missing the meeting- he went camping on Whidbey Island instead. The treasurer reported \$5564 in accounts, with no huge outstanding bills.

The October Friday Niter looks to be another resurrected course from the past. Eric, Jeff, and Dan have a stack of old ones to choose from. No new roads to be found, so why not?

The Alcan is a week off, and the Taylor Highway has washed out, a major route.

Jerry picked now to move the Alcan web site to the Go Daddy host. Jeff is writing the new format.

President McMillen wondered out loud what became of the initiative to procure club CP trip-line lights. He also proposed follow-up on updating the club's By-laws to bring them into the 21st century. That idea didn't go far, while discussion ran long on whether to procure big car numbers for future rallies.

The date for No Alibi settled on June 4-5, continuing the first weekend of June tradition.

Rally reports: Sno-Git suffered a lot from changed speed limit signs when the county prepared to repave roads. The Monte Shelton Classic will be a "real" rally.

Trivia

* Cameron Hine's Legacy stayed in Anchorage after Alcan, being sold by John Fouse within a week. Not sure whether it helped that it got a transmission transplant a few days before the rally, courtesy of Steve Perret.

* Carrying on some sort of tradition, Jerry was buying a motorcycle trailer while Alcan Registration was going on. The trailer got new wheel bearings and then made its inaugural trip to Alaska and back.

* Roy Ward's Impala had an unfortunate incident. He recounts that the old days of negotiating with the insurance company are gone. They gave him a list of approved body shops! And the body shop had a slick estimating computer program that precisely estimates the exact work required, right down to ...

the numbers of nuts and bolts and the time it takes to work on each!

* Prodrive will campaign a Mini in the WRC for 2011. There is an AWD version in the works for retail, too.

For Sale/ Wanted



1987 Subaru RX Coupe GL 3-door 1.8 liter Turbo (EA82T) 5-speed dual-range transmission, Bilstein 40mm coil-over suspension

Starter stage rally car, Rallycross car, or caged TSD driver

Car is SCCA logbooked (expired), caged (needs sill bar added), race seats and belts (expired)

Will be Vintage eligible in two years. Does not pass emissions.

\$3000.00 with a long list of spares INCLUDED

Parts include: "Open Class" motor, complete, running (\$500); 2 stock motors, repairable; 2 motors parts only; 1 motor disassembled; 2 used heads (not tested); spare MAS assembly, intake plumbing; turbo plenum (w/ intercooler); 2 turbo plenum (stock); AWD transmission (3.70:1); roof clip; hood; doors; aero kit (2 complete); some window glass; drive line; front spindles; rear crossmember; rear swaybar; front swaybar; fuel tank, vent and filler; A/C condenser, compressor, HVAC module, HVAC plumbing; power brake assembly; clutch pedal assembly; gauge cluster & speedo for 3.70 ratio and for 3.90 ratio; seats -- 2 driver, 2 passenger, 1 rear bench, 2 rear back; assorted wheels and tires; two complete interior trim; assorted belts and hoses; complete wiring harness and ECU; and assorted brake, temp, & ignition parts.

"Retail" for the parts is \$4090.00

As a package \$2495.00

Buy-it-Now -- included with the car.

Serious inquiries only --- this is NOT a Mazda RX-3

* 1987 Subaru GL wagon

Parts car for above. 5-speed push-button all wheel drive. Nearly everything in the drivetrain will interchange with the RX. Starts; needs battery; probably needs exhaust replaced (parts here). Does not pass emissions.

\$500.00 as is, where is... (\$1.00 if included in above package "Buy-it-Now")

\$900.00 if repaired to running.

Contact: ronsorem (@) gmail (dot) com

* **2001 Audi Allroad** All the luxury and bells and whistles. Waterpump and timing belt done, negotiate for the studded Hakkas. New low price: \$7200, more details at blackholeracing@gmail.com (Jim or Cristy Breazeale)

* **1968 Valiant** 2 dr. post. 273 V8, original owner with paperwork, manuals. Not a parts car, this is complete. Spare rear axle. Solid car. Located in Duvall. \$1200.00

Sam Baker, 425-788-2004 or contact Roy Ward,
roy.ward@frontier.com

* I have a quantity of **No Alibi tee shirts** in larger sizes:
xl, 2xl, 3xl. If anybody would like a shirt let me know and
I will hold one for you. After another month or so I will
probably donate them to charity unless somebody wants to
claim the remainder. Eric Horst, erich@teamd.org

RASC Calendar

Rallycrosses not listed, but happening.

October 2 –SOVREN Maryhill hillclimb. Might have exhibition
“rally” class.

Stage in PNW

Sept 23 – CANCELLED Wild West, Pomeroy, WA

Oct 1-2 – Pacific Forest Rally, Canadian Nat'l, Merritt, B.C.

Oct. 23: Mt. Hood Rally - ORG

Dec 3-5: Big White Rally and SnowX - Kelowna, BC

British Columbia & Washington TSD

Sep 10: NWRC Friday Niter by PSRC

Oct 2 – Night on Bald Mountain TSD by ORCA

Oct 8: NWRC Friday Niter by RASC

Oct 30 – Midnight TSD, Parksville, Vancouver Island, BC

Nov. 20 – Totem, British Columbia

Oregon TSD

Sept 11 – Rally Against Parkinson's, Portland Int'l
Raceway

Sept 17 – Friday Nighter, Milwaukie, OR

October 1 – Friday Nighter, Milwaukie, OR

Rainier Auto Sports Club will meet this coming Monday, September 13, at 7:30 PM at Café Veloce at the Totem Lake shopping center. Best way I can think of to get there via 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 pass, 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: The epic 2010 summer Alcan is over. Maybe some tall tales. Excitement builds in anticipation of the October Friday Niter.

2010 Board Members:

President- Jeff McMillen, jeff@somepants.com

Vice-President: Steve Richards, smrdcatman@comcast.net, 425-337-0232

Secretary: Dan Comden, dan@comdens.com,

Treasurer: Steve Willey: willey@selby.com

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Contributions and paid/unpaid advertisements eagerly sought: e-mail: mnolte@blarg.net

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The Wishbone Alley Gazette

% Mark Nolte

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