

Rally News

* Raindrop (April 21) Rallymaster Ed Rachner moved the date a week. It avoids the bike rally from the original proposed date and doesn't seem to conflict with anything else nearby.

The route will follow the usual format of about 4 hours and 120 miles. Start is being confirmed in Snoqualmie, then to a break at Buckley (Mud Mountain Dam), and finish at Bruno's Restaurant in Eatonville.

Ed says that he hasn't laid out a rally for quite a few years. Technology has moved a lot – like, uh, spreadsheets and better mapping.

* Thunderbird Rally 2013, by Ron Sorem © 2/23/13

Merritt-Kamloops-Merritt BC. February 16 & 17, 2013. The West Coast Rally Association and Rally Master Paul Westwick presented the 42nd running of the winter classic Thunderbird Rally. This would be Round 1 of the BC TSD Rally Championship for 2013.

Forty-seven teams would take the start in Merritt on a sunny but brisk Saturday morning. Entrants ranged from British Columbia, Alberta, Washington, Oregon, California, and Arizona. Distance travelled to the event would be a factor, in a strange way, to the outcome. Let's say: "*Jet Lag, what Jet Lag?*" More on this as we go along.



The Damm's scored only 16 points through 31 CP's /7 hours of regularities.

Cars left Merritt headed south on the Coquihalla Highway, calibrating odometer and computer factors to match the rally master's measurements. As we reached the Coldwater River exit, snow sifted from the sky. Snow may be the biggest draw for Thunderbird, yet the roads remained bare. Kane Valley Regularity would be the first change in this regard. Compact snow and ice was the norm early in the section, broken by frozen mud, open puddles, and finally fresh snow covering the route. The deeper snow brought others to the area, and toward the end of the 17km section we were cautioned to watch for cross-country skiers (and snowmobiles, mostly on big trucks and trailers, not so concerned about our little cars).

A short transit down the pavement passed Aspen Grove, to the Coalmont Road and Otter Valley Regularity. Bare pavement, changed to gravel, changed to frost over mud, watch for elk crossing the road, more frozen mud, "*MOOSE!*", and checkpoint. At this point the road drops dramatically. Drivers are cautioned for a sharp corner with "exposure" straight ahead (meaning "don't go off here!").

Most years this is deep snow over ice and treacherous at best, but we weren't cautioned of this year's very slippery, muddy surface as we made our way into the narrow cut for the Otter Creek bridge. The sunny weather had melted much of the snow, trapping water in corners, between fender high frozen banks. One such corner with a water-splash and photo-op was fun for most, but caught up a couple of cars. Fortunately this was just after the checkpoint, and there was plenty of route left to get back on time for the next control, before the pioneer and mining town of Coalmont/Tulameen and the end of the 47km section.

A transit passed through the avalanche area, under the watchful "eyes" of local hoodoos (rock formations resembling statues) on the way to the gas and grub break in Princeton.

Northeast leaving Princeton, on pavement, to a left onto Hembrie Mountain Road and gravel for the 43km Rampart Lake Regularity. Snow was now the norm, catching one car out, "stuffed", high centered. The Driver got out quickly, but the Navigator was unable to open his door until some shoveling ensued, and now both were waiting for sweep to tug them back to the road. I can attest to this predicament, as noted a bit later in the route instructions is "Ron's Corner" where over ten years back, I missed a corner and found a rock, which at the time seemed like the only thing keeping us from Vinson Lake, although the undergrowth now hides that view. The remaining route out to Hwy 97 is a deceptively smooth shallow rollercoaster meandering through the woods to the end of section.



Dan's Saab was attracted to the magnetic snow banks. Hans Adomeit/Marvin Crippen DNF'd, drove it home.

Many of the checkpoint crews were routed around this section to get ahead of the rally, into and beyond Merritt, and east for the next timed assignment. Minnie Lakes Regularity was to cover 28km, and began by climbing Pennask Lake Road on pavement, changed to gravel, then to frost over mud, and snow. At the Minnie Lakes resort corner, the "lakes" began. Drivers had been cautioned at the start to use care, but that the water was "not nearly as deep as a Saab Sonett windshield". A Satch Carlson reference from years ago, which would prove true again with this year's Sonett entry. In past years, the mini lakes were the only smooth part of the road where their solid frozen surface was level, the rest of the route rutted and deep snow. Other times the lakes were thawed in various degree, and the water-splash was sent "to the fence line" on

both sides. Any water crossing is difficult at speed – fast enough to make it through, slow enough not to drown the car or yank the steering toward the edge. Cattle guards can be tricky too, catching one of the AWD cars off guard, but able to work his way out, only to have the next car follow the new track, miss the “proper” opening and get truly stuck, incurring minor damage as well. A “Caution! Hard Left Exposure Right” marks the steep descent to Douglas Lake village and the last checkpoint of the section. The snow had arrived now, in earnest. Blizzard conditions, snowing sideways.

An executive decision from Rally Master Paul would cancel the next two sections (Twig Creek and Robbins Range) as impassable in these conditions, and all were to proceed directly to Kamloops and dinner. Although met by mixed opinions, some thinking they would have advantage in the deep snow, others thankful they wouldn't have to try, I can relate that on our “shortcut” to leapfrog the rally for our next assignment, the blizzard masked a herd of horses in the road -- that came as a real pucker factor! We were out of radio range and weren't aware of the cancellation so were trying our best to get to the cut-off by the deadline – no such luck, so on to Kamloops where we were told of the changes. The rally followed the highway with about the same distance traveled, approximately 442km/276miles.

Our Jet Lag team was faring well. Snow in Sweden as inspiration? Home just long enough to check the windows and doors then travel to BC, Marinus & Renne Damm in Car 3 led the US contingent and the field with only 11 seconds error in nine hours. Car 2 followed with 12, BC and Historic Car 10 with 13, more Canadian veteran talent in Car 5 with 14, and US entrants Cars 1 and 4 (all past winners) tied with 16. Oregon and Alberta shared 19, and Merritt entry (and off-time rally organizer) Navvie Nicki Beverly and Driver Dan Lachapelle followed with 23.

Results were posted late Saturday, and the overnight fatigue was leaning the leaders (unknown to them as yet) toward retirement and a relaxing trip home to rest. Scores appeared at breakfast, and a renewed vigor appeared as well.

Sunday morning start saw only two retirements from the field. Overnight repairs kept several in the competition.

A transit north on Hwy 5 then climbing east on Paul's Lake Road to the Pinantan Regularity for it's 17km. The route drops off the plateau above the South Thompson River to Shuswap Road and a few challenging corners before a tame 32km finish along the river and back to Hwy 5 North to complete the loop.

As is the norm for Paul Westwick rallies, the checkpoint crews are on their own rally behind the scenes, with detailed instructions. A few of us split off the route and were the de-facto road opening teams. Lac du Bois Regularity started up the ridge from Kamloops Westside on broad dry gravel. Some time later, into the woodlands, snow along the road became snow on the road, and eventually narrowing and deep. Left, at a crossroad became a completely different game. Only the checkpoint cars through ahead of the rally, very cautious in the deep snow for 8km to a checkpoint corner, then the mainline Tranquille-Criss Creek Rd up to STOP and End Of Section; 47.49km total. Followed by less than a 3km transit to regroup and relax.

Criss Creek Regularity, about 36km, a long loop, and the occasional fox sighting, following Tranquille Criss Creek to

the big acute right onto Sawmill Lake, and toward the earlier Lac du Bois route.

A 1km transit, then begin the 51km Red Lake Regularity, this time turning right at the crossroad for a second try through the narrow track and deep snow seen earlier. Right again on Tranquille, and now left for Copper Creek. The section started on snow, proceeded to a series of downhill switchbacks that were muddy and extremely slick and continued along the ranchland valley before turning up Sabiston Creek to search for (and find) more snow. The top of Sabiston is relatively flat for just a couple of kilometers before DROPPING through several hairpins that have been known to collect cars. This year was no exception. Early on, there was snow, toward the bottom there was mud – both were very slippery.

A brief stint east onto the Trans Canada Highway through Savona with no stops to the next section.

Tunkwa Lake Regularity would be the last chance to add to your score along a 38km route, and although starting on dry pavement, a series of shaded snowy switchbacks presented some challenge, then a long smooth section with no controls may have lulled a few to sleep, resulting in a few “earlies” at the final checkpoint.

The final transit from Logan Lake along Hwy 97 to Merritt was uneventful. Scores were available as soon as possible after all the scoring crews arrived.

“Team Jet Lag” persevered with only 5 points for the day and a total of 16 for the weekend, earning First Overall and congratulations to Marinus & Renne Damm, Car 3, from Portland OR. Closely followed in Second place, with 8 for the day and 24 for the weekend, by Car 4, Glenn Wallace and R.Dale Kraushaar. Their Saturday tie-mates took 14 for Sunday, yielding 30 overall, for Third Place, and First Historic, in the 1969 Saab Sonett, for Car 1 (2012 Winners) Satch Carlson and Russ Kraushaar. First in Calculator class, but also of Historic vintage, 1970 Datsun 240Z, Scott Trinder and Andrew Dobric with 31 points. First Novice went to Jason Gunn and Kevin Black, Car 18, with a respectable 78 points. First and only Paper class (Seat of the Pants, no calculating equipment) to Larry Louie and Vincci Lau.

The 2013 Thunderbird covered roughly 780km/487mi in 15½ hours. 47 started, 45 finished, all drove home... Nine checkpoint crews scored 35 controls.

Complete scores, photos, and stories of past events on www.rallybc.com

* Alcan (August 18-26, 2014) Current plan is to start survey August 19, and sell XC90 up north afterward.

Jerry acquired a DeLorme inReach satellite communicator to compare to the SPOT system. An affordable communicator makes for a safer rally.

Club News

* February meeting notes, by MN. Café Veloce was using their meeting area for someone else, so we convened at a long table at 7:40. No Secretary, so meeting minutes were not read. Something like \$3059 in the bank, with the NWRC fees coming up for 3 rallies in 2013.

Rally reports: No Alibi- centered around the Tri-Cities. Raindrop- RM Ed Rachner worried about 4 miles of unpaved road, The date will have to change so not to conflict with a bicycle ride (Now moved out a week to April 21st-MN) The Dirtfish start has to be nailed down, the stop at Mud

Mountain Dam depends on the opening date of the restrooms, and the finish restaurant in Eatonville looks smallish.

The NWRC's resolution to not sanction events with a date conflicting with a Friday Niter was discussed.

The club mailbox has been renewed. Someone brought up the new FCC regulation about narrowbanding the radios that have been used on Alcans.

Adjourned at 8:11.

Dues remain \$30 for family, \$25 for individual membership. No increase since 2006! Treasurer Cristy would like everyone paid up by the end of March.

Trivia

* Steve Richards has a new Mazda 6 on order. The old one had about 57K on it. Revisiting the dealer where he got the present one, he wasn't happy with their valuation of the trade-in. They raised it!

* Paul Westwick streamlined T-Bird scoring by asking CP crews to record arrival times onto a flashdrive, which he downloaded to his laptop at every opportunity. While other crews did it while at the CP, Nolte took pictures, then tried entering times while transiting to the next checkpoint. The MacBook has a very slippery bottom, resulting in even more mistyped numbers than usual (which is saying something!). A non-slip pad is being developed.

Whether Paul found errors or otherwise manually corrected scores is a mystery- as always.

*Eric Horst added a 1991 Volvo 740 to his fleet.

* Contagious enthusiasm works: Jim Breazeale's boss decided to try the Thunderbird- with another co-worker navigating. The Celica All-Trac packed snow such that a new fan blade was installed in Kamloops. They placed about last, but Jim still has a job.

For Sale

* For Sale: Interior of 2002 Impreza Outback Wagon. In light and dark grey, complete with door cards, front and rear seats. \$225 OBO. Ed Rachner---206-499-8271.

* 2001 BMW 330ix. Silver, black interior. automatic transmission, 17" wheels. Cheap at \$2800 (*price reduced!*) because of a bad head gasket and much labor involved in the fix. (Shipping to Seattle from Henderson, NV for less than \$600) Jerry Hines, 206-227-6343



*For Sale: PIAA LP 570 High Intensity Led Driving Lamp Kit (2 lamps) -7 inch LED Long Range driving lights. Reflector- LEDs project off of an ingenious computer-designed multi-surface reflector offering more and better illumination than halogen lamps with the durability and low power draw of

LED lighting. Kit includes two lamps

mounting brackets complete wiring harness and detailed installation instructions. Bulb Type: 5 watt LED bulbs 6000K Description: Polycarbonate and cast aluminum housing with polycarbonate lens.

RASC club price \$220 cash....

ALSO: New in box Hella 192 Driving lamp. Super Oscar size, discontinued. \$50? ronsorem @ gmail .com

*PIAA fog lights (2). Spread isn't good, not much good at either end of a car. Typical fog "band of light". Smallish at 6-3/8 x 3" tall, 3" deep. Much used at some point in their long life. \$39. Mark Nolte: mnolte@blarg.net

RASC Calendar –Added Heart of Darkness (June 15/16) in British Columbia and “The Road Not Taken” August 17/18 somewhere in Oregon.

Other/ Classic enthusiast events

April 20 - Tulip Rallye, gimmick, Burlington, WA

April 26/28 - Spring Thaw, Hope, B.C.

May 31/6/2 - Cascade Classic, Olympia, WA

July 25/28 Monte Shelton Classic, Portland, OR

Aug 9/11 - "Rush to Gold Bridge, B.C.

Sept 20/23 - Fall Freeze, B.C.

NW Stage Rallies -

May 3-5 - Oregon Trail, Portland, OR

June 8/9 -Idaho Rally, Boise, ID

June 21/23 - Olympus Int'l, Shelton, WA

July 20/21 - Mendocino Rally, Williams, CA

Oct 4-5 - Pacific Forest Rally, B.C.

Oct ? - Mt. Hood, OR

Nov 1/ 2 - Rocky Mountain, Invermere, B.C.

Dec 7-8 - Big White, B.C.

Oregon TSD -

April 5 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

May 10 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

June 7 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

July 5 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

Aug 2 -Rally School

Aug 3 - Mountains to the Sea

Aug 9 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

Aug 17/18 – The Road Not Taken

Sept 6 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

Oct 4 - Friday Night Series, Milwaukie

TSD- Washington, British Columbia

March 23 - Trail of the Gnu - Alberta

April 12 - NWRC Friday Niter by PSRC

April 21 -Raindrop by RASC

May 10 - NWRC Friday Niter by ORCA

June 1-2 - No Alibi- by RASC

June 14 - NWRC Friday Niter by NWRC

June 15/16 – Heart of Darkness, B.C.

July 12 - NWRC Friday Niter by NWRC

July 20 - SnoGit by ORCA

Aug 9 - NWRC Friday Niter by ORCA

Sept 13 - NWRC Friday Niter by PSRC

Oct 11 - NWRC Friday Niter by RASC

Nov 16/17 - Totem, B.C

Rainier Auto Sports Club will meet this coming Monday, March 11 at 7:30 PM at Café Veloce (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 *usually* the second Monday of each month. Past Members, visitors, and spectators are welcomed.

Agenda: Rolling out plans for Raindrop. Treasurer will collect Dues (\$30 family, \$25 individual) from the two who haven't paid up.

2013 Board Members:

President: Marvin Crippen, mandos@gmail.com

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

Secretary, Eric Horst - erich@quavy.com

Treasurer, Cristy Breazeale, 360-318-3320

At Large, Jim Breazeale, blackholeracing@yahoo.com

At Large, Troy Jorgensen, - RASC@waflracing.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**

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