

**MINTEX  
NATIONAL**

# **RALLY SERIES**

CHAMPIONSHIP  
CHATTER

after

Round 6.

***TRACKROD***

***FOREST*** *STAGES RALLY*



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# Roger's Ramblings

## Trackrod Treatise.

Well – had it been twelve months since we were all at Leeds, how time flies. A nasty shock was in store for early arrivals at the Hilton National at Leeds- beer at £2.75 a pint. Clerk of the Course Rod Parkin found me speechless on Thursday, however a sharp discussion with the management secured a suitable reduction ready for the influx of competitors on the weekend.

Thursday started with the Schools initiative at John Smeaton High School, Chris Mellors with the Texaco Escort Cosworth and Jenny Davies in her Peugeot were in attendance. Some 120 children were entertained and educated in English, Geography and Science & Technology. Thanks to you both for your support for this successful project, which has proved a worthy initiative this year.

Friday scrutineering session started at 3pm at CMA Leeds, a splendid venue just outside the city where everyone had plenty of room for unloading and final preparations. Trackrod Motor Club had good security on the venue, they would not let even me into the venue, despite wearing the co-ordinators red shirt and sitting in a van with Mintex in 2ft. high letters down the side !.

No real dramas at scrutiny or signing on. The merry band of SKODA competitors had an end of term air about them all looking forward to a good battle up front, to settle the Network Q Rally prize drive. Geoff Smith in the Priority Airfreight Escort caused a stir transferring to class B 12 in order to try some new parts for next season and also to leave a straight fight for the N4 class between Jeremy Easson and Steve Petch. All eyes however were on the Mellors Elliot camp with principal Chris Mellors able to take the title for the third year in succession on the event with points for 7th place only. The only major drama for a normally very relaxed team was the urgent acquisition of 50 gallons of Avgas - for Brian Lyalls helicopter pending his arrival from Aberdeen that evening !. The Series welcomed for the first time this year two lady competitors who had not joined us since registering at the beginning of the year. Barbara Armstrong in a quite resplendent Seat F2 Car, which appeared to go as well as it sounded, winning her Class A7. and looking promising for 1997 and Pam Lukeman now with her National licence, halving her start number of 104 to finish in the early 50's

As the rally was due to start at Scarborough on Saturday morning, many crews stayed in that town for the evening instead of driving up from Leeds that morning, this however meant that rally HQ. was a little quieter than normal. There were a good number of representatives from other championship rounds who made for a mini party at Rally HQ. however and it was noted that Peter Griffiths and Rick Smith only just made lunch on Saturday !. I was seconded to attend the Olivers Mount Start to ask competitors to co-operate with regard to the "Continuous Backfiring" saga. I am pleased to report that the Environmental Officer had no report to make - thank you chaps and chap'esses.

Back to the plot: Chris Mellors was out of the box three seconds up on a charging Steve Smith in the Lancia, with Steve Hill and Brian Lyall a further 8 sec. back. Geoff Smith used his new found power to be one of a handful of competitors under 6 minutes for the exiting stage. Making a welcome return to motorsport was Trackrod regular Steve Banister, sadly now without "Ethel" his trusty Escort RS. however he has built up a replacement and he delighted the good crowd at the Scarborough motorcycle Circuit with his antics, showing he has not lost his ability to wring every possible ounce of competitiveness out of a hopelessly outclassed car. Sadly the gearbox of the Escort of Brian Bell exploded after just one lap of the circuit, leaving Brian an early shower and trip home to Skegness.

To the Woods - To the Woods etc.....After short service to prepare the cars for the forest, the competitors headed for Langdale this stage accounting for the Subaru of Murray Grierson with electrical problems and Mintex "Young Gun" Mark Perrott with headgasket problems, a sad sight to all. They had obviously not read my script, which was to be in front of Chris Mellors. Brian Lyall had scorched through the stage 2 seconds in front of Mellors these two being the only crews under 5 Minutes for the stage. It seemed that Chris had not been reading my script either as he hammered everyone in Staindale a full 5 seconds clear of Steve Hill who was experiencing a few niggling problems with the water injection and a minor gear selection problem. Steve was not in the mood to give up and was determined to give it his best shot. Holding a watching brief in third was Steve Smith who really has got to grips with his Lancia this year.



Out on these early stages were also Teleflorist Leading Lady Andrea Hall with engine problems, David Wood in the SAAB with transmission failure, Warren Philliskirk engine, Jenny Davies in a ditch, RAC Prize drive winner Charlie Exton with the lovely Suzy Emilliani popped a drive shaft after clipping one of the chicanes in Dalby, and Mark Stokoe with a broken driveshaft however the brothers Mark and Bob in the faithful Skoda Favorit stitched up Class N 1 despite a non finish.

A total of 23 miles in Dalby awaited competitors after service at the fire tower, a clear run saw Steve Hill steal a few seconds back off champion elect Mellors, one wonders if the car had been available at the season start what would have been the outcome, still there's next year in prospect.

We were delighted to see old friend of the National Series - Jackie Francis Lucy who lives down the road at Kirkbymoorside in attendance, who had come to see how many of the old guard remain. Winter Rally representative Roger Sawyer was attacked by a dog in a Pickering pub, drawing blood. The dog fortunately survived, a Yorkshire terrier - which yours truly had been stroking a few minutes earlier I, it shows that yorkies have taste, but obviously not for Roger Sawyer who ended up in Leeds General for a tetanus shot in the B.. By the way for all you surfers ( internet ) David James of Tynemouth Computer Services has information and results of the Series on <http://www.idiscover.co.uk/tcs21/> or <http://www.tcs01.demon.co.uk/> ———happy surfing I. Anyway back to the plot.... it seemed that only Steve Hill was reading my script.... having pinched a few seconds back of Chris Mellors who was complaining that he could not get into the groove....it certainly did not look like that to me from where I was standing in Dalby I. With 5 fastest times the new 1996 Mintex Champion cruised to victory leaving a disappointed but thoughtful Steve Hill looking forward to next year, a delighted Steve Smith had his best Mintex finish to date in third and Andy Smith in the Priority Escort fourth.. Formula 2 was decimated with first Roger Davies retiring with engine problems and Paul Dyas with engine mounting trouble finally Neil Hiorns lunching his motor on the final stage. This left the SEAT of Barbara Armstrong to take Class A7 in the first Mintex outing for the car. However Mintex Formula 2 honours went to a beaming Peter Thornton who despite making a nonsense of a bridge on the last stage managed to lead all fellow N3 competitors home for his best result this year. N4 the more serious battle between Steve Petch and Jeremy Easson. Steve had an advantage of 11 seconds after 3 stages however Jeremy woke up and blitzed his opposition taking 30 seconds back in the Dalby complex alone ( also picking up the £1000 Ford Motorsport Part Bonus for his trouble ). Series visitor Julian Porter was in attendance testing the strength of the competition finally pipping Easson for Overall Group N honours by 6 seconds after an off on the final stage of the day at Duncombe Park, his Raliart Mitsubishi had many an envious eye cast at it during the day.

So twas back to Leeds with a triple Mintex National Champion Chris Mellors who has stamped an authority on the Series this year taking 5 Maximum scores from 6 events. Our congratulations to the Mellors Elliot Texaco Team for a vintage performance, Brian Goff however still needs to start the Bulldog Rally to be assured of the Co-Drivers title.

Regs are out for the Bulldog Midland Rally and John Trevethick assures us that the event stages are in superb order, get your entries in for what promises to be another classic event. I am reliably informed that it is the intention of the organisers to run a chat show /forum on the Friday evening watch the finals for details for what could be a end of term bit of fun.

Series Registrar Dilys Rogers has come up with an idea to promote the 1997 Series with visits to local motor clubs in the winter months, if you have an enthusiastic local group of clubs who would be interested in hosting such an evening give Dilys a ring.

You will note that contained in this bulletin are the booking forms for the Prize Presentation at Kenilworth on December 14th. We have reserved all 110 rooms on your behalf, however these will be allocated on a first come first paid basis. Jackie Francis Lucy is holding extra accommodation nearby until November 18th so get your reservations in early. ANCRO have decided to arrange a Cabaret during the evening for your entertainment after the success of the Trackrod Presentation. The hotel has undergone a £1.4m.refurbishment since last year and now includes a Sports complex with steam rooms, swimming pool etc. so don't forget your bathers! Membership of the complex is included in the package for the weekend. Those of you who attended last year will remember (or perhaps not remember!) what a memorable evening was had by all - who can forget the Scottish contingent with the Highland Reel etc. There is talk of a Mintex Series golf match on the Saturday at Royal Leamington Golf Club which could be arranged if enough people are interested. Sue Smith of Southern Car Club has offered to organise a Saturday shopping trip for the girls again if enough interest. Please let us know so we can make the weekend more memorable for you all .....Run out of paper.....Rog...