

Final Survey Run

In the last Update email (#5) we announced that the event this year is now classified as a Special Stage Rally. Due to the maximum average speed restriction of 90km/h placed on competitive sections in a "Road Rally" (which was the classification for the "Red Centre" event and past COTs), and with the outback tracks lending themselves to be much faster than forest tracks, the target times on numerous sections were such that many

competitors clean-sheeted the sections. This will now no longer be an issue.

Just prior to the last Update email, Phil and I had returned from the 3rd survey run finalising days one, two and three. Bob Watson and I have just returned from Survey 4 and have filled in all the missing stages and the event is now (nearly) finalised. (Bob's comments later). Here's the summary of the event:

	Transport	Competitive	Total	Stages	% Comp
Day 1	152	112	264	5 stages	42.42
Day 2	227	249	476	6 stages	52.31
Day 3	222	190	412	4 stages	46.12
Day 4	303	130	433	4 stages	30.02
Day 5	57	17	74	3 stages	22.97
Day 6	278	155	433	6 stages	35.80
Day 7	104	47	151	4 stages	31.13
	1,343 km	900 km	2,243 km	32 SS	37.25%

There will be two complete run throughs to be completed checking the road books and finalising lunch breaks, service instructions and more important items like nominating the "Pub of the Day."

The first of these checks will be mid June with the final CAMS course check with Alan Patterson in July.

Each time we find a stage we think "this will be the best stage of the event" now with the 32 stages finalised I find it difficult to identify which one the competitors will vote as the best. A couple come to

mind, Day 1 "Back Yamma State Forest" has been close to the top of the list for the past two events, Day 2 the last stage of the day 'Hill View' joins with "Yarrowonga Station" and although we lost 15km due to the results of the heavy rains it will suit both the big and smaller cars.

Day 3 is a toss up as the 4 stages on that day are all great! Likewise with Day 4, although the last two stages will excite both driver and navigator.

AUGUST 2012

FRI SAT SUN MON TUE WED THU FRI SAT
 17 18 19 20 21 22 23 24 25

EVENT CALENDAR

Friday August 17

- Documentation / Scrutiny, Overnight Forbes

Saturday August 18

- Documentation / Scrutiny / Prologue / Welcome function, Overnight Forbes

Sunday August 19

- 1st Day Competition, Overnight Condobolin

Monday August 20

- 2nd Day Competition, Overnight Cobar

Tuesday August 21

- 3rd Day Competition, Overnight Ivanhoe

Wednesday August 22

- 4th Day Competition, Overnight Broken Hill

Thursday August 23

- 5th Day Competition, Overnight Broken Hill

Friday August 24

- 6th Day Competition, Overnight Renmark

Saturday August 25

- 7th Day Competition / Presentation, Overnight Renmark



Sandy Creek crossing

2012 CLASSIC OUTBACK TRIAL

NEWSLETTER #17

CLASSIC OUTBACK TRIAL

MAY 2012

I was somewhat concerned with the availability of suitable competitive sections around Broken Hill, now however, although the day is the shortest of the event, I am sure that the competitors will not only find the day challenging but a relief to be able to a catch of breath. The final destination of the day is at the historic town of Silverton, 25 km west of Broken Hill. Our hosts at the historic pub, Peter and Patsy Price, have a great location for a scrumptious lunch and a cool beer or two to wash down all the stories of the day.



Silverton Pub



Couple of spares

Day 6 has a mixture of everything but my guess will be Coombah. We utilise only 55km of the 250,000 acres, but it will leave lasting impressions of outback driving. The final day, Day 7, although short, has a 25km run along the Victoria/South Australian border which will be high on the list. Another feature of the day will be the use of an off road track owned by Brad Gallard. Brad owns a very serious off road vehicle and, subject to availability, will be demonstrating the capabilities of his Monster truck. The stage incorporates his orange grove and several kilometres of tracks used by bikes and trikes.

Supplementary Regulations: The Sup Regs, subject to CAMS approval, have been posted on the website for your reading pleasure. There are quite a few changes from the 2010 event, some caused by the change to Special Stage status and others to make the event more enjoyable.



We will remove the obstacle

T Sponsorship: We are again delighted to have Telstra Countrywide assist us with our communications. They are releasing a new satellite phone which is more compact and much easier to navigate menu items.

All our officials will have a sat phone ensuring total communications throughout the event regardless of their remote location.

Gates: Competitors, or navigators precisely, will be very happy to know that all gates on the special stages will be open for your driving pleasure. With the great cooperation of the property owners, they will be moving stock to accommodate this request, or where this is not possible, we will have volunteers at the gates keeping the stock clear.

Fuel: We have checked all the petrol stations at all the overnight stops and it would appear that apart from Forbes, Cobar, Broken Hill and Renmark 98 octane is unavailable. At the refuel stops on Day 2 at Nymagee and Day 3 at the end of the first SS only 92 octane will be available from a tanker.

Accommodation: As we passed through our overnight stops we have been checking on the availability of accommodation. Condobolin and Cobar are tight but rooms are still available at the headquarters and other motels. As previously advised, if you are considering entering, please let me know so I can arrange for additional tents at Ivanhoe.

On the subject of Ivanhoe, the evening meal should be a night to remember. Ivanhoe is growing and since our first visit last November, we have noticed a real buzz around town. Great to see the town moving ahead with the caravan park, café and pub all having new management and keen to make everyone welcome.

Observation: I notice that the regulations (well some of them) are available for the Sydney to London in April 2014. Entry fee for the total event is \$52,000 with the Australian leg only a mere \$20,000! The distance from Sydney to Perth should be around 4,500km (to be generous) with ?km competitive but lets say 20% = 900 km. On my reckoning that's about \$22 per kilometre. It is obvious that we are very much undervalued at \$4 per competition kilometre.

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MAY 2012

On the road again—COT Course Survey May 2012

It was not until I jumped into the trusty Frontier Services Nissan Pathfinder survey car with my good friend Philip Bernadou that I realized how much I miss being in the outback. After an intensive period planning the Red Centre to Gold Coast Trial in 2008 I thought I was all outbacked out, but one never is.

The first day's drive to Ivanhoe was a doddle, the only lowlight being the consumption of a very large and quite revolting home made sausage roll at Hay. It was enormous, and the size was directly related to the amount of digestive discomfort suffered. Fortunately a few cold beers in the hospitable Ivanhoe pub seemed to cure the problem.

Early next day we met up with a property owner north of Ivanhoe who took us through a very nice stage of around 27 kms on flowing farm tracks – smooth and fast. Too easy – no searching around for hours, the stage was ready made. Then we headed west towards Broken Hill, and fell on our feet again. Another property owner met, another stage that was just right without any modification. We were on a roll.

It got even better. Closer to Broken Hill, we met up with a young guy who is in the local car club. He was the son of the property owner, and gave us two magic stages, among the best I have ever experienced, to finish the day. More cold beers in the pub with a few of the locals who were helping with the rally finished off a top day.



Bob W and host Peter



Brad Gallard

The next day of the COT was scheduled to finish at Silverton, where the rally is assured of a great reception. For those who have not been to the Silverton pub, it is a classic, and the surrounding old gold town has some wonderfully preserved buildings. On the way we needed to find a suitable competitive stage to finish, and we did. It is a contrast to the previous day, because as soon as you go into a mining area, as Broken Hill is, the roads become a bit mongrelly. We found a tough stage which will make crews appreciate the beer at Silverton even more than normal.

Our next destination was Renmark. Philip has done well to find some interesting stages in what is generally flat straight country, and which cut off a lot of distance compared with the main roads.

Next day was spent in and around Renmark. The day's first stage is an absolute testicle tester, very fast, undulating but hardly ever straight. You will be talking about this one for a long time! After this adrenalin rush we visited a leading off road competitor, Brad Gallard at his Renmark workshop. He owns the most amazing off road vehicle, a V8 powered buggy weighing over two tones, constructed with some of the best engineering I have ever seen, seriously better than a V8 Supercar. Brad finished second outright in last year's Finke Desert Rally, and the sight of this two tone monster in full cry must have been awesome. Brad also happens

own a few hundred acres of orange groves with some vacant land adjacent, and assisted us in developing a great 16 km stage, which was unexpected and a total bonus. Part of the stage incorporates an off road track that Brad is developing, and on the COT we may be lucky enough to see the monster buggy in action on this course. He says he hits the jump ups at 160 km/h, and a photo of the vehicle at least 6 metres in the air tends to prove it.

My lasting impression on all of the times I have been in the outback, as well as the joy of being in the bush, is the absolute pleasure of talking to honest hard working people with no tickets on themselves. There is no bullshit in the bush – what you see is what you get, and these people are solid gold. When you are running in the COT, give thanks to these property owners who have made a tremendous contribution to the event.

From what I have seen, the COT will be a great event. The roads are great, the percentage of competition is very high, and you will be in the bush. What more could you want?

Bob Watson

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End of Nine Mile SS