

Try to Ketchum if you can

BY RON SOREM

Contributing editor

BELLEVUE — Rallymaster Tom Pali-dar, and the Puget Sound Rally Club presented "Ketchum – On The Fly" on Sept. 17, a 6-hour, 160-mile TSD Monte Carlo style touring rally covering some of the familiar Friday Nighter territory, but in daylight, for a completely different perspective. This was the fourth and final event in the 2006 NWRC Monte Carlo-Tour Championship.

We were a late entry — last car out — and Car 13. Are you superstitious? Our car wouldn't restart in the parking lot after the driver's meeting. We coasted to the outcone and bump started the car, but the computer was dead. Circle the parking lot, reset the clock, reset the rough odo factor, reset odo transit time. OK, we're late. No problem, two drivers — Mark Nolte and me — and not a navigator in the bunch! Mark runs a Timewise, I have an Alfa — an old Alfa. Mark mentioned something about stone tablets.

The odo check was straightforward, I-

90 east, Snoqualmie Plateau, then Mill Pond Road. The Alfa attempted computing a factor — a button push and it's entered — speeds for the next two CAS are entered, odo reset and we're ready. Except some button wasn't pushed hard enough — go back, restart. We're late, and looking for hidden checkpoints.

Mark and I have run rallies out here for nearly 40 years (ouch!) so there are few new hiding spots for checkpoints for us. Except CP 1 — we never saw it. Local traffic was pushing us down Sno-Falls hill. I pulled over, let them pass, then they slowed down! ARRGH. Left at 372nd, low CAS, we could make it up on Fish Hatchery Road before the next checkpoint hiding place, and we did, I think. At the end of the section Mark announced our odo was off. What?

We transited through Fall City, trying to correct the Alfa (from both sides of the car). I missed the left turn. Huh! OK, turn around, reverse the odo, find the sign, there's still time before we're late. There it is, get ready, passing the sign on zero, push CAS ... push harder. No worries,

we're running on zero, but "SOP Car" is on our minute, and slowing. Issy-Fall City is double yellow, so no passing. We're down 3 ... down 6. "Do we take a 30?" "Nah, we'll be OK". Oh?

No checkpoints for some distance, we think we made it. We didn't see any checkpoints. Right to Duthie Hill, Car 12 is moving right along. Right on 202, "SOP car" has left blinker — ummm? They turn right, still very close to our minute. Reading ahead we speculate as to CP locations. "Do we take a 30?" "Nah..." Checkpoint! Huh!

Snoqualmie River Road looks very different in daylight — without the river running over the road. Acute Left up Tolt Hill — no CP ... no CP ... no CP — so far so good. We're on CAS and again we're being pushed by locals. Highway 202, on-time, doing 5 over, still being pushed — wide spot, take a stop-n-go.

OK, on-time, turn up Ames Lake hill — drat! Locals, slow locals. Down 10, they speed up. Double yellow, can't pass. Down 6 and gaining, we're looking good, then they slow! "Do we take a 30?" ... Silence...

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