

Snow gives Totem Rally the element of surprise

Wallace, Kraushaar win overall by 1 second

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CACHE CREEK, B.C. — The West Coast Rally Association and co-organizers Paul Westwick and Nicki Beverly presented the Totem Rally Nov. 22 and 23. “Winter Roads Summer Ditches” warns of sometimes icy and snow-covered roads, without the aid of snowbanks.

Twenty four cars took the start, including 11 Subaru, seven cars from British Columbia, stateside competitors from as far away as California and Arizona and six checkpoint crews, including three from Washington.

Teams began the day with a risk run up Battle Creek FSR with its narrow twisting climb, then hairpin exposure clinging to the slope. Another hairpin climbs steeper still, before turning onto Deadman-Cache Creek Road for the “Yawning Pit of Death” downhill switchback.

Next up was Red Lake Regularity. The uphill hairpins of Sabastion Creek FSR and the following downhill, with a spectacular view of Kamloops Lake, were dry and dusty. The hairpins climbing to Red Lake were smooth and brisk. Tranquille-Criss Creek dropped to the river at Kamloops for the first gas stop and break.

North along Westsyde and the North Thompson, for Gorman Lake Regularity, and O’Conner Lake FSR into the first signs of snow. Slippery roads and deer hunters (paying more attention to the woods than on the road) were challenges for the field.

East from Barrier to Johnson Lake Regularity and the hairpins climbing; the run along the lake; and the hairpins dropping back to Adams Lake FSR. Both Car 1 and Car 2 suffered flats along Adams Lake after taking zeroes at the only checkpoint.

Over the Pass Regularity will be

the one of stories to come. The first checkpoint crew radioed snow on the road at 11 km. Then 4 inches or more at 15 km. Then serious snow and difficulty staying in the only track. Over the pass and the snow was reported as less deep, but tricky going. The two-wheel-drive course opening car high-centered in the deep snow. The first competitors helped get him going again, pushing him up and over, presenting a four-car train at the next checkpoint. A bit further back in the pack, Car 8 led a seven-car train, all passing our control in a 41-second window.

Quoting the organizers: *“Conflict-ing instructions given to those who were held up behind course opening makes it impossible to generate reasonable and fair scores, even with the time declarations, therefore, those controls [at 29.89 and 41.90] are not being scored.”* I can confirm that snow depth at our control was 10 inches, just over the pass.

The Historic Saab Sonett retired in Clearwater, with transmission issues. Dinner and parties ensued at the Wells Gray Inn.

Day Two began with a transit south and west. A frosty gravel Eakin Creek Regularity would wake up the rally. Three checkpoints greeted the teams, first in gravel then in snow. One team slid wide on a medium right uphill and parked in a dry creek, on the driver’s door. Minor scratches on the car, nothing on the crew. Sweep transported the team to Bridge Lake where they waited for a recovery vehicle. Following the extraction, they drove to the finish in Cache Creek.

A transit into Clinton for fuel and snacks preceded Big Bar Lake Regularity. Big Bar and Jesmond are nearly automatic on Central B.C. events. This year’s route covered 89.57 km (55.66 miles) of smooth

mainline gravel with a few sections of frosty snow. Speeds ranged from a high of 72 km/h (44.7mph) down to a very short stint at 27 km/h (16.8mph) in hairpins, past a couple of cabins right on the road.

A 2.67-km transit past Kelly Lake brought the rally to Pavilion Regularity, a 19.42-km snowy hillclimb that took its toll on the two-wheel-drive cars. Only one 2wd car made it though — the rest backtracked to Clinton and south on Highway 97 to Cache Creek. Recent snow and light travel contributed to Totem’s difficulties on Pavilion.

Congratulations to Glenn Wallace and R. Dale Kraushaar for First Overall, First Unlimited, with only 5 points for two days (Subaru). Second to Jeff McMillen and Marvin Crippen one second back with 6 (Subaru). Third to Jason Webster and Brandon Harer (Subaru, 2008 winners) edging out Lee Sorenson and Rod Sorenson (Subaru 2.5RS) both teams with 8, Jason and Brandon with more zeroes.

In Calculator Class, Paul Eklund and Kala Rounds (Subaru) took first Calc, seventh Overall, with only 27 points. Steve Richards and Gary Reid (Subaru) took second Calc and eighth Overall with 34. Robert Gobright and Alex Schubel were the highest placing two-wheel drive, third Calc and ninth Overall in a ‘92 VW Golf GTI, with 38.

First Paper (SOP) went to Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen (Subaru) with 156. First Novice to David Fox and son Simon Fox (Subaru) with 251. First Historic to Mike Palm and Garth Hales in a ‘74 VW Super Beetle with 477.

Totem 2008 covered 806 kilometers or 501 miles, in 15 hours 40 minutes.

Complete results at www.rallybc.com/archives/Totem.htm.