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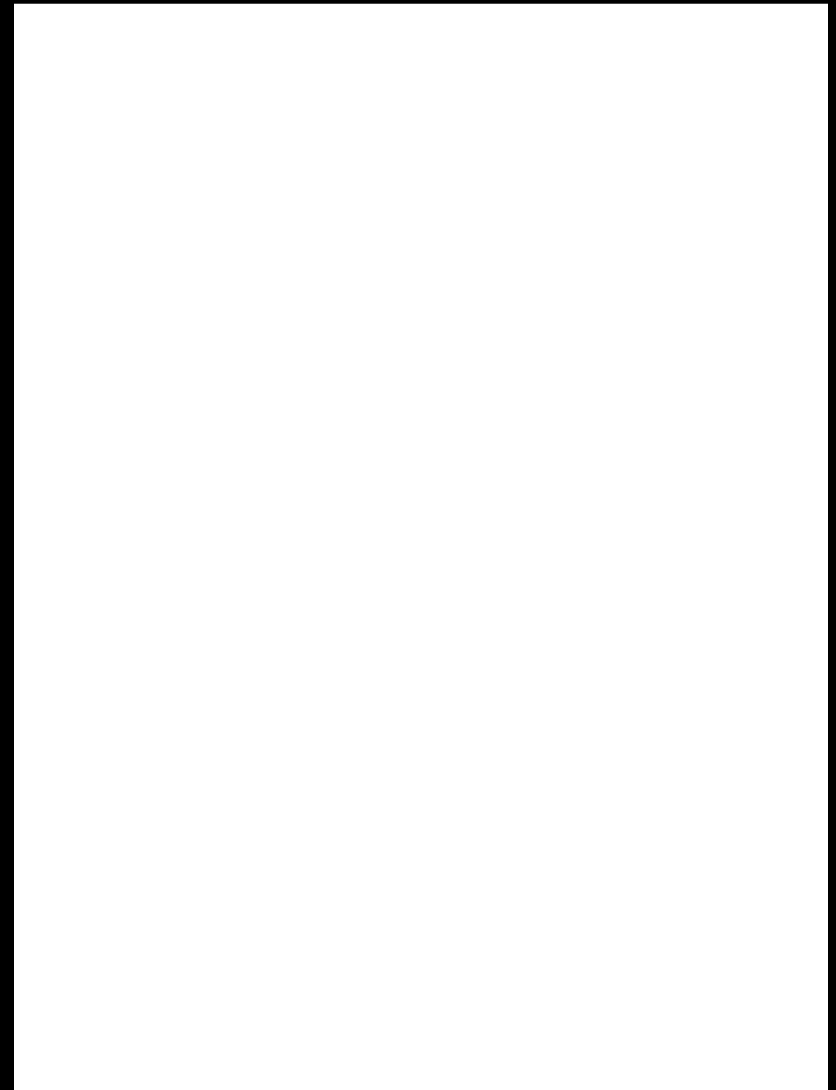
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Airtime

May/June 2002 Vol. 5 No. 3





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Novice Coordinator Sid Kendall leaves no stone unturned during the Novice #2 prerun inspection.

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This is a large advertisement for the 2002 BC Rally Championship. At the top, it says '2002 BC RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP 2002' and 'WEST COAST RALLY ASSOCIATION'. Below this is a large banner for 'SPECIALTY SUBARU' with a starburst logo. The bottom section features several sponsor logos: 'DRIVER FOR THE AUTO ENTHUSIAST', 'RIVERSIDE CERTIGARD', 'OMP' with the website 'www.ompwins.com', 'POLARIS FULL SPEED AHEAD', 'rallyequipment.com', 'Driver's Edge AUTOSPORT', and 'Automobilias'. There is also a small logo for 'rocket'.

Pace Notes: Message from the Publisher

Hey Folks!

Well I am back in the saddle and pleased to be heading up Airtime once again. Many thanks to Bill for issue two and to Budd Stanley for all the articles. I hope you enjoy our latest updates from the world of rally both at home and around North America. Inside you will find insightful articles as well as final standings for Pacific Forest Rally, Big Horn, the WCRA Novice TSD events recent SCCA events and much more... I hope you enjoy.

If you have any comments, articles or photos that you wish to have published, please forward them to me, or Budd, via email. mikael@rallybc.com or budd@rallybc.com

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CARS Championship Standings

CHAMPIONSHIP STANDINGS (after 4/9 rounds):

1 Erickson & Pat Richard	50 points
3 Comrie-Picard	36
4 Jean-Sebastien Besner	27
5 Levac	25
6 Thomson	21
7 Tom McGeer	20
8 Brian Scott	18

Coast to Coast Continued...

where we looked across the valley to spectacular mountains and giant waterfalls. It really was picture perfect. If those organizers had factored in some 1 minute pauses for pictures, I could show you just how grand it was. If you want to go stage rallying, without a roll cage, I recommend Coast to Coast. It's the closest you'll get on an organized event. There are many summer TSDs that are just not exciting enough for the driver. This is not one of them. I'll be back next year if they keep those speeds up.

Coast to Coast Continued...

him sleep for a while. When I ask him if he needs to sleep, he just says “thanks” and beams back into his coma. He’s too big to push out of the car while it’s moving, so I plan on killing him at the end of stage. I’ll have to make my excuses to his mother after the rally so that is not a concern during the rally. Unfortunately, he cannot sleep all the way. I’m trying to drive and read the route book. But turn left at 60.87km means nothing when my odo reads just 58 something at that point. At 72kph, I fly past an intersection. I have to wake him. His eyes are open, and he’s talking, but he’s still asleep. Ok, he says, if we meet a bridge in 2km we’re right. We don’t. Screech, turn, and fly back down to the junction. Now we’re moving. We pass car #10 (who should be 2 minutes behind us) sometime later. We should have had this section on video. It was a blast. We made up the time very quickly and thankfully nothing was coming the other way. Going into the rally we shared the lead in the series with John McLaren and Brian Wende. Brian was absent, and John was wearing a big smile during day 1. Things were going his way. Well, this is rallying, and there’s always a BUT. When the scores came in that night, John was not doing as well as he thought. His navigator had used the MPH figure in the route book to do his calculations instead of the KPH. Oh dear, that’s a pity. We’re leading the novice category after day 1 and John’s over 100 points behind us.

After driving most of day 1 being totally dejected, pondering if it was even going to be worthwhile doing most of the remaining events, day 2 dawns and the fight is most definitely on. We now know what equipment we can rely on and with careful planning and lots of work on Owen’s part, we can do it. 2nd to the last stage we round a bend to be greeted with an instruction that says “Bear right then over bridge”. Well I can bear left and go over a bridge or bear right and hope that around the next bend there is a bridge. Owen’s no clue. I choose left. Some of the others choose right and are left high and dry when the bridge fails to appear. Shouldn’t happen, but that’s rallying. The last curve ball was a bad instruction that said turn right about 2km before you could turn right. In TSDs you hardly ever see another competitor during a stage. Imagine my surprise to see car #5 come down the road towards me, closely followed by car #1 who is making a sterling effort to break the sound barrier. The rest of the day is uneventful. We complete the rally and, despite a mistake on my part (while trying to be helpful and do some of the navigator’s job) we have had a reasonable day considering the circumstances. The only thing now is to wait for the scores.

No surprise that we are not in contention for first overall. That dream died with the rally computer. The scores are in quickly. We’ve held on to 1st in class by a whisker. John is 2nd. One more stage and the results would probably be the other way around. It was an emotional roller coaster of an event. We came away with the result we wanted and overcame so many things. We met lots of great people and enjoyed some of the island’s best roads and scenery. There were some sections

Subaru Canadian Rally Championship: Big Horn Rally

Richard’s No Fluke

By Budd Stanley



Richard and McCurdy charge their way to a first place finish

After a 2 month lay-off in the Subaru Canadian Rally Championship, Pat Richard wins the Big Horn Rally in Edson Alberta in his factory Group N WRX. It was the second straight win for the 28-year-old driver from Vancouver, whose first-ever career victory came in the previous national event, the Rallye Perce-Neige Maniwaki in Quebec in February. “I can’t believe I’ve won two in a row. I guess it means the last time was not a fluke,” he said.

Fresh from a competitive outing in the Pirelli International Rally in a Peugeot 206 cup car, Richard returned to the WRX to take a commanding lead over Mitsubishi Lancer Driver Sylvain Erickson in the rally, as well as a giant leap ahead in the Drivers Championship.

The Big Horn Rally is well known as one of the fastest rallies in Canada. Wide smooth roads and long easy bends allow top cars get well over 200kph. Threat of snow in years past, this year’s rally was mostly dry, and gave spectators a good show, as rally cars powered through the towns and surrounding forests.

The battle of the day went to the two Lancers of Andrew Comrie-Picard and American Brian Scott. Trading stage times all day, Comrie-Picard was able to take 3rd place over all from Scott by 21 seconds. This, the second straight rally he’s been on the podium.

From the very start the Subaru Legacy of Kozegi and Westhead had electrical problems ending their chances for a class win. After the service halt, the car was righted and continued on to finish a respectable 3rd in class, 10th over-all beaten by the hard charging Paynters in a factory WRX Wagon, and the privateer WRX of Joel Levac and Eric Bourbonnais

Subaru Canadian Rally Championship: Big Horn Cont...

Group 2 would see Gord and Kathy Olsen win the class in their VW Golf GTI over class rivals Peter Reilly and Ray Felice in a Martini look-alike Ford Focus, by nearly 4 minutes. The Olsens also took the overall win in the regional portion of the rally, dedicated to the Western Canadian Rally Championship.

In the smaller displacement classes, Andrew and Rebecca Miller won the P3 class in the VW Golf GTI over the Nissan Pulsar NX of Yavor and Jesse Klostranec. While Martin Wilson and Dennis Wende finished up with top honours in P1, pushing their little Subaru Justy to victory.

Retirements included two time Western Canadian Champion Janusz Komorowski and Keith Morrison launching their Eagle Talon off the road, and into the scenery after running in the top 5. Sylvain Vincent, Peter Hill and Roger Sanderson retired with mechanical difficulties.

The next event in the Subaru Canadian Rally Championship is only a week away in Calgary Alberta, as the Rocky Mountain Rally gets under way.

Bighorn Final Standings

- 1) Patrick Richard- Subaru
 - 2) Sylvain Erickson- Lancer EVO
 - 3) Andrew Comrie Pickard - Lancer EVO
 - 4) Brian Scott- Lancer EVO
 - 5) John Paynter- Subaru
 - 6) Peter Thomson- Subaru
 - 7) Joel Levac- Subaru
 - 8) Harry Anderson- Eagle Talon
 - 9) Gord Olsen- VW GTI
 - 10) Dave Kozegi- Subaru
 - 11) Bruno Laveridiere- Eagle Talon
 - 12) Peter Reilly- Ford Focus
 - 13) Andrew Miller- VW GTI
 - 14) Zibi Szewczyk- Toyota Celica
 - 15) Maciej Ogrocki- Subaru
 - 16) Richard Penrose- Toyota Corolla
 - 17) Martin Wilson- Subaru Justy
 - 18) Yavor Klostranec- Nissan NX 2000
- DNF
- Sylvain Vincent - Subaru (fuel pump)
Peter Hill - Corolla (clutch)
Sanderson - Nissan Pulsar (engine)
Janusz Komorowski - Eagle Talon (roll over)

Coast to Coast Adventure

by Peter Parsonage

Coast to Coast was a 2 day event on Vancouver Island that counted towards the Pacific North West and BC regional championships. The rally goes back a few years but has not been low in popularity in recent years. The organizers of this year's event were determined to put on a first class event and succeed. The rally started in Duncan on Saturday morning and finished in Nanaimo Sunday afternoon around 3:30pm with an overnight rest in Port Alberni . It lived up to its name and led us from coast to coast, east to west and back again. The island roads are smooth and wide. Lots of shale, gravel and rock. Not so much mud and dust. We were warned at the first driver's briefing that this would be a brisk TSD, and they were right. Lots of sections that required an average around the 70kph mark made for some spirited driving. Just one car was lost early on when they left the road and were unable to continue. For the remainder, we finished and each have our stories to tell. Here's a brief summary of the experiences in car #8. For those of you who don't know, I drive and my 15yo son Owen navigates. I feel the roles will be reversed some time soon. The first stage was uneventful due mainly to the custom rally computer that Ashton and Eric have been putting together. After months of trial and error, all the functions work, the odo is accurate to the metre and doing everything we need. Until...

During the transit to stage 2, the computer failed and took out the stock speedo and odo. We had nothing but a check engine light to cheer us. We're supposed to drive to perfect time and I cannot find out how fast we're going or have any means to determine how far we've gone. We're out of cell phone range already and there's no way to call Ashton. As we wait for the start of the next stage, I manage to identify the problem, disconnect the computer, reset the ECU and get a working speedo and odo. Unfortunately, the new gravel tires are oversized so now the speedo and odo are never going to be right. Owen gets down to some frantic recalculations and we head off on stage 2. About 10km into the stage, we round a corner and see a few water bottles across the road. Must have fallen off someone's truck. Next corner, there's a small overnight bag. As each corner passes we encounter, a tow rope, a bucket, spare oil, a leather jacket, the list is long. At some point (I think it was the leather jacket), it dawns on me that the car in front of us has a rear door that must have come open and they are slowly shedding themselves of all their belongings. It's a historic Saab Sonet and the first clue the crew get is that Rebecca is getting sick due to the exhaust fumes coming into the cabin. It's not going to be their rally. Our times flail between late and early as we chase an odo that drifts massively off target. Add to that the occasional route book inaccuracy and we are pretty much lost (as far as keeping perfect time).

Imagine also, Owen is in the middle of a 10 second countdown. 10...9...8...7... silence. I initially thought he noticed something in the calculations and was distracted. On no. Mr. KnowItAll had stayed up all the previous night playing on his computer. He's asleep. There's no point in trying to keep him awake so I let

WCRA Merrit Rally Challenge continued...

a hard beating in the Pacific Forest Rally the day before, the MRM motorsports MR2 driven by both Budd Stanley and Dwain Jackman was back for more punishment on the Rally cross course. Unfortunately the MR2 had enough rally action for the weekend and would drop out of contention with over heating problems late in the event.

Impressive novice drives also came from the Toyota Truck of Graham Brockley, Robert MacDonald in a Ford Festiva, and the Arson backed TT of Andrew Tilson. All drivers were seen throwing their cars into corners with minimal amount of respect. All the fun would come to an end on Tilsons last run however, as he punctured the oil pan of the TT and left all his oil in the parking lot. Fortunately he finished his run and would finish third in class

After all six runs were in, Jeff Yeung and Piotr Kadlubowski posted fastest combined times of the day, also finishing in that order in they're class. Open AWD class would be won by Shane Anderson in the less powerful Impreza RS, posting consistently good times with the WRX of Cliff Kosterman only three seconds behind. Group 2 would see some of the hardest fought battles of the day, but in the end it was the CRX of Philip Garlick who won the class after an impressive run. Second place would end up a tie between the Chevy Sprint of Dan McLean and the Toyota Celica of Chad Manley, pushing all he could get out of the old car. Finally the Production class was won by the Suzuki Swift GTi of Ren Carrol, with Robert MacDonald and Jason Mardon close behind.

After an exciting day of rallying, teams will be anxiously awaiting the next round in the Rally cross championship which will be held in Merrit August 10th.



Photos courtesy of Jeff Vanderwall



Tearing up the gravel at Round 2 of the Merrit Rally Challenge



WCRA Merrit Rally Challenge

MRC2 Full of Action

Second round of the Merrit Rally Challenge, while having fewer entries, proved to be one of the most exciting events of the year. Cars and drivers of all classes came out for a sunny day's rallying on the temporary circuit laid out at Aspen Planers dry-land-sort. Even a couple of surviving Stage teams made it out for the event, after running the Pacific Forest Rally the day before in the mountains surrounding Merrit.

The day's circuit laid out by Peter Parsonage would consist of a multitude of tight and easy corners as well as a large water splash, left over from rains earlier in the week. Right off the bat, Western Canadian Rally Champion Janusz Komorowski attacked the course in his Open classed Eagle Talon. Posting fastest times in his first 2 runs of the course, Komorowski looked like he was going to walk away with top honours. Luck wouldn't be on Janusz's side this weekend though. After pulling out of the Pacific Forest Rally the day before with 6 punctured tires, Komorowski rolled his Talon 2 and a half times after digging his wheels into a soft corner. After a brief pause in action, the car was righted and the driver was ready to continue his attack on the course. Unfortunately the car was disqualified due to damages incurred in the roll over.

While the early leader was out of the event, the action on the course never let up. The Subaru WRX's of Kadlubowski, Kosterman and Yeung where all posting mid to low 70 second times, along with the Impreza RS of Shane Anderson and Andrew Tilsons Clarksdale Audi TT.

In the 2 wheel drive classes, Dan McLean and Philip Garlick were pushing they're cars to the limit in hopes of top times, and also displaying impressive drives. After

Story and photos continue on page 14

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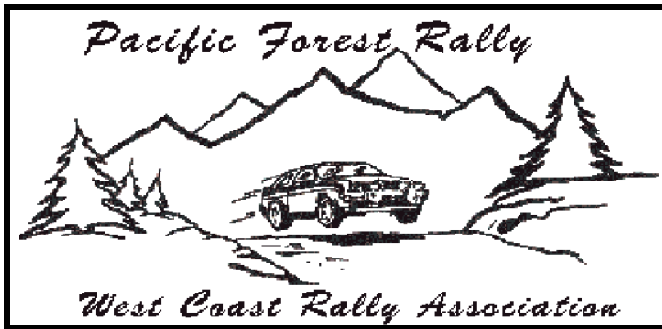
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Round 4 of the 2002 Western Canadian Rally Championship

WCRA: Pacific Forest Rally

Arefi Wins Pacific Forest

By Budd Stanley

In only his fourth ever rally, Mehran Arefi and Co-driver Dan McLean held off a field of competitive cars and drivers, to win the 2002 Pacific Forest Rally held in Merrit B.C. Driving a Subaru Impreza WRX, Arefi showed great poise, setting top four times in all stages, moving his way to the top as others dropped out with punctures and mechanical failures.

Only in Canada would you find rally stages in June with fresh snow on the ground. The slippery conditions would lead to a couple of unscheduled trips into the forest. The wet muddy stages would also pull up sharp rocks that would play havoc with all crews by the end of the day. Two teams were sent home early due to too many punctures. Two-time Western Canadian Champion; Janusz Komorowski experienced 6 punctures in the first 3 stages with 4 on the third effectively ending his rally. The 323 GTX of Foster and Perry also experienced the same bad luck as multiple flats ended their rally on the very next stage.

Rally favourites Scott Trinder and Janice Damitio both received 10-minute time penalties entering the second stage, and found themselves fighting each other and the rest of the pack as they climbed back into contention. Scott and co-driver Bob Trinder pushed hard trying to gain back time, catching a couple of punctures along the way as they made up the lost time. The day was going well for both teams, each where keeping their cars on the road, yet posting fastest stage times.

With both teams in the top 4, Janice Damitio and co-driver Amity Trowbridge won the final 2 stages of the day and moved they're Open class Eagle Talon into 2nd place overall, first in class. After a hard fight the Trinders finished 3rd overall in they're Production Subaru Impreza, second in class.

After crashing on Stage two and loosing 10 minutes stuck on a rock, the Toyota MR2 of Budd Stanley and co-driver Dwane Jackman then ran 18km on a flat tire through stage 3. After receiving yet another 7 minutes in time penalties, the

WCRA Connection in Scotland

Pat Richard wows Scottish Rally Enthusiasts.

A storming drive by Canadian Pat Richard on his first visit to Scotland wowed fellow competitors and crowds as the 206 Super Cup driver dominated last weekend's Scottish International Rally, held near Dumfries, Scotland.

The Vancouver-based 28 year old who currently shares the joint lead in the Canadian Championship, led from the first stage even though he was still getting used to right hand drive and two wheel drive rather than his usual Subaru Impreza.

He's splitting his year between contesting events in Canada and North America with competing in the British-based Peugeot 206 Super Cup in a bid to learn something new to North American rallying –pacenotes.

Together with co-driver Alyson Marlow, Pat has been fine tuning his pace notes and quickly took a hold of the 206 Super Cup at the weekend. "I never really expected to be on the pace this early in the season especially after missing the Rally of Wales which clashed with one in Canada," he said. However his dominance was cut short on the final stage with a dramatic roll dropping him out of the lead and out of the rally. The pair took a fast left hand corner a little too tightly and a rock launched them into three rolls the car ending up lodged on a tree trunk in the undergrowth. "We were ready to get going again but the suspension was broken so that was us out of the rally," said Pat. "Its really disappointing not to finish but we never thought we would even by vying for the lead at this stage of the year so I'm pleased we have at least shown we can be on the pace." After their mishap, Marko Ramanen of Finland moved on from second place to take the win. "I expect to have a few more mishaps while I learn the notes, but since its only my second event I'm not too worried about it."

Series regulars were caught off-guard as Richard led from the start of the event, at times taking more than 1 second per mile off of the rising stars, who are all vying for a works Super 1600 drive at the end of the season. The Peugeot Super Cup is the same series that jump-started the careers of current and past world champions Richard Burns and Colin McRae. With Pat now heading back to Canada for the next round of that championship the race is on to reshell the car in time for the next round of the 206 Super Cup, the International Jim Clark Rally, held next month. The Edinburgh based event will provide another steep learning curve for the Canadian who has never rallied on tarmac before. "This year is all about learning and its just one lesson after another," he said. "I have no idea how the car will handle on the Jim Clark and it doesn't look like I will get much time to test the car before the rally starts, but I can't wait to give it a go."

CARS: Rocky Mountain Rally

by Budd Stanley

After fighting with back-to-back winner Pat Richard in the early stages of the rally, Sylvain Erickson pulled away after Richards retirement to take a convincing win by over 4 minutes on the closest competition. Driving a Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution, this is Ericksons first win since the Rallye Perce-Neige in 2001.

Despite puncturing the radiator on a large jump on day one, Sylvain and brother Philippe Erickson made over night repairs and managed to put in the dominating performance on the second day. Second place Peter Thomson, running a Subaru Impreza WRX inherited the spot after the demise of Richard, but could never catch the speed that Erickson was posting, despite a hard push.

Conditions made the going tough, as remnants of a snowfall made the roads wet and muddy. Many cars were caught out by the slippery conditions, and snowbanks saved many of those who underestimated the conditions.

It was a close fought battle for third as the Lancer of Picard and the Subaru of Levac battled through out the day changing positions many times. In the end Picards Mitsubishi was able to overcome brake problems to take the place from Levac and earning a well-deserved seat on the podium at the end of the day.

Levac took some consolation by winning the production 4 class, while Gord Olsen, of Brooks, Alberta, driving a VW Golf, was fifth overall and winner of the Group 2 division for modified two-wheel-drive cars. John Paynter was sixth in a Subaru Impreza and second in the top production class. The smaller-engined production class winners were Andrew Miller, 11th overall in a VW Golf; Yavor Klostranec, 14th in a Nissan Pulsar and first in Production 2; and Martin Wilson, of Vancouver, 15th in a Subaru Justy, and winning the Production 1 class.

Two time Western Canadian Rally Champion, Janusz Komorowski ran in the top 5 all day until his luck ran out, blowing the turbo charger in his open classed Eagle Talon. This after a roll over in the Big Horn rally only 7 days earlier. Other notable retirements from the rally included Sylvain Vincent, who's Subaru Impreza suffered a broken fuel pump, and Bruno Laverdiere, who had an engine failure on his Eagle Talon.

The next round of the Subaru Canadian Rally Championship will be the Rally Baie des Chaleurs, July 5-7th in New Richmond Quebec.

Driver	Navigator	Car	Time
1 Sylvain Erickson,	Philippe Erickson,	Mitsubishi Lancer	1h31m21s
2 Peter Thomson,	Rod Hendricksen,	Subaru WRX	1h35m52
3 Andrew Comrie-Picard,	Dave Shindle,	Mitsubishi Lancer	1h38m09s
4 Joel Levac,	Eric Bourbonnais	Subaru WRX	1h39m39s
5 Gord Olsen	Kathy Olsen	VW GTI	1h40m40s
6 John Paynter,	Clarke Paynter,	Subaru Impreza	1h42m59s
7 Jeff Smith,	Miles McEwing,	VW Beetle	1h44m47s
8 Nick Boucher	Pat Lavigne,	Subaru Legacy	1h45m44s.

Pacific Forest Rally Continued...

team set off to catch the rest of the field along with Trinder and Damitio. With out use of a route book the MR2 was able to set top 5 times and gain 15 minutes back on the competition. After a hard push, the time lost was too much for the team, and the MR2 would end the day second in Group 2, 9th overall. The winning Group 2 car of Richard Penrose and first time co-driver Andrew Tilson had an error free day, and drove a patient rally to finish comfortably in 6th overall, and winning the Group 2 class in his Toyota Corolla.

The upset of the day goes to the Corolla of Ted Wilkinson and Bill Westhead. After replacing an alternator in the middle of the night before the rally, the team found themselves leading the rally after the top 3 cars incurred 10 minute time penalties. Wilkinson and Westhead continued to post competitive times through out the day and continued to lead the rally entering the final stage. Unfortunately half way into the stage, the car bogged to a stop with what was described as fuel problems. Wilkinson was able to limp the car out of the stage and to the rally finish, but not after loosing 13 minutes on the stage, moving the team back to 5th place overall. Fighting Wilkinson's Corolla for class honours was the 73' Toyota Corolla of Peter Hill and new co-driver Leanne Junnila. Driving conservatively all day to save the car, the team caught a rock on stage 4, and heavily damaged a ball joint. After time lost on the next stage, the joint was replaced at service and the crew went on to win the class after the misfortunes of Wilkinson, and take 4th overall.

In a rally full of scraps, the super light weight division was just as good as the heavy weights. Martin Wilson and Dennis Wende were in a day long battle with the Geo Metro of Warren Brough and Chris Davis. Despite knocking the rear suspension loose on the Subaru Justy, Wilson was able to adapt to the new handling of the car and pull out the victory over the Metro by 1 minute and 20 seconds.

The Western Canadian Rally Championship will take a long break until October, when the Mountain Trials rally will be run in Cache Creek B.C. After the three events in 5 weeks the cars will get some much needed attention.



SCCA: Rim of the World

PALMDALE, California - 'America's Toughest Rally' took little time asserting its position, eliminating one key player on the very first stage, and picking off several others in no time at all. Paul Choiniere lead most of the evening, taking good advantage of the clear air from his first on the road position, but handed off the lead to teammate Mark Higgins when drivetrain problems sidelined the 8-time champion late in the evenings stages.

Paul Choiniere's season has been a tough one, now with four consecutive non-finishes, but both he and his Hyundai were showing real signs of them teams commitment to the program – winning one stage outright and tying for best time on another. Hyundai's Motorsports Manager Toni Honsowetz was clear this morning: "we're not jumping to any conclusions on the cause of this failure until we do a full analysis – we've got four weeks to get the problems solved before STPR (round 5); we will get it sorted."

Subaru continues to have rocky goings in this cruel sport, as *Mark Lovell* rolled his WRX in SS4, losing some time, but managing to bring his now well wrinkled car back to the mid-evening service for some very hasty bodywork and suspension adjustment. The car still mechanically sound, the crack Prodrive crew was able to manage even a few cosmetic repairs to the car in the short (about 20 minutes) time they had before he and faithful co-driver Steve Turvey roared back off into the darkness.

In the *overall standings*, the works teams are back on top, with Hyundai's Mark Higgin's leading by a fairly comfortable 30 seconds over Subaru's Ramana Lagemann, who finished the first day 10 seconds ahead of current Driver's Championship points leader David Higgins. Mark Lovell, despite his dramatic rollover, holds onto 4th position, less than a minute behind the leading Hyundai - a remarkable achievement, and 2001 Gr N champion *Karl Scheible's* first drive in 2002 has him in a comfortable 5th place.

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SCCA Rim of the World

Independent Drivers to watch in day two include the Canadian duo of *Scott* and *Bob Trinder* – who started the rally in 32nd position – and now occupy 8th place in the innovative, automatic transmissioned Subaru Impreza from the fiercely independent team of Knight Racing. *John Nelson* started his PGT Subaru Impreza 2.5RS in 59th place, and worked all the way up to 16th, and series regulars *Craig Peeper* and *Ian Bevan* have done similarly in their Group N Subaru SRX, gaining 28 positions, now in 14th.

As is always the case at Rim, the *punishing high-desert environment* took its toll on equipment, with 18 Pro series retirements over the 2-day rally. Gratefully, only 2001 Overall Champion Mark Lovell's fully functional but thoroughly wrinkled Subaru WRX looked the worse for wear at the conclusion of the event, with nearly all retirements coming from equipment failures caused by the pounding the cars take over the challenging and fiercely dusty Angeles National Forest roads. Said Lovell at the finish: "We are lucky to be here, and despite the less than perfect weekend for us, we really do enjoy this event, and look forward to being here next year – the (organizing) committee has made huge strides forward from last year, and the field of cars was truly impressive."

Visiting Subaru/Prodrive *WRC driver Petter Solberg* had the opportunity to experience the Rim of the World roads firsthand, and agreed with what other visitors to the event have said in the past – that the conditions here are very similar to the Acropolis and Cypress rallies – two of the toughest and most challenging rallies in the World Rally Championship.

2001 Group N Champion Karl Scheible, this time rallying in Open class with father and series veteran Wayne Scheible co-driving had a terrific welcome back to the Championship, taking the third place podium, and announcing that he would also be at his home event and Round 5 of the Championship, Susquehannock Trail, at the end of this month.

The **Drivers Championship**, as the series heads to its mid-year point, is firmly in the hands of David Higgins, who at (unofficially) 67 points now has a substantial margin over brother Mark Higgins at 50, and Mark Lovell, at 44. Mark Nelson was this weekend's fast riser, earning 10 points, tying him with Rhys Millen at 25 points. The **Co-Drivers' Championship**, by virtue of the frequent co-driver changes at Subaru and with David Higgins (who has changed co-drivers for the last three events) is a completely different story. Hyundai's Michael Gibson in the lead at 50, Subaru's Steve Turvey in second at 43, and Mitsubishi's Garry Cowan tied with Independent Charles Bradley at 25 for third.

The SCCA ProRally Championship switches coasts for Round 5, heading to the lush eastern forests in the Endless Mountains of north central Pennsylvania for the oldest and fastest rally in the series: the Susquehannock Trail Rally, on June 1.