



Officers strike trouble in Classic Trial

Press release, Friday September 4, 2009

Tweed Heads, Friday September 4: All hopes of winning the 2,260km 2009 Frontier Services Classic Outback Trial are now over for David and Kate Officer after they suffered transmission problems in their 1970 Mitsubishi Colt Galant on this morning's Rocky River stage near Glen Innes, dropping them from a comfortable lead to last place as the field of 35 pre-1996 Historic Rally Cars arrived in the Tweed area this afternoon.

The former Australian Rally Champions came to a halt in the 47 kilometre-long stage, but their service crew had to wait for their teammates, Steve Ashton and Ro Nixon in their similar Mitsubishi Galant, before they could help them.

Their rally car has now been repaired, but with just three timed stages to go tomorrow, they are out of all contention for even a podium finish.

"We're gutted," said David Officer, who with his wife Kate won last year's 7,600km Red Centre to Gold Cast Trial in the same car they originally purchased for \$50 back in 2003. "But that's rallying. You have to take your luck as it comes."

Their demise has left fellow Victorians Terry Naish and Ross Runnalls comfortably in the lead in their 1970 Datsun 1600, more than three minutes ahead of Ashton/Nixon, with the New South Wales crew of Michael Pinckham and Tom Flegl now third, nearly 10 minutes further back, in their 1982 Holden Commodore sedan.

The NSW Peugeot 504 Ti crew of Andy Crane and Dave Anderson are now fifth, with Queensland's Michael and Peter Giddings close behind them in sixth place in their 1970 model Datsun 180B.

Classic Outback Trial Competitors get their first taste of RRA action tonight when they tackle the Repco Rally Australia Super Special Stage on the streets of Murwillumbah under lights, with the first car scheduled to run the course at 7.45pm and the last to start at 8.42pm.

Tomorrow, Trial entrants will compete against the clock at full rally speeds over three of the actual unsealed Repco Rally Australia special stages used by competitors in the World Rally Championship – two immediately after the WRC cars and the last ahead of the International rally field – giving entrants the same unique driving experience as RRA entrants.

The Classic Outback Trial cars will compete on the Lynches (Dayco 1) stage from 8.55am, with the last car due to start at 9.28am.

The COT cars will start the Eden (Bosch 1) special stage from 9.30am until 10.03am and the Classic field will precede the Repco Rally Australia field on the Hillyards (CTREK West 1) special stage after the Kyogle lunchbreak, with the first car due to start at 12.40pm and the last at 1.13pm.

While their cars will pre-date those used by WRC competitors by a minimum of 14 years – and up to 43 years in the case of the oldest vehicle, a 1966 Ford Falcon – spectators can still be assured of spectacular driving.

The Trial finishes at Tweed Heads later that afternoon, with the first cars arriving at the Jack Evans Boat Harbour Car Park from 3.00pm.

The Trial's official Gala Presentation Dinner will be held tomorrow evening at the event's headquarters at the Tweed Ultima. Most entrants, service crews and event officials will then be enthusiastic spectators on the final day of Repco Rally Australia on Sunday September 6.

Further event information

For event information please contact Philip Bernadou Phone: 0412 498 602, or email: pora1@bigpond.net.au Website: www.classicoutbacktrial.com.au

For media information and publication-quality photographs visit 'Media' on the Trial's website home page,

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For more information on Frontier Services and Outback Links.

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