

**P**AUL MacLENNAN IS A TORONTO FIREMAN; JOHN WILSON IS AN ASSISTANT PROFESSOR IN THE DEPARTMENT OF COMPUTER SCIENCE AT THE UNIVERSITY OF WATERLOO. This wouldn't mean much if MacLennan and Wilson didn't like to drive cars—but they do, which meant trouble for the 59 other crews that challenged them in this year's running of the world's longest car rally. These 59 crews collapsed and crashed, they blew up and they bogged down, they got lost and they rolled, and at the end only 26 survived. But leading the survivors, the winners of the 1966 'Shell 4000,' were a Toronto fireman and an assistant university professor.

Driving for six days, over 4,100 miles of some of the most disastrous roads any continent can offer, MacLennan and Wilson led a team of Ford-Lotus Cortinas to First, Third, and Ninth overall, and the manufacturers team prize. Their performance provided a classic confrontation between a well-planned, well-executed team operation, and the dogged determination of individual, and unsupported, private owners.

The 1558-cc Lotus Cortinas were entered by Ford of Canada, and prepared by Paul Cooke, crew chief of Chuck Rathgeb's Comstock Racing Team of Toronto. Cooke acted as team manager *en route*, assisted by former Ford of Canada driver Lloyd Howell and Ford of England competition director Henry Taylor. It is also a matter of record that Cooke prepared the Anglia in which MacLennan and Wilson won this year's Canadian Winter Rally and the Mustang they drove to second place in last year's Shell 4000. MacLennan and Wilson had originally been declared winners last year, but were displaced to Second on a successful appeal by Klaus Ross and John Bird in a factory Volvo.

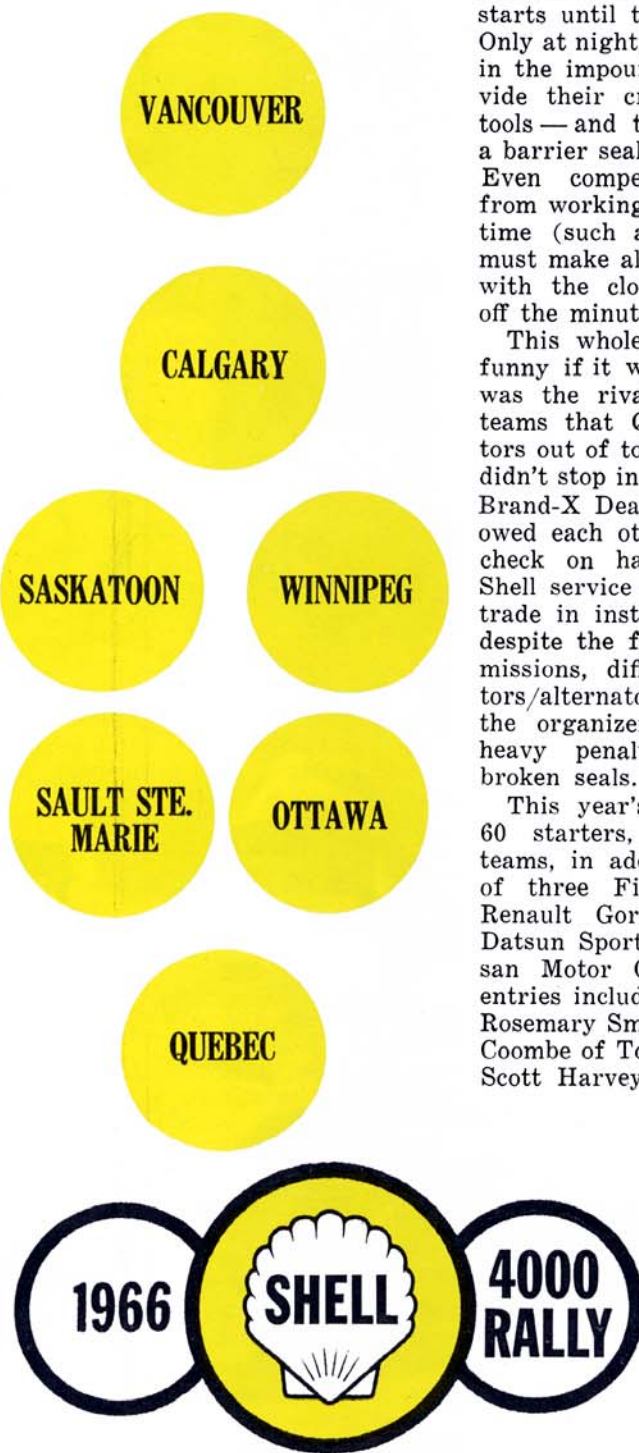
It was perhaps poetic justice that while MacLennan and Wilson should win this year, their strongest challenge should come from a privately-entered Volvo driven by Ewan (Pip) Graham and Henry Acteson, from Alberta. Last year they finished Fourth overall and took the private entry award, and this year they moved up to Second overall to win the same award again.

A factor designed to even out the competition between factory and independent entries—and at the same time make the rally a genuine test of the machinery—is the approach toward servicing. Unlike European rallies, where factory cars are serviced with the logistics of a military operation, the Shell 4000

places an outright ban on service crews. They must not be seen anywhere on the route, let alone touch the cars from the moment the rally starts until the moment it finishes. Only at night, for a brief 15 minutes in the impound area, can they provide their crews with advice and tools—and then only from behind a barrier sealing off the *parc ferme*. Even competitors are forbidden from working on their cars on dead time (such as a lunch stop), and must make all repairs on rally time, with the clock relentlessly ticking off the minutes.

This whole service bit would be funny if it weren't so serious. Such was the rivalry among the major teams that Q-cars trailed competitors out of towns to make sure they didn't stop in to visit their 'Friendly Brand-X Dealer'. Competitors shadowed each other, even off route, to check on hanky-panky. And non-Shell service stations did a roaring trade in instant pit stops. All this despite the fact that engine, transmissions, differentials, and generators/alternators were all sealed by the organizers at the start, with heavy penalties for missing or broken seals.

This year's Shell 4000 attracted 60 starters, with manufacturers' teams, in addition to the Cortinas, of three Fiat 850 coupes, three Renault Gordini R-8s, and three Datsun Sports 1600s from the Nissan Motor Co. Individual factory entries included a Sunbeam Imp for Rosemary Smith of Ireland and Ann Coombe of Toronto, a Barracuda for Scott Harvey of Dearborn Heights



By Don Grey

**It was an epic  
battle of survival  
that lasted  
for over 4000 miles on  
the worst roads  
in North America!**

and Mike Kerry of Toronto, and a Jeep Wagoneer (two-wheel drive) for Peter Lerch and Blair Bunch of Quebec.

Backing up the factory entries to some extent were 15 cars entered by automobile dealers and accessory firms. The remaining 30 cars—exactly half the field—came from private owners. And of these, nine were all-American crews competing for a special trophy presented by the National Road Rally Association.

The cars were divided into six









classes, with the dividing lines at 1150 cc (70 cu.in. and below), 1600 cc (97 cu.in.), 2000 cc (122 cu. in.), 3000 cc (183 cu. in.), 5000 cc (305 cu.in.) and above. On the normal road sections of the rally all classes were scored on an equal basis — ten points for every minute early or late at any control. Revived this year was the adoption of the European system of allowing cars to arrive early as long as they clocked in on time. On

the special stages, however, run over roads closed to the public, each class was scored separately — the fastest car in the class rating zero, and the remainder fined one point for every six seconds they were slower.

There were eight special stages, ranging in length from 6.4 miles to 37.7 miles, with a total of 181.5 miles. As expected, they played a vital part in the outcome of the rally — both when they were run and in

Overall winners, Paul MacLennan and John Wilson slide the Comstock prepared Lotus Cortina down a cottage road in the Ontario resort country.



Winch and dig—a scene typical of the rally. U.S. crews in front and the third team Cortina finally got out of the mudhole by helping each other.



A rising star on the European rally scene, Roger Clark of England, with Robin Edwardes of Quebec navigating, drove his Cortina to third overall.

Snow and ice still cover Clear Lake in Riding Mountain National Park as John Trudeau punches the time clock at the finish of the special stage.



a Ford strategy session before the rally.

Ford brought over factory driver Roger Clark from England to partner Robin Edwardes of Quebec in the second Cortina. In the third car they paired Torontonians Eppie Wietzes and Brent Davies. If each driver went flat out on the special stages it was likely that Clark would give points wholesale not only to the opposition, but to his two team-

mates as well. So even if all three cars stayed clean on the normal road sections of the rally, their drivers would be so busy carving each other up on the special stages that the team would be knocked out of overall contention. Since there was no serious opposition to the Cortinas in Class Two (private Volkswagens and Mini Coopers, and the factory Datsuns, of which two dropped out the first day), Ford's solution was

for all three cars to run the special stages at the same speed. A simple answer, but how do you work it with three cars running as much as half an hour apart.

Well, MacLennan and Wilson were first Cortina on the road, so Wilson was issued with a supply of bags of brightly colored dye. In the early part of a special stage he would heave a dye-marker on the road every

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Tom Grimshaw does a running recon for Tom Samida, when they took to the fields with their Valiant to avoid cars (opposite) stuck in the gumbo.



Roundup time! The Vincent/Catto GT-350 Mustang bulldogs a calf in the Columbia River Canyon. Calf was tapped, got away with a few bruises.

Seen here on an easy section in Ontario, Pip Graham/Henry Acteson from Alberta took second overall and private entry honors in their Volvo.



The Peugeot of Frank Curran/Ron Carney has 135,000 on the odo, has finished the rally three times, this year 2nd in class and 10th overall.



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four minutes. Toward the end he cut the interval to a dye-marker every minute. When Clark/Edwardes and Wietzes/Davies ran the special stage they simply adjusted their pace to that indicated by the dye-markers (easily visible) and, hopefully, sail into the control within six seconds of MacLennan/Wilson.

This became quite a game as the rally proceeded, with other competitors desperately trying to obtain similar dyes to confuse the Cortinas, and Ford holding mock board meetings to decide the dye color for the day. (As insurance, Wilson also tried writing his special stage elapsed times on a slip of paper and leaving it at the control for the other two team cars. This worked fine for a while — until the opposition caught on and walked off with the slips before the second and third Cortinas arrived!)

The planning ended, and the time for putting it into practice began, when the first car rolled down the starting ramp in Vancouver to start the first leg of the rally — an 830-mile overnight run through the Coast Mountains and the Rockies to Calgary. Almost immediately, rally organizers Jim Gunn and Peter Bone hauled the cars off the paved highway into a series of tight, twisting dirt roads. With stiff averages and controls, in some cases less than four miles apart, virtually everyone dropped a minute (and ten points). This still left them on an even footing, but it also gave them clear warning that the organizers had done their homework.

Then came 'The Cascades,' the first and longest of the special stages, a 37.7-mile corkscrew of unfenced gravel road whose best description is its name. Racked out originally by miners and their donkeys, 'The Cascades' has become something of a tradition on the Shell 4000.

A paved run through the Selkirk and Rocky Mountains brought competitors to the Alberta foothills for a 19.8-mile special stage through the Crowsnest Forest. Viciously curved and snow-covered at first, the loose gravel road opened out into long stretches that had the big cars flying.

The Ford dye-works began to synchronize its operations, with Clark/Edwardes recording 18:07 (zero penalty), Wietzes/Davies 18:15 (1 point) and MacLennan/Wilson 18:21 (2 points).

Rolling into Calgary after 20 hours on the road, eight of the original 60 starters were missing. Among them was one of the Renault team, a Datsun 1600 that went off the road in the Cascades, and a second Datsun, driven by 1965 winner Klaus Ross, whose engine seized when an oil line parted 14 miles south of Calgary.

The second day's 630-mile run to Saskatoon began by going back into the foothills of the Rockies for a 32-mile special stage over mud, snow, slime and

gravel in the Bow River Forest.

Leaving the foothills, the competitors headed for a day-and-a-half over the flat, flat Prairies, where even the most ingenious rally organizer is hard pressed to come up with challenging roads. Before reaching Saskatoon, however, the drivers were offered another special stage, this one 21.8 miles of dusty gravel through the army camp at Wainwright, Alberta.

Merriman (Chevelle) continued to confound everyone with a time of 18:02, followed by Floyd/Stedelbauer (Olds) at 18:17, Carter/Silvera (Chevy) at 18:46 and Harvey/Kerry (Barracuda) at 18:51. Graham/Acteson (Volvo) turned 19:33, the Cortinas 20:34 and Rosemary Smith 20:54, to lead their classes without penalty, but the Henderson/Gallop Falcon came unstuck, literally. A sharp turn forced Henderson to spin the car and it came to a halt with its front wheels barely on the road, and the back wheels halfway down a 45-degree bank. Before they could move it, the corner also caught Carter/Silvera and the Chevrolet's sliding back-end whacked the Falcon's nose. Henderson got out of there in a hurry by backing down the slope and motoring along a gully until he could rejoin the road. The excursion cost him 5½ minutes, the only time he was not fastest Class Five car on the special stages.

Shortly after the special stage the last remaining opposition to Smith/Coombe for the *Coupe des Dames* trophy was eliminated. Diana Carter/Terry Gillies took time out to try to rejuvenate the engine of their Fiat 850; soon afterward were disqualified at a special control for not maintaining 80 percent of the average speed set. (Such controls were established each day to discourage competitors from stopping for repairs and then bombing down the road above the legal limits in an effort to catch up. They were also used to disqualify drivers maintaining more than 120 percent of the set averages.)

Five more cars had joined the casualty list, leaving 47 to begin the third day's 630-mile run to Winnipeg. This was soon reduced to 46 when a Mustang flipped on a 6.4-mile special stage just outside Saskatoon. The run was too short to affect the scores to any extent, but there was always the Prairies' special hazard — gumbo — waiting to trap the unwary. Dry, sunny weather had dulled the edge of that weapon, and the front-running cars escaped unscathed. But when the tail-enders began slithering and sliding through the churned-up roads a couple of local farmers allowed "as it was still a mite greasy," and just down the road three of their brethren with tractors were doing a lucrative trade pulling cars through a 200-yard quagmire.

Moving into Manitoba, the competitors were presented with their sixth special stage — 19.5 miles of dirt road through Riding Mountain National Park. Easy as special stages go, it was not easy enough for Merriman/Peters. After setting fastest time on the five previous stages, the engine in their Chevelle called it quits and blew up.

Caked in mud, the cars limped and staggered into Winnipeg, the half-way mark in the rally. Ten more of their number were missing, including the last of the Renault team and three cars bogged in the gumbo. But for the Cortinas, it was first down and goal to go. Except for the Merriman/Peters dropout, the leaders stayed in the same order as at Saskatoon.

The fourth leg of the rally, 910 miles around the top of Lake Superior to Sault Ste. Marie, was the longest and easiest, because there is only one road, and most of that is paved. But, as so often happens, it is on the easy legs that concentration lapses and mistakes are made. The day began with a 28.3-mile special stage through Manitoba's Sandilands Forest Reserve, and Scott Harvey cut the Barracuda loose for a time of 23:37, which was more than 1½-minutes faster than anyone else. Many of the cars drowned their ignitions in 100-foot long waterholes, but the leaders swam through without penalty.

Shortly after Sandilands the rally was routed into the United States for the first time since its inception, with a brief 40-mile run through northern Minnesota to Rainy River, Ontario. It was just about an hour later, on a simple elapsed-time section, that Clark/Edwardes made the mistake that was to cost them second overall.

Edwardes had been drowsing as they pulled into a combination time control/gas stop in Fort Frances, and they were a couple of miles down the road when Edwardes suddenly realized he had not punched in while Clark was checking the car. They dashed back, but the error cost them five minutes and 50 points, moving them to third place behind Graham/Acteson. It was the day's only change amongst the leaders. Behind them, though, six more cars had succumbed and the scorers at the 'Soo' tallied just 31 runners.

The last two days — 615 miles from Sault Ste. Marie to Ottawa, and 400 miles from there to the finish — were by all odds the busiest of the rally. But they started out badly for Graham/Acteson and Smith/Coombe. The clutch on the Volvo's Halda Speedpilot packed up in a maze of forestry roads just outside the Soo, and they lost three minutes getting back on the beam. This bumped their score to 76, barely 11 points less than Clark/Edwardes.

Smith/Coombe were more unfortunate. A rapid sequence of turns caught the navigator off route and while turning the car around, Rosemary put it off the road. It took them 33 minutes to get out and the 330 points dropped them from Fourth to Eighth overall.

There were no special stages to whet the drivers' appetites and they hardly needed them, because this was Winter Rally country — a special stage in all but name. For almost 400 miles the route carved an erratic course through back roads and lumber trails, past farm and field, around lake and stream, dipping, weaving and bobbing like a side-winder with the hiccups. Before they knew it, the drivers were in Ottawa.

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Twenty-seven cars growled into life for the final 400-mile run to the finish, and in the entire distance the smoothest surface they encountered was the last special stage of 10 laps over the St. Jovite racing circuit in the Laurentians. After that things rapidly deteriorated from bad to worse to atrocious as organizers Gunn and Bone had one final fling at decimating the ranks. That their route succeeded in knocking out only one more car was not for a want of trying. Mile by diabolical mile the bends got tighter, and the potholes deeper, until in the last 50 miles the boulders looked as if they had been specially quarried for the rally.

In the entire rally only two cars cleaned this section, and they were the Graham/Acteson Volvo and the Clark/Edwardes Cortina, disputing second overall down to the wire. MacLennan and Wilson might have done so, but with a 64-point margin over the Volvo they elected to give up points rather than risk collapse within sight of the finish. And so it was that their Cortina led 25 other survivors past the Plains of Abraham and into the walled city of Quebec to win the toughest Shell 4000 in the event's six-year history.

- Results:
1. Paul MacLennan/John Wilson, Cortina, 32 points, Class 2.
  2. Pip Graham/Henry Acteson, Volvo, 76, Class 3, private entry.
  3. Roger Clark/Robin Edwardes, Cortina, 87, Class 2.
  4. Scott Harvey/Mike Kerry, Barracuda, 119, Class 6.
  5. Gene Henderson/Doug Gallop, Falcon, 283, Class 5, private entry.
  6. Maurice Carter/Bill Silvera, Chevrolet Super Sport, Class 6.
  7. Fritz Hochreuter/Paul Manson, VW 1500, 370, Class 2, private entry.
  8. Rosemary Smith/Ann Coombe, Imp, 502, Class 1, Coupe Des Dames.
  9. Eppie Wietzes/Brent Davies, Cortina, 616, Class 2.
  10. Frank Curran/Ron Carney, Peugeot, 648, Class 3, private entry.

The National Road Rally Association's award for the highest-placed all-American entry went to two of the most popular private entrants in the rally — Lou Batori of New York and Marius Valsamis of Philadelphia.

Scott Harvey (Barracuda) received the award for the best aggregate performance on the special stages, and the sportsmanship trophy went to two fellows who managed to finish a trouble-plagued Austin Mini Cooper — Jim Callon of Sault Ste. Marie and Joe Mazuch of Jacques Cartier, Que.