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INDY 500-SHELL 4000 SPAIN, MONACO GP'S

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SHELL 4000



by Chris Allan

Scott Harvey's battling Barracuda makes it . . . AMC takes team manufacturers prize.

□ Car rallies inevitably leave a chap with weak knees in a hotel room somewhere — this time in the Nova Scotian Hotel of Halifax which is no doubt an extremely pleasant hotel except each year on Saturday, June 8, when the wind veers and blows the fragrant stench of rotting fish in the window.

Weak knees are an occupational hazard in the tedious chore of reporting a car rally and are covered in a special clause written into CT&T's health plan. They come from running between rally offices on the mezzanine floor to bars on the ground floor over an extended period, while officials and CASC committies sit heavy-lidded hearing protests, making decisions, reconsidering decisions, reaffirming decisions and finally revising the whole bloody list of results you filed yesterday.

Being courageous and outspoken you would have to hint that the Shell 4000 rally this year was not an outstanding event. In fact it was quite probably the worst in seven years of traipsing across the big land and left the majority of competitors with little in the

way of challenging memories to justify stiff backsides.

Scott Harvey's victory, while popular because good ol' Scott's a nice chap, was as predictable as a quart bottle of mouthwash in a P.R. man's bathroom. After the shock of three special stages in the first leg which shook 'down the 69 starters suitably, the first three cars at the end ran the rest of the way without a single penalty point nor even the fear of one.

Harvey, with young navigator Ralph Beckman, who celebrated his 22nd birthday the day before the Calgary start, won with eight points in the same Barracuda which carried Harvey to second overall last year. Drivers Paul MacLennan and Tom Jones brought Rambler Americans into second and third respectively with 16 and 18 points. MacLennan, who won for Ford in '66 but is now almost retired from competition, had Jim Peters as navigator. Jones, whose specialty is in autographing hotel room paintings and handing them out as finishers' plaques, drove with John Medwell.

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SHELL 4000



South African rally champion, Ewold van Bergen with loveable Paul Manson navigating wound up fourth in a Datsun with 25 points. Hunter Floyd, another of the American Motors drivers who take parties the same way as speed sections, brought the third Rambler into fifth with navigator Lutz Ecker and 51 points.

Ramblers thus walked away with the manufacturer's team award in only their second year over Norfolk Enterprises of Hudson, Quebec (Toyotas) and Nissan (Datsuns).

None of the first five cars were affected when they revised the revised results but it did bump the husband and wife crew of Haydn and Sylvia Gozzard 1,350 dollars-worth out of sixth place to seventh.

The Gozzards had originally placed sixth in a Renault Gordini for first private entry (\$1,000), first mixed crew (another \$1,000) and first in class Two (\$350), with a seven point margin over another Renault crewed by James Potts and Ernie Wilson. But a protest by Barracuda driver Gene Henderson over ambiguous route instructions on an early section in the rally was upheld and all points assessed in the section nullified. Potts had picked up 10 points in the section and, with the subtraction, moved ahead of the Gozzards for first private and first in class.

The Gozzards, however, upon seeing the yacht they wanted to buy with the prize money shrink to a punt, served notice of appeal to the revered gentlemen of Canada's national governing body and felt confident the ruling would be reversed if the CASC can organize a hearing.

In eighth place, Englishman Tony Fall scared the hell out of navigator Denis Johnson, but got the Leyland Land Crab — an Austin 1800 — to the finish line for British Motor Holdings. Fall's famous teammate Paddy Hopkirk was not disqualified, insisted organizer Jim Gunn, but his Mini Cooper was 'declared ineligible' an hour and a half before the start of the second last day.

Hopkirk, in fact, with the sniff of public relations work in the background, provided most of the action in the rally between making magic radiators disappear and dodging gun-bearing farmer's wives.

The radiator made its wondrous appearance on the second day with Paddy in the lead but the car was overheating badly as BMH team officials knew damn well it would. But you don't bring Ireland's gift to rallying over here to watch him nurse a sick car all the way down through the standings, so all of a sudden here's Paddy with an extra radiator on the front bumper. This of course not only keeps him in the lead for three days but also most certainly in the news as the radiator disappears at the end of the day then for Pete's sake re-appears again.

Now Shell officials not being gullible natives to be brow-beaten by Europe's top rally team, Paddy was told at 3 a.m. on Thursday that they were sorry but after due consideration — four days no less — the car would have to go.

Exit Patrick-me-boyo and navigator Mike Kerry, who had not been too happy at any rate after losing the lead by punching in two minutes early at a control the day before.

The retreat to Eire followed a most eventful day altogether, highlighted by the extraordinary scene of an Irishman, a German, and a French-Canadian on one side of a road block and a highly excited farmer from Huntsville and a wife-plus-shotgun on the other side.

Paddy's version made great listening.

"Here we are coming over the brow of a hill and of course we're scooting along sort of and is there not a large truck right in the middle of the road and this chap Marcel Rainville pleading with a man to move it. But the man's got a rock in his hand and he's not having any of it.

"So I get out and I'm pleading with the man too, see and then Fritz Hochreuter comes along in his Porsche and sneaks around the back of the thing and what does the man do but back up his contraption and almost flatten Fritz.

"Well, Fritz runs over and jumps in the cab and he's almost strangling the man and all of a sudden there's the daughter and she's screaming Daddy's been murdered and here comes mother and she has a gun in her hand and it's just a terrible thing. It could have been a real punch-up."

The incident, though hilarious in the telling,



accompanied by a soft Irish brogue, nonetheless could have been serious. It was variously blamed on poor public relations in not notifying the farmer or at least reminding him that the odd car might be passing his way, but a few drivers also pointed pinkies at the Ramblers which had whipped through the area in sort of a hurry just before, while the farmer's children were apparently playing by the roadside.

Police finally persuaded the man to move his roadblock, a '65 Chev with a home-built trailer on the back, and the loss dropped Hopkirk from fourth to 11th where he stayed for a few hours until he left the rally that night.

As it was, the farmer wasn't the only citizen to be shaken up as the rally took on the appearance of being organized by an eager funeral parlour to boost business. A case in point was a section early in Quebec on the Sherbrooke-Saint John run where a tight stage had made most drivers hustle and many late.

But instead of having a control point at the end of the rough going which even a novice would expect, organizers inexplicably placed it several miles down a straight, gravel road on the far side of two small communities. And though traffic laws govern drivers in the rule book, the practical result was that two townships went into group shock as late cars hammered through at dangerous speeds.

The planning was unjustifiably careless in this case — and in other cases where high average speed sections ran through resort areas, fine for April but this rally was run in June — and did little to prop up a sport which by its nature is all too vulnerable to public criticism.

The poor location of controls, though not necessarily dangerous as in the incident described, took most of the challenge out of the rally. After the tough first day there was little more than a half-hearted gesture at making this a competition and even on the last day, with an excellent and difficult route the last 100 miles or so, officialdom still insisted on placing controls where crews could either go into the rough going minutes up or make up the time when they came out. Following the last two days in an AMX from

American Motors, it took little skill to run the route clean in a car that was absolutely stock.

All of which meant that from the second day on, crews could only hope for mechanical failure hitting cars ahead of them. Privately, MacLennan felt he could out-drive Harvey, particularly in heavy mud in which he is superb. But he never got the chance as Harvey's only real danger was overcome on the Wednesday from Sudbury to Sherbrooke.

That day a transmission mount broke and the drive train had to be roped up until a replacement could be made that evening. Harvey elected to hold nothing back and was repaid with a clean run.

"We decided to run clean or bomb out altogether," he said later. "Our luck held and we replaced the mount in 15 minutes at the overnight stop.

Harvey also replaced a muffler on the Barracuda and met two flat tires on the final day as the route twisted over roadbeds of flint chips and jagged boulders. But each time he was able to make up the time handily.

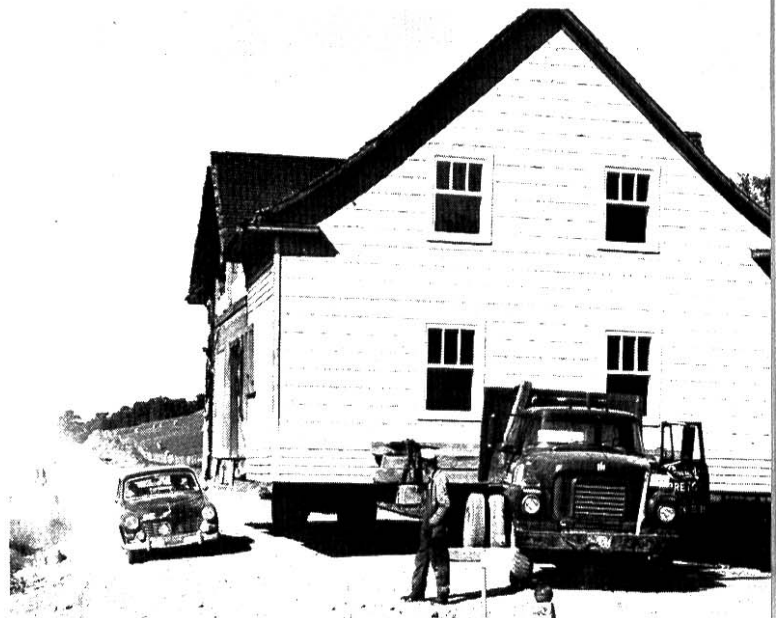
Thus Harvey won his first Shell in seven years trying (and his last — in future he will manage, not drive) on the opening day. Beckman maintains they won it two days before they even started.

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Above left: Jones and Medwell throw up the dust . . . there was no rain this year please note.

Right: Van Bergen and Paul Manson placed fourth overall with their Datsun 2000; first in Class 4.

Below: We've heard of blocking the rally, but this is ridiculous!





Jim Gunn (far left) and J. E. Hughes, vice-president General Counsel look on as Ralph Beckman and Scott Harvey (far right) congratulate each other.

"Scott had a practice car set up just like the rally car," explained the young engineering student. "And for a week before the start we were up at 6 a.m. running every road west of Calgary until eight at night. When we started we had pace notes for each of the first three sections."

Organizers released the names of the speed stages two days before the start and though the names meant nothing, astute navigators were able to work out reasonably accurately where the stages would be. In the case of Tony Fall and Denis Johnson they had time to go out and run what they thought would be the stages and were right for two and a half stages. In the third stage they misjudged the selection and when Johnson ran out of pace notes, Fall ran out of road.

Despite the pace notes and Beckman's fine guesswork, Harvey still managed to pick up his eight points. The car stalled in one section, a hill climb, and the bulk of the points (seven) came later when a herd of cows blocked the road.

Other early incidents in the rally came when Rick Wallace and Denny Quirk rolled what could have been a very competitive Saab and came to a halt 20 feet closer to sea level, 80 miles southwest of Calgary in a speed section. The next day, from Regina to Fort William two other crews followed this fine old tradition in the Qu'Appelle Valley of Saskatchewan. John Cross and Charles McLaren demolished a Renault and Tony Fall, charging through someone's dust, put the Land Crab on its ear.

Despite losing the windscreen, Fall finished the special stage under target time and cleaned the next and difficult road section. On succeeding days throughout the rally, new fenders and body parts appeared on the car to put it gradually back into shape.

Two-time champions Klaus Ross and John Bird also dropped to the bottom of the rally the same day after hitting a deep culvert in a works Datsun. Klaus spent the rest of the rally tooling along taking photographs of photographers taking photographs of him.

The next day, Tuesday, from Fort William to Sudbury, Harvey moved into the lead after Hopkirk missed the route, charged back on it again and Kerry, fearing he was late, punched in early.

Little of note was to happen the rest of the way apart from Hunter Floyd and Paul MacLennan outbluffing a tank which appeared suddenly in the Camp Gagetown speed section in New Brunswick and the

\$600 drunk AMC threw in Halifax.

After the dust had cleared in Halifax and Hunter Floyd had finally gone to bed, the future of the Shell appeared dim. Company officials are always reluctant to announce such items until the mandatory number of meetings have been sat through but the atmosphere among veterans was despondent concerning a 1969 4000.

For one thing Shell some time ago invited the CASC to pick up another sponsor while it gradually withdrew over a period of years but the fleet-footed CASC has to date failed to do so, leaving Shell little choice but to withdraw completely.

If they do return perhaps they can be prevailed upon to improve the event. They can start by making the decision early enough to leave time to organize it properly.

They can follow that by increasing the budget to allow more controls at important points, valued at \$300-\$400 to set up. Then they can put it back into the early spring once more so that people in Porsches will not be able to cover the whole route with the top down again.

And then somehow, but please don't ask me how, they can make this rally worth the time of the top European teams and give it the stature expected of an event counting towards a world championship.

The Top 25

| Pos. | Crew | Car | Pts. Lost |
|------|----------------------|-------------|-----------|
| 1. | Harvey/Beckman | Barracuda | 8 |
| 2. | MacLennan/Jim Peters | Rambler | 16 |
| 3. | Jones/Medwall | Rambler | 18 |
| 4. | Van Bergen/Manson | Datsun | 25 |
| 5. | Floyd/Ecker | Rambler | 51 |
| 6. | Potts/Wilson | Renault | 56 |
| 7. | Gozzard/Gozzard | Renault | 59 |
| 8. | Fall/Johnson | BMC 1800 | 64 |
| 9. | Hochreuter/Carney | Porsche | 65 |
| 10. | Smith/Catto | Toyota | 97 |
| 11. | Henderson/Pogue | Barracuda | 110 |
| 12. | Van Louie/Gaik | Datsun | 119 |
| 13. | Carter/Dempsey | F85 Cutlasé | 132 |
| 14. | Schmidt/Schmidt | Volkswagen | 142 |
| 15. | Ronald/Slade | Peugeot 404 | 149 |
| 16. | Kuehne/Cady | Saab | 166 |
| 17. | Vezina/Turmel | Volvo | 180 |
| 18. | Blard/L'Esperance | Renault | 202 |
| 19. | Rainville/Edwardes | Toyota | 224 |
| 20. | Crews/Crews | Saab | 229 |
| 21. | Horton/Deak | Datsun | 239 |
| 22. | Cayer/Beausejour | Peugeot | 269 |
| 23. | Middlemiss/Lynch | Datsun | 277 |
| 24. | Golz/McCutcheon | Buick GS400 | 285 |
| 25. | Guibault/Rainville | Toyota | 319 |

Champion-sparked Chrysler Barracuda and Rambler Americans



Scott Harvey, driver, along with Ralph Beckman, navigator, puts his Chrysler (Canada) Ltd. Barracuda through its paces to *win* 1968 Shell 4000 Rally.

The Shell 4000 Rally was a gruelling test—over 4000 miles of often tortuous muddy road from Calgary to Halifax. Drivers, cars and equipment had to be of championship calibre just to finish. So congratulations to Scott Harvey and Ralph Beckman, the driver and the navigator of the Barracuda that finished First; and to the American Motors Team that finished 2nd, 3rd and 5th winning the Manufacturers Team Award.

Once again, Champion spark plugs proved their dependability in a spectacular performance test. That's why they are the choice of experts the world over. Why settle for less in your car?

win Top Awards in Shell 4000 Rally!



Rambler American shows the form that helped American Motors' three entrants win the Manufacturers Team Award.



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