



Dusty Shell Rally with an All Michigan Win

As the last few of the enormous number of finishers rolled across the ramp in Halifax, a light rain began to fall—the first of any kind of precipitation on the entire Shell 4000 route—and course layout man, Peter Bone, was heard crying softly, “Where did I go wrong?” Of course, the rally was held several weeks later in the year than usual, but even so, everyone involved expected heavy rains along the route. Unfortunately, dust and hot weather belied the northern locale. The dry weather kept the dirt and gravel roads in good condition, too good in fact, and was a contributing reason for 55 of the original 69 starters finishing within the allowed time.

This year the starting point was moved east from Vancouver to Calgary. The move was necessary if the rally was to finish in Halifax, the first time the Shell 4000 had ventured into the Maritime provinces. The move eliminated the difficult mountain sections in British Columbia, but the hope was to use some unfamiliar, challenging roads in eastern Canada. Calgary made a dandy send-off spot, with the Stampede grounds used for inspection, impound, and the initial start. The Calgary Sports Car Club smoothly managed the tricky FIA inspection and all kinds of details, and also tossed a neat party at their clubhouse for the competitors two days before the start. The city fathers hosted a dinner party the night before the rally, but the teams did manage to get their cars in shape between festivities.

The most notable factory entries were the two 3-car teams from American Motors (Canada) and Nissan (Canada), the two BLMC factory cars from England, and the lone Barracuda from Chrysler (Canada). AMC had a top-drawer, all-Canadian team headed by Paul MacLennan and Jim Peters, both previous Shell winners. Backing them up were the Hunter Floyd/Lutz Ecker and Tom Jones/John Medwell teams. The immaculate Rambler Americans were painted Kelvinator white and boasted 225 hp V-8s; husky roll bars were installed as well as the usual underside protection used on this type of event. The Nissan team had an international look with brand new Datsun overhead cam, six-cylinder, 2000-cc sedans hitherto unseen in this side of the world, but run successfully on the Safari last spring. These cars were tended by both Japanese and Canadian mechanics, and had past winners, Klaus Ross and John Bird in one car, Englishman John Horton and Ed Deak in another, and for the third Nissan, brought South African National Rally Champion Ewold Van Bergen from Pretoria and teamed him with Paul Manson, who won the 1967 Canadian National Rally Championship with Ross.

Hogging the pre-rally spotlight, how-

ever, was Paddy Hopkirk and the factory Mini, equipped with fat, knobby Dunlops, wrap-around bucket seats, and a 1275 engine delivering an honest 105 hp. Tall, slender navigator Mike Kerry, accustomed to the more spacious Chrysler products, was a sight, folding his frame into the car with his knees up under his chin and the clipboard balanced somewhere in between. BLMC also brought a BMC 1800, more commonly called the Leyland Land Crab, for Tony Fall, who was paired with Canadian Denis Johnson in the larger, rather underpowered front-wheel-drive sedan. Both cars were painted BMC rally red and sported the most outlandish looking front mud flaps (to protect the lights), which did little to enhance the classic beauty of both models. Hopkirk and Fall entertained the spectators at impound with a few of their famous hand brake turns, and signed countless autographs for the rally-wise Canadian fans.

Scott Harvey and Ralph Beckman were in the familiar blue Barracuda, the single entry from Chrysler Canada, but it was heavily supported from both sides of the border. A 273 V-8 was installed to put the Barracuda in Class 5 (more advantageous than the Class 6, 340CID for slower target times on the closed sections), but other equipment was the same as described in Harvey's rally prep article (See SCG May '67). Harvey has worked for years to perfect Chrysler's rally vehicle, and the Barracuda looked, and proved to be, equal to the task at hand. Also in the sponsored category was a dealer-entered team of Toyota Corollas, and there were many private teams too.

The award-winning scores were settled early in North America's most prestigious rally. After the teams left Calgary in the early evening, the competitors plunged into a 600-mile, 17-hour leg that held four special stages where the eventual top placing cars picked up their only penalty points. It was the Hopkirk/Kerry Mini, with just three points, that led the score sheet in Regina, followed by the Harvey/Beckman Barracuda (8) and the MacClennan/Peters Rambler (16). The Cypress Hill special stage run at dawn had the added hazard of wandering livestock on the supposedly closed road, which cost Harvey 7 points and Hopkirk 2. Hopkirk was in trouble with a badly overheating engine right from the start, and remarked that he thought the engine had seized early in the night on a 23-mile special stage. Adding large amounts of water constantly, got the super shoe box to Regina, but repairs were badly needed. Sure enough, the next day began L'affaire Paddy's wagon, as shortly after leaving impound, the Mini sprouted a second radiator, this one mounted on the bumper in front of the grill. The now cool-running Mini held its lead in the rally, picking up only one point in the deep sand of the 31-mile Sandilands special stage. Harvey and MacClennan both had cleaned the 20-hour run to Ft. William to hold second and third, with the Jones/Medwell Rambler next with 18 points, followed by the Van Bergen/Manson Datsun with 20; very tight scores with sponsored cars in the first six places. Holding seventh and leading the private category were Fritz Hochreuter and Ron Carney in a beauti-

ful Porsche 911T.

Although no official protest had been lodged, the organizers gazed perplexedly at the odd looking Mini bravely parked in the impound, and BLMC had other troubles as well. Shortly after leaving Regina, Tony Fall fell over in the Land Crab. Fighting to see in the dark and swirling dust, Tony missed a turn on a back road in Qu'Appelle Valley, and in a futile effort to save time, had dumped the car in the meadow. Landing on it's wheels the 1800 was mechanically sound, but bruised, and the windshield was gone. The team suffered choking dust until they were gifted by a Datsun crew (same class) with a roll of clear plastic with which they fashioned a temporary windshield. For safety reasons, the organizers allow windshield replacements using outside help in the impound with no time penalty, but Tony and Denis had a good bit of fiberglass work on the dents to do in the next few days to escape points for body damage in Halifax, and thereby hold their sixth place overall. In this same area, Paul MacClennan had run over nine miles on a flat tire and still managed to zero the leg and the day. The Rose/Bird Datsun had transmission trouble, but managed to have it repaired with a great time loss in Winnipeg. They escaped being time barred from the rally by some really clever math work by John Bird, which brought the team to Ft. William just two minutes inside the maximum early and late time penalties.

The third day's run to Sudbury (mostly highway) was uneventful except for the leading Mini. After removing the extra radiator and trying to effect less obvious repairs to the cooling system, Hopkirk and Kerry shot down the road to a time control, but left the watches behind and inadvertently clocked in early, picking up 20 points and dropping to a tie for fourth.

About 150 miles out of Sudbury the next day, troubles came to most of the rally cars. The first few apparently had annoyed a local farmer by whizzing in front of his spread and raising huge clouds of dust. He then blocked his road with his own vehicles, which caused a great many rally cars to arrive late at the control, located just down this road that was supposed to be public. Stories of a fist fight and much reckless driving brought the police, and, though few citations were issued, rally scores were really affected. Although the point leaders were also leading on the road and got through with zeros, Hochreuter dropped points, thereby putting the Gozzard's Renault Gordini in the private entry lead. Private team scores were also juggled a bit by this unfortunate occurrence. Some parts of Canada are just getting too civilized for the rally crowd.

As the cars prepared to leave Sherbrooke the next dawn, the ax fell on Paddy's wagon. When the crew went for their route book, they were informed that the Mini has been disqualified by the organizers—one assumes for non FIA mods.

The fifth day's run led from Sherbrooke to another dusty closed section; then through some really picturesque Quebec roads over the top of the province and into the Maritimes. The evening's Camp Gagetown, New Brunswick, special stage had the added treat of a few military tanks



Harvey (right) and Beckman wave victoriously from the light-weight nose of the Barracuda; Tom Jones' Rambler performs for the cameras; Hopkirk's Mini displays new frontal styling.

Photos/Robert C. Ragsdale/Jean Calvin

roaming the course. The MacLennan Rambler saw eye to eye with one tank commander, prudently took to the bushes, but still posted a zero, as did rally leader Harvey (plagued with a leaky exhaust system) and the other two Ramblers, as well as several other teams.

The final day saw some really tough rally roads, the best on the route, but the event still suffered from hot, dry weather. All but a few cars survived, even on the one dandy section that closely resembled the bottom of a gravel pit. Scott Harvey and Ralph Beckman replaced the exhaust system on their Barracuda, and then had two trauma-inducing flat tires, but hung onto their slim score of eight points and reached the finish ramp as overall and Class 5 winners. For Scott Harvey, a product planning engineer with Chrysler in Detroit, this was the realization of a long standing ambition. A veteran competitor, Scott has twice been SCCA National Rally Champion, posted class wins three times in both the Shell and the Canadian Winter Rallies, and achieved numerous other wins on the race track and in the rally trails. But the overall victory and carload of prizes on the Shell 4000 had always eluded him.

Ralph Beckman, an engineering student at the University of Michigan, competes in rallies regularly in Canada and the U.S., and navigated Scott to a clean record on the road in his second time out in the sponsored Barracuda.

With a fantastic performance, the Rambler team came in second, third and fifth to sweep away the manufacturers' team prize. Expert ralliists all, the talented team also provided off-the-cuff entertainment whenever the rally stopped for a few hours. We suspect team manager Ernie Regehr got grayer by the day, and kept the phone number of the nearest bail bondsman handy at all times. Aided by rally-wise special advisor Lloyd Howell, Regehr maintained control of his cut-ups, but it was snidely suggested that he might take the team on tour—a vaudeville tour. The Ramblers had run without fault, requiring only a few shock replacements and tires on the 4,125 mile course. Drivers MacLennan, Jones and Floyd claimed the cars performed so well that they had nothing to do but horse around

at the controls. The entire team scored a total of 85 points, often the score of the winning car on this rally.

In a well-deserved fourth place was the Van Bergan/Manson Datsun. Dust, of course, was old hat to the South African; they lost all of their 25 points on special stages and had no mechanical problems with the new model from Nissan.

Jim Gunn and Peter Bone had designed a good route, but the dry weather eliminated most of the challenge. Many of the teams felt the rally was too easy and the checkpoints badly placed. More often than not, after coming out of a tight section, there would not be a control for miles, so one could fly down the highway and make up lost time before the checkpoint. These factors brought many novice teams to the finish along with the veterans, who were unhappy (and dusty) with the lack of poor conditions on the route. It would have been a different story if the roads had been the usual soggy man-and-machine-eating gumbo.

RESULTS

Pos.	Crew	Home State	Car	Points Lost
1	Scott Harvey	Michigan	Barracuda	8
	Ralph Beckman	Michigan		
2	Paul MacLennan	Ontario	Rambler	16
	Jim Peters	Ontario		
3	Tom Jones	Ontario	Rambler	18
	John Medwell	Ontario		
4	Ewold Van Bergen	South Africa	Datsun 2000	25
	Paul Manson	Ontario		
5	Hunter Floyd	Alberta	Rambler	51
	Lutz Ecker	Ontario		
6	James Potts	Ontario	Renault	
	Ernest Wilson	Ontario	Gordini	56
7	Haydn Gozzard	Ontario	Renault	
	Sylvia Gozzard		Gordini	59
8	Tony Fall	England	BMC 1800	64
	Denis Johnson	Quebec		
9	Fritz Hochreuter	Ontario	Porsche 911T	65
	Ron Carney	Ontario		
10	John Smith	Ontario	Toyota	
	John Catto	Ontario	Carolla	97

Class winners

Class 1, Sean Power/Jim Lapp, Ontario, Sunbeam Imp; Class 2, Potts/Wilson; Class 3, Norm Van Louie/Sieg Galk, Ontario, Datsun PL 510; Class 4, Van Bergen/Manson; Class 5, Harvey/Beckman; Class 6, Gene Henderson/Ken Pogue, Michigan. Private entry, Potts/Wilson; Mixed Couples, Gozzard/Gozzard.