



The provisional winner, the Plymouth Barracuda, crewed by Scott Harvey and Ralph Beckman, sweeps round a corner at Carlton Place, on the Sudbroke-Sherbrooke section

SHELL 4000 RALLY

—TRANS CANADA

SCOTT HARVEY (BARRACUDA) WINS—AT LAST!

STORY: Graham Robson

4,000 miles in six days—Calgary to Halifax. American Motors Ramblers finish second and third, win the Team Prizes; Paddy Hopkirk's Cooper S disqualified; route easy because of dry, dusty roads; only 14 retirements.

THE world's longest rally, running almost across Canada, was won last week by Scott Harvey and Ralph Beckman in a works-prepared Plymouth Barracuda S, with 4,480 c.c. (273 cu. in.) engine—the same car Harvey had used to finish second last year. Paddy Hopkirk and Mike Kerry led the rally

briefly in their works BMC Mini-Cooper S until an overheating engine required a drastic solution: they fitted an auxiliary radiator in front of the grille, but this was ruled illegal by rally stewards and the car was disqualified at the end of the fourth day. By then it didn't matter anyway as lost time on the road had dropped the little car to about tenth place. American Motors advanced their growing performance image by taking second (Paul MacLennan), and third (Tommy Jones), plus the manufacturers' team award. South African Ewold van Bergen's Datsun 2000 finished fourth, the best of the trio of works Japanese cars, but Tony Fall's BMC 1800 was beaten for pace and could do no better than seventh place.

Renowned in previous years for unpredictable road surfaces and many natural hazards, this year's Shell 4000 ran throughout on dry, dusty roads. Average speeds were easy to beat, and

the winner was decided on performance in a mere eight special stages, totalling 155 miles.

The entry

From Britain, BMC sent two cars, while the Finns were rallying in Greece. Paddy Hopkirk was entered in a Group 2 Mini-Cooper S, actually registered GRX 5D like the car he had driven in the "disqualification Monte" more than two years ago; the engine was back on SU's as the new-fangled Weber-BMC prototype units are giving trouble, and the front of the car sported huge, rigid mud-flaps to help keep the battery of lamps clean. Tony Fall had the red and white 1800 which Brian Culcheth had driven on the Monte (and was tested by *Autocar* in March this year)—mysteriously its registration number had changed in the meantime! Both f.w.d. BMC cars had extra mileage recorders driven from the rear wheels and guarded by skids.

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Scott Harvey brought along the same Barracuda he had used in 1967, purposely using an old car so that the now discontinued 273 cu. in. vee-8 engine could be used in the under 5,000 c.c. class; his car was smartly turned out in "corporate blue" with spare mileage recording drives taped to the front wings. The really strong AMC team came from the Canadian factory at Windsor, with much encouragement from over the border in Detroit, using the Rambler American bodies with 290 cu. in. (4,752 c.c.) engines. Both Barracuda and Rambler American entries had four-speed floor gearchanges instead of the more usual automatics.

There were two serious Japanese teams. Datsun sent a trio of their efficient-looking 2000s, which have a six-cylinder engine and twin SU carburettors; they were shepherded by lots of intense-looking mechanics. The Toyotas were normal-looking Corallas, very nicely prepared.

Sixty-nine cars turned up for the start, this year placed on the edge of the Rockies at Calgary. Over 4,000 miles were routed, with overnight stops at Regina, Fort William, Sudbury, Sherbrooke University, St. John, and the finish at Halifax, Nova Scotia.

Particular problems

The zealous organizers try to make life easier for private owners by banning service on the road, and limiting service work before night stops to 15 minutes with the drivers doing their own work. What this means is that factories and keen sponsored crews get their service *anyway*—and behind bushes and off the route—while the poor private owner soldiers on alone.

Because of the easyish nature of most roads, artificial hazards are placed before the navigators. Though some sections are straight forward A-to-B, with a time allowance, many also demand strict average speed keeping (averages which may be changed in mid-section) with unannounced controls thrown in to keep navigators on their toes. This makes absolutely accurate distance recorders necessary, with duplicate drives often fitted to non-driven wheels, and to get to grips with "44.8 mph for 26.95 miles" all navigators use Curta calculators, which look like pepper mills, are actually miniature desk calculators, and are made in Lichtenstein. Canadian navigators are essential for all foreign drivers; Hopkirk chose Mike Kerry and Tony Fall had Denis Johnson. To make the whole plot a bit more confusing, there are different target times for each class in the special stages ("Closed Sections" in Shell language); this means that a Mini-Cooper S can be significantly slower than the American cars but still loses fewer penalties because of a more favourable target time.

Start from Stampede Grounds

The start was from the world-famous Stampede Grounds in Calgary on Saturday evening, 1 June. Because of the vastness of the prairies, the first two legs, Calgary to Regina, Regina to Fort William, were to be the longest, and—this year—contained six of the eight special stages.

The first three stages came almost immediately, in the Rocky Mountains forest south of Calgary. All were dry and very fast, so the over-60 mph target times (even for small cars), were possible for several crews. Even so, Scott Harvey's Barracuda came through in the lead, dropping only one penalty (just 10sec late on one stage), ahead of Hopkirk's Cooper S with

3 penalties, closely followed by the Ramblers of Paul MacLennan and Tommy Jones. But at Medicine Hat, where there was a brief halt for fuel and rest, Hopkirk's car was already in trouble. The engine was overheating badly and had boiled most of its water away on the long stages, so a hurried conference was called with the nearby service crews.

Soon after the halt came stage 4, through the Cypress Hill Park south of Medicine Hat, where the 7-miler was a splendid Mini stage. In spite of the hot engine, Hopkirk's car was quickest and cleaned the sandy forest-type stage, while most of the big American cars were too unwieldy; a herd of cows wandered across the road at the wrong time, sufficient to hold up MacLennan briefly, but Scott Harvey had to come to a complete standstill before picking his way between the horns, and took a 7 point (70sec) penalty. It was already clear that only about a half-dozen drivers were really "rallying" with the rest hoping to conserve their cars and waiting for tricky road conditions farther east. The tricks came immediately, however, when a redundant instruction in the route cards caused everyone to take the wrong track in the forests and lose time; even Jim Peters (navigator to winner Roger Clark last year), got confused in the MacLennan Rambler. Having puzzled their way back to the right road (and this on a strict average speed section!), there were many long faces, which lifted only when the organizers decided to scrub timing at this point. There were further protests about this at the finish, not resolved at the time of writing.

Every evening competitors were allowed 15

minutes in *Parc Fermé* to work on their cars. At Regina they were mainly concerned with shaking out the dust, but Gene Henderson's Barracuda needed a new speedometer cable, and tyres were in demand.

Regina to Fort William made an easier day, though two special stages and a trip into the USA (Wisconsin) added interest. Tony Fall rolled the BMC 1800 on an easy road section—which shattered the windscreen and battered the bodywork—but he continued undaunted; with a damage penalty in the regulations he was faced by a busy week getting the car straight again! Hopkirk's Mini caused a sensation by appearing soon after the re-start with an extra Mini radiator bolted on to the front of the car in an effort to cool the engine, and this immediately caused Datsun drivers to inquire politely of the stewards whether it was truly legal and Group 2; Hopkirk said nothing, but pointed out that he would have had to retire if this desperate measure hadn't been taken.

The Winnipeg area was eventful for Datsun, for Klaus Ross (a two-time winner) had gearbox trouble in his car, spent hours having it changed, and had to enlist a police escort to get him quickly through the city to the next control! Sandilands special stage came next, and favoured the big cars because it was so straight and covered in deep sand. Probably no one was trying harder than Paul MacLennan here, especially after his seat belt came unclipped and the door flew open! The Datsuns sounded crisp but were not very quick, and Hochreuter's Porsche looked well but was driven slowly. Quietly and carefully, Haydn Gozzard was

Denis Johnson rushes to check in at the end of the Sandilands special stage, while Tony Fall waits in the BMC-entered Austin 1800





Optional extra? Overheating forced the BMC mechanics to fit the jury-rig radiator on the front of the Hopkirk-Kerry Cooper S; the car was disqualified for not complying to Group 2!

working his own Renault Gordini 1300 up through the field, arriving at Fort William in sixth place. On safety grounds Tony Fall's mechanics were allowed to fit a new screen to the 1800 in *parce fermé*, which involved a lot of work on the bent bodywork, while Paddy Hopkirk was warned by the stewards that they didn't like his extra radiator; this was removed for the third day.

Fort William to Sudbury was less troublesome except for one short loop into the hills, where Hopkirk's car was clocked-in two minutes early at one point after going off the route, dropping to fourth place, equal with van Bergen's Datsun. Only nine cars had retired in the first half of the event, with no promise of more exacting road conditions in the eastern provinces.

On Wednesday morning, the 60 surviving cars set out across the less populated areas of Ontario. The route jinked and turned in and out of the dirt roads that are legion around here, often passing the only houses for many miles. At one of them, a local farmer took it upon himself to block the road with a truck, and his family produced a shot gun as well. The unfortunate Hopkirk, Fritz Hochreuter's Porsche, a Datsun and a Saab were all held up at the barricades, and there was a scuffle before the farmer was persuaded by police that the rally should go through. Penalties due to lateness at the next control were *not* cancelled, this being one of those well known rallying cases of "*Force Majeur*". Paddy then dropped down to tenth position and Hochreuter slipped a couple of places too.

The afternoon route used all the tiny roads

between Ottawa and Montreal, after which cars went to the new University building at Sherbrooke. Big crowds turned up there, and a local pop group started an impromptu concert nearby, so Shell received maximum publicity. The "Now you see it, now you don't" Mini radiator had appeared on the car again, but this was to be the end, as stewards at last declared the car not to comply with Group 2 regulations; Hopkirk was not allowed to restart the next morning. Two of the Rambler crews were worrying about their fuel tank shields, now holed, while Scott Harvey's normally placid arrival was replaced by a hurry to get into the *parc* to change a collapsed rear engine mounting; this could not quite be completed in time, but enough bolts were fixed for the Barracuda to re-start in the morning—the damaged exhaust system had to wait until later in the day.

The Datsuns continued with their usual efficiency, though Englishman John Horton was admitting to having been off the road, and had a badly slipping clutch because of a leaking crankshaft seal.

Sherbrooke to St John, Thursday's run, included the final two special stages. These were cleaned by all the leading cars, being straight and dusty, but the final stage through a military proving ground threw up such hazards as tanks, jeeps and trucks—not the nicest things to meet when bounding over a brow at 100-plus! The local TV station at St John was assuming that Harvey would win and wanted a long interview, while the local papers wanted pictures of him and young Ralph Beckman poring over a map. Harvey was tolerant and

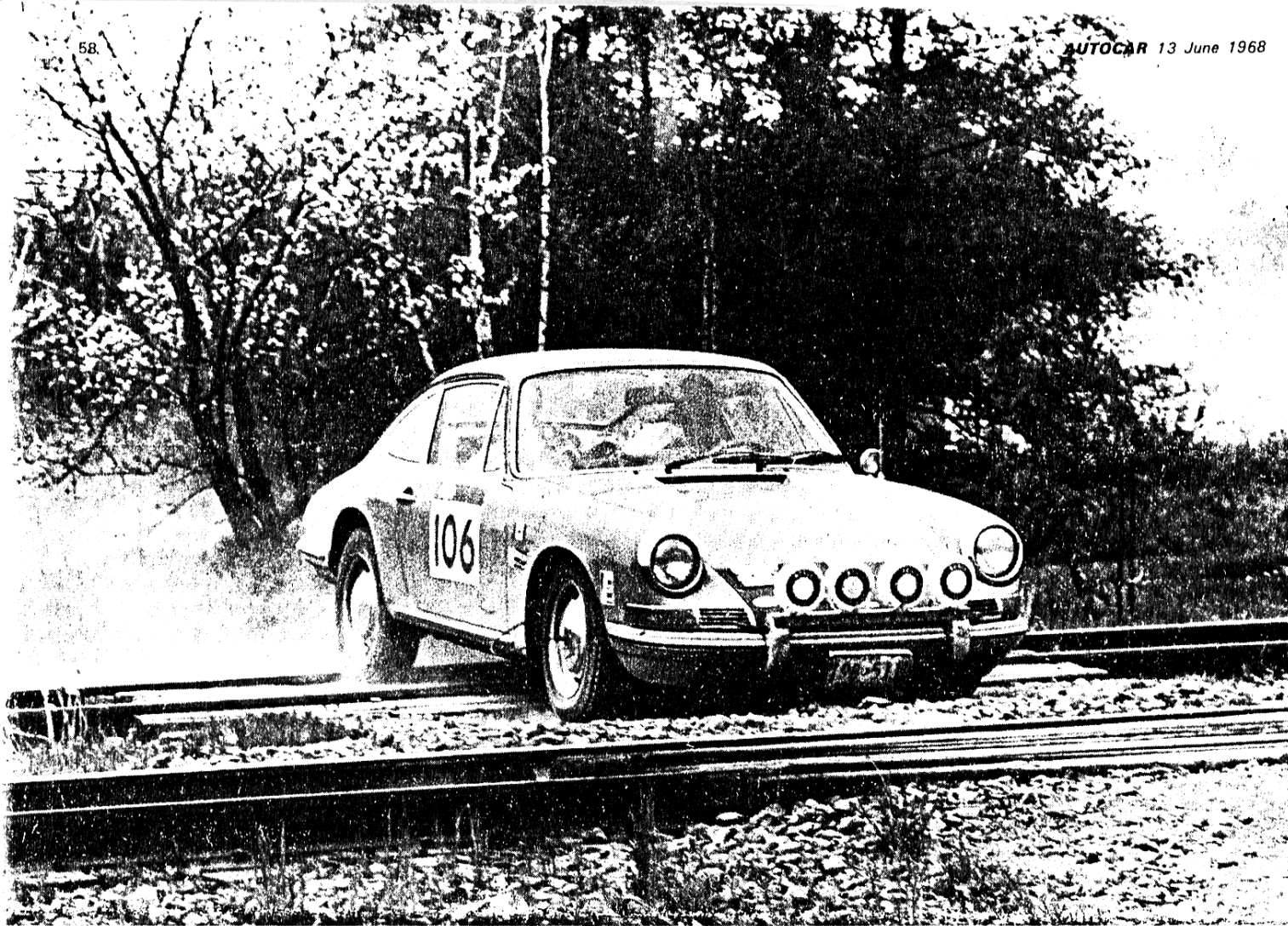
faintly embarrassed, but Beckman was as self-confident as only a young American can be.

Friday's final run to Halifax was as much anticlimax as the rest of the week. Barring accidents there was to be no section difficult enough to cause time-loss, and the only important casualty during the day was Haydn Gozzard, whose Renault Gordini lost one minute because of a timing error. Tony Fall's 1800 finally arrived in St John with most of the dents patched up (sufficient, apparently, to satisfy the stewards that there was "no damage"). The Ramblers rumbled in, well satisfied with their team victory—MacLennan and Peters having been second since the third day, and Scott Harvey's bright blue Barracuda finally climbed the ramp for Harvey to win his first Shell 4000 after many years of trying—including second place last year. TV and radio all had their way, the Plymouth mechanics produced champagne, and even Ralph Beckman looked a bit embarrassed.

Aftermath—is it world class?

This is my second Shell 4000 Rally—the first being as a team manager in 1964—and I have kept in close touch with competitors in the intervening years. When such a marathon stretches almost from coast to coast of the vast country of Canada, lasting six days and covering over 4,000 miles, there is a natural temptation for locals to consider this in the same breath as the Safari. Overall judgment is clouded somewhat by the fact that his was an "easy year", with dry tracks throughout and few retirements.

In fact, wet weather or dry, the Shell 4000 is no match for the Safari, nor indeed for any of



Ouch! The Hochreuter-Carney Porsche 911T crashes across a not-so-level crossing in the Magnetic Hills game park in Nova Scotia

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our own forestry internationals, and the fault is entirely due to the laws of the land. Canada suffers an overall 60 mph speed limit (which is ludicrous by any standards in this country of enormous open spaces), and from a police force that is at once apathetic to rallying and rigidly rule-bound; the result is that the highest average speed that can be set on any open road is rarely over 52 mph, and competitors drive in fear of being paced by police in unmarked cars, by radar, or even—in the open spaces—by light aircraft.

Those special stages that exist are difficult to find because—says organizer Jim Gunn—it is almost impossible to persuade private land-owners to lend their tracks for such use. The luck of the draw this year was that six of the eight available stages were completed in the first two days. One should remember here that the Safari is almost entirely special stage from start to finish, and that a typical British international may pack 500 miles of forests into 2,000 road miles; the Shell mileage of stages was only 155.

The public road routes this year were just too easy, with the first four cars completely clean, settling their battle on the stages. In a wet Shell 4000—usual if the event is held earlier in the year—there are many places where deep mud holes and gumbo can sort out the experienced from the new-comers, but this usually reduces the results to the lottery exhibited by this year's Safari. In spite of the

complex navigation and accurate time-keeping demanded (by British standards anyway), the road sections are just too easy in many parts of the country; this could be resolved only by confining the event to the eastern side of Canada or to the Rockies. Shell, as very generous sponsors, naturally want the maximum "exposure" for their promotion, and try to encourage the romantic notion of a coast-to-coast marathon. They succeed in this, even though parts of the rally are plainly angled more for publicity than for competitors' convenience.

Factories are reluctant to come to Canada for various reasons; the 4000 counts for no significant championship (the World rally trophy means little), costs are high because of big distances from Europe, and the promotional rewards in Canada are thought to be small. One particular grouse is the banning of active service support, and the infliction of a damage penalty—both not normal in European Championship events.

All of which is a pity. If only Shell were able to put on a more competitive event—regardless of weather—and if only the event could be made more compact, factory entries might flood in; for the sake of the Shell 4000's future, we hope this will happen in 1969.

Provisional Results

	Penalties
1. Barracuda S (S. Harvey-R. Beckman)	8
2. Rambler American (P. MacLennan-J. Peters)	16
3. Rambler American (T. Jones-J. Medwell)	18
4. Datsun 2000 (E. van Bergen-P. Manson)	25
5. Rambler American (H. Floyd-L. Ecker)	51
6. Renault Gordini 1300 (H. Gozzard and Mrs. Gozzard)	59

7. BMC 1800 (A. Fall-D. Johnson)	64
8. Renault Gordini 1300 (J. Potts-E. Wilson)	66
9. Porsche 911T (F. Hochreuter-R. Carney)	75
10. Toyota Corolla (J. Smith-J. Catto)	97

Classes: Groups 1, 2 and 3 combined

Up to 1,000 cc: 1. Sunbeam Rallye Imp (S. Power-J. Lapp); 2. BMC Mini-Cooper (T. van Beek-L. Paivarinta), 1,001 to 1,300 cc: 1. Renault Gordini 1300 (H. Gozzard and Mrs. Gozzard); 2. Renault Gordini 1300 (J. Potts-E. Wilson); 3. Toyota Corolla (J. Smith-J. Catto), 1,301 to 1,600 cc: 1. Datsun 1600 (N. van Louie-S. Galk); 2. VW 1500 (B. Schmidt and Mrs. Schmidt); 3. Saab V4 (D. Kuehne-D. Cady), 1,601 to 2,500 cc: 1. Datsun 2000 (E. van Bergen-P. Manson); 2. BMC 1800 (A. Fall-D. Johnson); 3. Porsche 911T (F. Hochreuter-R. Carney), 2,501 to 5,000 cc: 1. Barracuda S (S. Harvey-R. Beckman); 2. Rambler American (P. MacLennan-J. Peters); 3. Rambler American (T. Jones-J. Medwell), Over 5,000 cc: 1. Oldsmobile F85 Cutlass (M. Carter-A. Dempsey); 2. Barracuda S (G. Henderson-K. Pogue); 3. Buick GS400 (E. Golz-M. McCutcheon).

Team Prize: American Motors Ramblers (P. MacLennan, T. Jones and H. Floyd).

Private Owners' award: Renault Gordini 1300 (H. Gozzard and Mrs. Gozzard).

These results are subject to protest and appeal at the time of going to press; first five places will not be affected.

Rally Leaders at Half-distance—Sudbury, Ontario

	Penalties
1. Barracuda S (S. Harvey-R. Beckman)	8
2. Rambler American (P. MacLennan-J. Peters)	16
3. Rambler American (T. Jones-J. Medwell)	18
BMC Mini-Cooper S (P. Hopkirk-M. Kerry)	24
4. { Datsun 2000 (E. van Bergen-P. Manson)	24
{ Renault Gordini 1300 (H. Gozzard and Mrs. S. Gozzard)	49
{ Porsche 911T (F. Hochreuter-R. Carney)	49
8. BMC 1800 (A. Fall-D. Johnson)	50
9. Rambler American (H. Floyd-L. Ecker)	51
10. Renault Gordini 1300 (J. Potts-E. Wilson)	56

Manufacturers' Team: American Motors Ramblers (P. MacLennan, H. Floyd and T. Jones).

Positions subject to protest at time of going to press.