

□ Canada's major car rally is the Shell 4000. To make such an event the success it is today requires an intricate organization program involving many people across the country. And the man responsible for this organization is Jim Gunn.

But, while Gunn's chief job is to organize the Shell 4000 rally, his work actually requires him to be quite versatile. For example, he must act as a public relations man. His knowledge of insurance has become an important factor in planning the rally while communications also play a major role in his work.

Gunn developed his interest in motorsport during his high school days. "At that time many of the kids had 'foreign' cars and we used to have a lot of fun with them."

However, when he came out of high school his interest in cars was sidetracked slightly with the outbreak of the War where he served as a Navigator for the RCAF. He flew on Lancaster Bombers with Group 6 in England and after three years service was discharged as a Flying Officer.

Of course, after the War, cars were scarce. However, in late 1946 and early 1947 European makes started to be imported to Canada.

It was in 1947 that Gunn joined the Sports Motor Car Club of Montreal and his first taste of motorsport competition came in a night trial when he was asked to help man a control point.

This particular event saw both motorcycles and cars competing. He recalls a particular funny situation which occurred at his check point.

"Like most rallies, an argument broke out about times when a girl on the back of a motorcycle claimed that the time clock was wrong," said Gunn. "Before anyone had a chance to answer she promptly pulled out an alarm clock from beneath her jacket and said, 'See I can prove that your clock is wrong.'"

To Gunn motorsport can be a very humorous game. He says this is what makes it interesting and even as a competitor in many rallies it was just for the fun of it.

In 1951 Gunn actually started on the trail to becoming the best known rally organizer in the country. It was in 1951 that he organized a night trial and then on June 17, 1951 he was among the members of three clubs who founded today's Canadian govern-

ing motorsport body, the Canadian Automobile Sport Club. From 1951 to 1955 he served this body in the capacity of secretary and Gunn points out that many of the principles set down at that time have been maintained to this day.

In 1957 he moved from Montreal back to his birth place, Toronto, and there he organized a few rallies. However, other commitments prevented him from becoming too involved although he did offer his services in an administrative capacity.

As president of the CASC in 1960 he started having several meetings with the Shell Oil Company helping to promote the British Columbia ITF Rally, which was run in



Jim Gunn

the spring of 1961. Then in the fall of 1961 he joined Shell to organize the '62 event.

As president of the CASC his wish was to promote motorsport in Canada and upon joining Shell he saw the opportunity to "marry commercial sponsorship with the sport."

"Mind you, the Shell 4000 itself had to undergo a slow process of developing and the idea was to attract Canadian competitors and not necessarily import big names," points out Gunn.

"I should, however, mention that one of our biggest boosts did come from Oliver Gendebien in 1963. His assistance started us switching efforts to become as close to an International event as possible, but still maintaining an interest for our Canadian competitors."

Gunn admits that the Shell 4000 did develop somewhat quicker than

T&T  
GUEST  
OF THE  
MONTH  
Jim Gunn

many people may have expected, but also adds that it still hasn't reached the ultimate state.

The philosophy of Gunn and Shell have been to furnish the press with as much information as they require. "We don't like to keep things quiet and our belief is to explain everything about the event down to the finest detail."

The aim of organizing the Shell rally is to have half of the entries finish. In other words Gunn's idea is not to make the event so tough that very few cars are able to make it to the finish.

"The idea is for people to accumulate points, but we like to see half of the entry list finish. If very few make it to the end, this doesn't necessarily mean it was a tough or good rally," said Gunn.

While the rally itself is run over a period of six days, the pre-planning is a year 'round job. In fact Gunn said that even before the 1966 rally comes to an end, most of the stopping points for 1967 will have been determined.

Of course, initial planning involves much map work after which he spends a period of three weeks going over the areas, covering approximately 6,000 miles.

"During our first run over the route, usually in August of the previous year, 100 pages of notes are collected and by the time the second run is made, (October 15) the route has been confirmed."

After that, there is a dry run in November and then such work as personal contact with the clubs involved, regulations, press conferences, etc., become part of the job.

In other words Jim Gunn's title as Shell 4000 Rally organizer actually means a 'jack-of-all-trades'.