

Team Tulachard

In association with:



RSAC SCOTTISH RALLY Dumfries

Saturday 30th June 2007



www.ecossepix.co.uk

Driver: Calum MacKenzie

Co-Driver: Simon Mills

Calum didn't really have very much to do to the car following the Granite City Rally at the end of April. All it needed was a clean and a spanner check. He was a little late in deciding that he was going to do the Scottish, as he had his dates mixed up for when it was on. He thought he was going to be offshore. As he was home he decided to do it, as it would also be the first time himself and Steve Bannister had been out together since Steve completed the build of his 302bhp Escort. Simon Mills stepped in to co-drive for Calum for the rally, as regular co-driver Alan Clark had already made plans for the weekend.

Scrutineering and documentation went smoothly on Friday night. However, Calum was having a dilemma trying to decide which tyres to use for the event. There were going to be two long stages in the forest of Ae, and he was concerned that the medium compound Dunlop tyre he normally uses, would not last the length of the stages.

Saturday started off dry, but by late morning the rain started, and didn't let off all day. The first stage was to the north of Ae forest for a 4.9 mile stage (Greskine). Calum & Simon finished the stage 6 seconds ahead of Steve Bannister, and were 14th fastest overall. Gary Adam took an early rally lead, with Jock Armstrong 2 seconds behind, and Neale Dougan close on their heels.

Stage 2, Ae North was the first long stage of the day at 14 miles. Calum had decided to use a hard compound of Dunlop tyre for this stage after discussions with his tyre supplier. It was felt that the harder compound would last better, with the abrasive nature of this stage. The tyres certainly lasted, however this also meant they had very little grip. They finished the stage 15th fastest, 7 seconds behind Malloch Nicoll in his Evo VIII and 30 seconds in front of George McDonald in his Super 1600 Corsa Kit Car. Steve Bannister succumbed to the nature of this stage, and incurred a puncture which he had to stop and change.

After first service at Heathhall, the crews contested a small spectator stage at the rear of the service area. This was a 0.7 mile stage, part of which was on a section of tarmac, and part of it through a quarry. Calum and Simon were 11th equal fastest through this stage, and were lying 13th overall in the rally. Dave Weston had snatched the rally lead, with Gary Adam, David Bogie, and Jock Armstrong all only 1 second behind. It was going to be a really close fight for the rally win.

Stage four took the crews to Kinarvie for an 8 mile stage. Calum and Simon had a good run through here, after opting to return to the medium compound tyre. The tyres made a huge difference to their grip with them achieving an 8th fastest stage time, only 2 seconds behind Reay MacKay in his 6R4 Metro. Calum commented on how he found this stage;

“I really enjoyed that. It was really foggy up the top, and when you’re travelling flat out in fifth gear when you can’t really see, committing fully to the notes is such an adrenaline rush. That’s what rallying is all about!”

After a further service at Heathhall, the service crew identified that the alternator had stopped charging. After a replacement, a new set of medium compound tyres, the crew headed back to the spectator stage at the rear of service, and then on to Ae forest for the last 14 mile stage. At this point in the day Calum and Simon were lying in 11th place overall, only 14 seconds behind Malloch Nicoll in tenth. They were also comfortably leading the 2WD challenge, with a 1.26 minute gap. At this point in the day, Gary Adam was still leading the event, with Dave Weston 9 seconds behind him, who was going to be pushing hard in the last stage to try and overtake Adam for the win.

Calum’s tactics for this last stage were; “trophies or trees!” and unfortunately the trees won! Calum was pushing hard for tenth place overall, and only a mile from the start he got caught out on a deceptive R9. Jock Armstrong was already off at this corner, and was slowing Calum down. Calum is unsure if he just lost his concentration, or if he simply took the corner too fast. He ran wide catching the back end of the car in the bank. He almost got away with it, until the back wing caught something in the bank, and over they went. “Clucking bells!” were Calum’s words! They were desperately disappointed in not finishing the event, as they were confident that they could have pushed for tenth overall. Calum stated;

“I really wanted that tenth spot, but as my mother always told me “I want doesn’t get!” That it is the first time I have rolled since 1995, and in total I have only been off 3 times in the 39 rallies I have done.”

It was an unfortunate end to the day, however the crew achieved some good overall times, and Calum was delighted to be faster than Steve Bannister in his higher powered Escort. Gary Adam held on to the top spot for the rally win, with Dave Weston finishing 2nd only 3 seconds behind. Jimmy Girvan, Jim Carty and Steven Clark made up the remaining top five.

Calum is confident that the car will be repaired ready for the Speyside Stages on Saturday 11th August, as the rebuild is well underway, with the help of Escort class rivals Keith Robathan and Willie Stuart. Wife Heather has even donned her boiler suit for the first time in years to lend a hand!

A big thank you to all of the team’s sponsors for their ongoing assistance, who without, the rally would not have been possible: Nicolson Maps www.nicolsonmaps.com , SBS Logistics www.sbsl.com , Escape Business Technologies www.escape-tech.co.uk , and Graham Hire.

Also a big thank you to: Keith Robathan, Robin Nicolson and Mark Cannon for their mechanic assistance on the day.

Thanks to the rescue crew for pulling the car out in stage 6, and also to all the marshals, organisers and doctors involved on the day, who without, the event wouldn't happen.

Results from the Scottish Rally can be found at www.flyingfinish.co.uk , and for more Scottish Rally Championship information, including a press report on the Scottish Rally, please visit the SRC website at www.scottishrallychampionship.co.uk

The team's next Scottish event will be the Speyside Stages in Elgin on Saturday 11th August. For more information on this event please visit their website at www.speyside-stages.co.uk

For further information, or to contact the team please visit their website at www.teamtulachard.co.uk