

## **Totem Rally 2006**

Ron Sorem © 11-21-2006

November 18 - 19, 2006. Cache Creek -- Williams Lake -- Cache Creek, British Columbia. The West Coast Rally Association and Rallymaster Richard Lynch presented the **2006 Totem Rally**: Final Round of the Pacific Coast Challenge Rally Championship, and Final Round of the BC TSD Rally Championship.

Twenty-five cars left Cache Creek under overcast skies. The odo check continued to Big Bar Road, north of Clinton, turning onto gravel, frost, slush and iced ruts. Five more crews left ahead of the rally to take up checkpoint locations. This was where Max Vaysburd and I would make our stand for the weekend, as CP Crew Two”.

The 89-km *Big Bar Regularity* ran northwesterly to Poison Lake intersection, where the rally turned south along Jesmond Road, with a gradual rise-and-fall, and a couple of tight 90 turns, toward Kelly Lake, and into Clinton. The first seven cars made it through the regularity with two zeros, two ones, two twos, and a three – relatively unscathed, however a bit ragged compared to straight zeros at our control early in the section. We closed our CP, then used a short-cut to get to Meadow Lake road ahead of the rally – the first of many leap-frog options.

At the start of 77-km *Meadow Lake Regularity*, one car was missing, Novice Car 24, causing concern and delay for control crews and Sweep. We had to wait for the missing car's time, plus five minutes, so we were delayed getting out of the woods... eventually the car showed up with a bent front control arm. The run through *Meadow Lake*, and on to Dog Creek, was filled with ups and downs, sweeping corners, an occasional downed tree partially blocking, right at crossroads with a speed change down to 54-km/h, and “rough” for the first 5-km. This was deeper snow now, although the double-90-left failed to collect anyone this year, with a lower CAS (Car Average Speed, or daylight, or no camera crews. The first “big” tree took up most of the narrower road here, the snow was deeper, the ruts a bit more troubling. The rally continued to Enterprise Road with Car 1, RJ Carroll and Michele Mah, and Car 2, Eric Horst and Steve Willey, taking no points for the section.

The short *Enterprise Transit* looped southwest, back to Dog Creek Road.

*Helena Lake Regularity* covered 72-km, with the first 11-km climbing to rejoin *Meadow Lake* at Gustafsen, repeating the rough section, the double-90-left, and the blocking tree, before a right on Tatton FSR, and some great challenges in icy corners en route to Helena Lake Road and out to Lac La Hache. We had leap-frogged again to our next control location on *Helena Lake Regularity* and took photos as it got darker and darker. We ran the computer “for practice” all the way, and I'm glad we weren't competing, as it was hard to maintain CAS in the slippery conditions. Eventual winners, Horst/Willey, in Eric's “not a Subaru” '89 BMW 325iX, mastered the slippery conditions and schooled the field, taking a mere one point in the section. The rest of the front-runner pack accumulated 9- to 12- to 16-points.

We followed our shortcut instructions to get out to Lac La Hache, but turned north (as would the rally, had we followed the route) instead of south at Hwy 97... I'll claim we were distracted by radio conversation -- we got to the gas stop just in time to wait for 12-15 cars. I talked Car 17 into letting me cut the line so I could get to our control position – it was time for Car 1 to leave and I had to be in front of him. We made it, but it was dicey on the ice going into Timothy Lake and Komori Roads.

*Spokin Lake Regularity* covered 68-km and claimed Novice Car 25, only 2-km into the section – substantially “off” -- three flat tires and only one spare. No radio communication could cover the entire section, so we had to send Sweep on through the course even though he was now very late. We had been outbound from our CP when we found Sweep and Car 25. We volunteered our two spares and followed the limping Legacy out to Lac La Hache for repairs. Good thing Sweep continued on course, because he found Car 19 at 22.01km, “L, quiet past house on L”. Navigator Johdi Masterman reported that Driver April Smith had tried everything in her bag of tricks – brake, power, opposite lock – but they had “slid sixty-plus feet” before entering a culvert and gaining some bumper-cover damage. Taped together, they completed the second day, earning the “Dead Last But Finished” award.

Due to the delays from “offs” and “stuffs”, none of the checkpoint cars were able to make it to the 10-km *Mountain House Regularity* before the rally, and unfortunately it became just another transit section into Williams Lake.

Car 9, Satch Carlson and Dennis Gunn, had difficulty late Saturday, but not with the road conditions --the hatch kept coming open on Satch's Saab Sonett, depositing bits of luggage on the road, although not noticed by the owners of said luggage until quite some distance down the road. A discussion ensued as to the suspected contents, and at first it was decided to just write it off – until the magic word “Passport” was uttered and the search was on – reverse course. Unaware that, after being ignored by several cars, the errant satchel had been retrieved by Car 15, Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen, but they could not communicate this to Car 9 when the two met along the route at speed. Eventually, the exchange was made. The FIRST EXCHANGE... Later in the night the hatch popped again. The driver recalls that the “exhaust note was a bit louder”, but it couldn't be readily determined in the dark that anything was missing. Car 15 to the rescue again, not before the bag had been ignored by five cars, and slightly squashed by Car 14. Eventually it was returned to the grateful owner.

Day One results, at midnight, saw Car 2, Horst/Willey, leading with 6; followed by Car 7, Glenn Wallace and R. Dale Kraushaar, with 14. Car 3, Martin Chung and Christa Monasch, and Car 6, Jeff McMillen and Marvin Crippen, were tied at third with 22. Car 1, Carroll/Mah, had a bit of trouble in the middle of *Helena Lake* and finished Day One alone in fifth with 26. Car 5, Gary Webb, Mohave Valley AZ, and John Kisela, Seattle, missed a speed-change-down in *Meadow Lake*, taking 21 early – plummeting to ninth, after leading through *Big Bar*.

Sunday began cold and windy... “it was a cold and windy day...” and frosty as well. On the transit out to Alkali Lake a logging truck accident partially blocked the route. Were all these possible totem-like trees trying to tell us something?

*Alkali Lake Regularity* contained 52-km of frosty roads, mud, ice, and snow – especially in the one big hairpin at 32-km. In past rallies this corner has collected many cars, with exposures before and after, overlooking the Fraser River. No reported problems this year. On the plateau now, the CAS (Car Average Speed) rose to 72-km/h (44.7-mph), until beginning the descent past Dog Creek's airport. Dropping rapidly, the CAS fell to 63-km/h, and finally 55, into the bottom of the gulch and Dog Creek Village, to end the regularity.

Further along, the *Dog Creek Transit* roads were possibly the deepest ice we encountered. If you had opportunity to stop, walking was treacherous, and the clear ice extended deep to the gravel.

*Exeter Regularity* covered 60-km, where the road was either wall-to-wall ice, or deep narrow snow tracks. Running the computer again, to keep in the game, we were OK through most of the section, although down 7 seconds at one point and able to make up only 5 by the next CP location. Again, I was just as happy to NOT be competing in these conditions – great fun, but a bit stressful, driving to maintain “zeros”.

Our checkpoint convoy streamed into 100 Mile House for a “quick” gas and go, then a rapid transit to the start of *Bonaparte Lake Regularity*, scheduled to be 92-km of varying road surfaces familiar to BC rallyists. The three CP crews had great fun getting to our control locations with the closest we'll likely come to a “drifting competition”. I watched another crew follow my slide through a turn – the two Subarus cutting near identical paths, the third crew taking a completely different line in a rear wheel drive Toyota, with their navigator reporting a full sideways drift through the whole corner, laughing all the way. The repartee on the radio kept us all entertained. We found our CP and the others proceeded down course – a long way down course – until one of the big trees that had been standing sentinel along the route at about 54-km, decided the wind was too much and fell across the road. Beyond checkpoint two and before checkpoint three, it was too big to move -- this became the turn-around point for the event and a detour was picked to get the convoy to Cache Creek. One problem though -- the Rallymaster, who had taken a shortcut and back-tracked into the end of the regularity, was expecting the rally that wouldn't get to him. The HAM radio relay barely covered the steep terrain. Eventually some scouting and shortcuts brought radio contact, and the explanation that the rally was over as far as scoring, while all the competitors were being turned around and cautiously sent out to the highway. Any detour or rerouting for the final regularity would have meant 90 minutes or more added to the arrival time. As it was, the rally convoy safely arrived, later than scheduled, with scoring completed around 5:00pm.

Day Two saw two cars with “zero” for the day. Car 1, RJ Carroll and Michelle Mah, just could not overcome the Day One penalty and kept 26 points for 4<sup>th</sup> Overall. Car 7, Wallace and Kraushaar, also “aced” the day, keeping their place in second.

Congratulations to Eric Horst and Steve Willey, of Rainier Auto Sports Club in the Seattle area, for First Overall, with only 8 points, in the 1989 BMW 325iX. Second, to Glenn Wallace, from the Seattle area, and R. Dale Kraushaar from Fountain Hills AZ, with 14 points, in the 2004 Subaru Turbo Baja. Third, to Rainier's Jeff McMillen and Marvin Crippen, taking two points on Day Two for 24 total, in the 2002 Subaru Impreza WRX. First Calculator, 5<sup>th</sup> Overall, to Martin Chung and Christa Monasch, in the 1995 Subaru Impreza. First Paper, to Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen, in the 1986 Subaru GL-10 Wagon. First Novice, to “locals” Rob and Lucile Anderson, in the 2006 Subaru Impreza STI. First Historic, to William McRae and Dave Harms, in the 1969 VW Beetle. First Historic-Equipped, to Car 17, Mike Palm and Garth Hales, in the '74 Super Beetle.

Totem 2006 saw participants from BC, AB, WA, OR, and two from Arizona.

Full results and photos at [www.rallybc.com](http://www.rallybc.com)  
This and other rally stories at [www.tsdroadrally.com](http://www.tsdroadrally.com)