

Laurie Sanson Fun Rally 2nd March 2008 – Whangarei Club

Set out early in the morning in a light drizzle. Got to the site and unloaded, drivers briefing out of the way and we're off – split into 2 groups: one starting on hazards 1 to 5, the other on 6 to 11.

Hazard 6 was a nice easy crawl around and back up – went wide and ran over a peg (bugger!). Hazard 7 was along and then up a bank and sidle around then back to the start – stuffed this one up as didn't give it enough to get onto the sidling. Hazard 8: pick a line through the drain then up a bank on the right side, turn left back into the drain and try to get back to the blue pegs. Hazard 9, this was a hill climb with a bit of a sidling, then a left turn to finish uphill. Had it all planned out – stay close to the yellows on the high side, only to get halfway then slip sideways losing forward motion. Hazard 10 was a slalom, in the drain up one side then across the other side and repeat – managed to clean sheet this one.

Hazard 11 – speed section! Nat hopped out and her nephew Amadeus hopped in. This looks to be fun. Went off with a hiss and a roar, out of the box around a yellow peg then out into the wilderness; turn about now, missing the peg, left then back around the yellow and out again, turning right into a small stream – water everywhere – back around yellows again then off again out up hill and back through reds and yellows and into the box to finish, weeds hanging everywhere off the vehicle.

Stopped for lunch then off to hazard 1 – Nat lost her seat as Amadeus takes over the co-driving. This was a tricky one, down a small drop-off onto a sidling, driver on the bottom side, then across a drain and climb a hill – most were getting crossed up at the drain and hill; a couple did get through. Hazard 2: couldn't turn to get around the tree for the hill climb. Hazard 3: this was a sidling, could go either way around a tree then up some bumps to the right then left and a hill climb to finish. We take the high sidling, landy will hang on there. A bit hairy in the middle, but okay with a quick squirt on the throttle

then past the tree, up the bumps, turn right but couldn't turn back to the left for the hill climb. A Landrover Discovery went low on this hazard (most others did too) and rolled onto a tree damaging the windscreen and a pillar. I had a look in the vehicle and noticed there was no roll cage at all – very stupid doing this hazard at all without one, and had his son in the vehicle as well.

Hazard 4: the boys in the morning had rutted up the first corner and vehicles were only getting to there, so we went wide at the start, hit the bumps at full noise and bounced up then clean sheeted the rest of the hazard. Hazard 5: down a dip then up a steep hill, then along the top and into a drain, turning right over a few bumps and out. Most were trying to climb the steep bank, but I decided to use the side as a wall of death and hopefully fling us out the top – it worked and then bounce-bounce through the drain and out the blues, another zero.

The day turned out good as the rain stopped before lunch and we finished second equal in standard class. A bit concerned though about vehicles doing this sort of rally with no roll cages in, even if they are hard-top.

- Colin

