

OKAIHAU RALLY 2nd December 2007 – A Novice's View

The time had finally arrived; loaded the buggy (Wozit) on the trailer, grabbed a few tools and headed for Carol's place, where we finished loading the car – tent, camping gear etc - then to bed. Up early Saturday morning, had breakfast and put the last minute bits into the car. Carol and Nathan are away early for a day at BMX. I left Hika at 9am heading for scrutineering – might as well be early, might get through a bit earlier (yeah, right!). I Arrived at Kawakawa at 11am, and only one vehicle in front of me. Sat back and watched others arrive, a real mixed bunch of vehicles. Syd and Brett arrived and joined the queue then Nat and Colin turned up. Scrutineering started early, around 12 o'clock, so things were happening. Wozit was 2nd in line so underwent the eagle eyes early; so far so good, only one thing to alter for next time. Syd and Brett headed for home for some rapid modifications while Colin, Nat and I headed for Okaihau to find the rally site and find a place to camp. Found the place okay and set about making camp, figured out the tent, unhooked the trailer and headed back to Hika to collect Carol and Nathan, arriving back at camp late in evening to find the tent and everything had been shifted – we'd camped in the wrong place!

Sunday morning: up early again, breakfast done and a last minute check on the vehicle then drivers' briefing at 8:30 – or was it 9:00? Bad remember! Well, this is it – we're off to hazard 19, our first of the day; check the kids to make sure they know what is happening – follow Kate they say! Number 19 was found and inspected; oh, shit, we have to go down there! Okay, here goes, over the top, down, and out, not quite sure where we're supposed to be. On to 21: line up with the blue pegs, we're off, down, around, line up the hill, give it death – and die. Ah well, freewheel out of the hazard and have a look under the hood. Bloody wire come off the coil; put it back on, hit the key and we're off again - Carol's eyes heaps better than mine! We got through to lunch without any major hassles, aside from getting stuck in 17.

Hazard 6 starts our afternoon. All going well until we get to 16. Looks relatively easy compared to others. A lady with a TV camera is asking questions about how we think we'll go. Maybe we shouldn't have answered; it might have been an omen. The marshal gives us the all clear, "When you're ready," she says. We're off, over the brow, hard right, boot it. Over the ruts, up we go. "Go right" yells Carol. Right we go, watch the rock, left and up – "#^^*)@!" says Carol as we get airborne, over we go – 1, 2, 3, and on the wheels; not finished yet – over again and tip us back right side up and run backwards clear of the hazard. A quick check of the body, yep, okay; check on Carol, assured she's okay. Steward gives us the all-clear and we're off. Hazard 22 reveals something hanging off underneath so back to the pits, out with the spanners and off with the offending shock. Then back to the rally and carry on. We finished the day without any more problems, then back to camp where it was time to pack up, load up and head home.

What a weekend! Roll on Pio Pio!!

- *Brooke*