

**MINTEX  
NATIONAL**

# **RALLY SERIES**

FINAL POSITIONS 1996

CHAMPIONSHIP  
CHATTER

after

Round 7

***THE BULLDOG MIDLAND  
RALLY***



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# Roger's Ramblings

## Midland Missive.

Well -- Rainy Aberystwyth everyone had been keeping an eye on the weather in the area running up to the Bulldog Rally and there was no chance of a repeat of the dust on previous events !

Friday scrutineering session started at 4pm at Lloyds Motors in the town where a canopy had been erected to shield the Scrutineers from the elements. Judging by the wind rattling the office today (Monday) it is just as well that the event found a window in the weather. A cheery Mintex Champion Chris Mellors was keeping an eye on Brian Lyall as Mellors Elliot team manager for the weekend. The Mintex Series was joined by our elder brothers from the Demon Tweaks/ Classic and Sportscar Championship, with Mike Hibbert, Jimmy McRae, David and Jill Sutton, Pauline Gullick, Drexel Gillespie et al making Dilys and myself feel in a 70s time warp !. It just goes to show how long the event has been running, many stories were exchanged over the weekend recalling happy times in the National Series..

Marcus Dodd arrived at scrutiny with a new steed with which he intends to contest the 1997 Series - an ex MLP full house Escort. He was looking forward to the fast Welsh forests the following day to explore the qualities of the new car. The event was a pre Network Q test outing for the Renault Megane team, with a veritable army of Renault personnel to look after the 4 cars on the event. Also making an appearance were the factory Nissan team taking advantage of the test opportunity, Mark Higgins was quietly confident under the direction of Paul Chopping, who has transformed the Nissan in recent months. Back to the Series regulars, Roger Davies needed a F2 win and some good fortune to tie up Formula 2 for the Series - more of this later. Steve Hill in the magnificent Lancer was bubbling with enthusiasm for a good run, having ironed the niggling problems that exist when developing a totally new car. The "Overseas Crew" of Steven Quinne and Richard Skinner were also hoping for an equally good run with a possibility of adding the AutoExpress Junior crown to the N3 class already won. Andrea Hall arrived at Aberystwyth in the Shropshire Rally School Escort Cosworth needing just to score with a finish to take the first Teleflorist Coupe des Dames from a brave Shelly Taunt in the Silverstone Rally School Skoda. The gauntlets were off in Group N with Jeremy Easson and Steve Petch looking forward to the battle of the following day as the Series class would be won by the winner of the Group N category on the event, as simple as that. Roger Duckworth appeared for the first time with his new Subaru Impreza getting some pre RAC practice in as well. Sadly the car does not sound half as good as the old Sierra but progress is progress.

John Trevethick and his team had decided to organise a pre event forum at the Aberystwyth Motor Club HQ. on the Friday evening. Howard Davies (Him of Gwyndaf's Right Hand seat ) along with Series regulars Mark Perrot, Steve Hill, Chris Mellors, Jon Bennett-Evans, and Roger Davies came to be abused by Peter Griffiths, the evening full of the fun that the Series is noted for.

The Bulldog event allowed the Historic competitors to run ahead of the field so it was start ramp duties at 08.30 hrs on Marine Terrace with the Mayor flagging the visitors away with a certain mayhem as competitors sorted the one way system of Aberystwyth out.

The National event was lead away by Steve Hill with Stella Boyles at 09 10 am. hotly persued by a snarling bunch of Meganes which sounded a little noisier than at the previous evenings scrutiny ! The usual short run out to the Llanfan stage produced problems for Hefin Harries in the Peugeot who was suffering from a management unit which would not manage properly, sadly causing his retirement after the first stage. it seemed that his Co-Driver had washed the engine down the previous evening without protecting the 'brain' and a very unhappy Hefin was the result.

Back to the plot: First blood was to the Megane of Robbie Head, four seconds clear of Brian Lyall and Mark Higgins who in turn were a second up on Steve Hill, with just 14 seconds covering the top 10 cars, an exiting day was in prospect. Next up was Myherin ( one of my personal favourite stages in the country ) where Steve Hill had adjusted to the pace and pulled 4 seconds on Brian Lyall and 5 sec on Robbie Head, therefore all square at the front of the field with Tarenig to come next.. Mark Higgins was quickest in this stage 4 seconds up on Hill who was 13 seconds up on Robbie head, beginning to show in the times was Jon Bennett - Evans



a bottom wishbone and took no further part in proceedings, a sad end to a determined bid for Series Group N honours in 1996. Next up was the long Hafren stage which usually sorts the contenders from the pretenders with Steve Hill topping the lists again, 4 secs quicker than Mark Higgins, the next places taken by the visiting F2 contingent, Hill being a determined 20 seconds clear of next Series competitor Brian Lyall. Iwan Roberts in the family Sierra suffered the usual slow down turbo ending a good run lying 7th after the first stages..

Mark Perrot was having an unusually quiet day, until it was explained to me that Welsh Championship honours were at stake, and he did not want to get carried away with the battle up front, preferring to keep an eye on his Welsh Championship position to at least salvage something from his year.

Steve Hill lead the event at service at Dolgellau by 8 seconds from a charging Nissan of Higgins with Head, Brian Lyall and Jon Bennett Evans in close attendance. Steve Smith was having an uncharacteristic day with brake problems, languishing down in 16th place but was fired up for a good run in the afternoon pulling himself back into the top ten in determined fashion. Roger Davies was dominating the other F2 battle in the Group N Astra and we all look forward to him upgrading to Group A next year.

After the first visit to Dyfi the gap at the front had closed to 4 seconds and whilst no other Series competitor was close, it seemed that maybe Steve was to be again denied the overall honours on a Mintex event. Higgins pinched another second in Pantperthog thus the gap was now 3 with two stages to go. The atmosphere at the Press Office was electric waiting to know if at last Steve Hill was to win a Mintex round, at about 4.00pm the result was confirmed that the bridesmaid tag he has worn for so long had been shed, a storming run through the last two stages had finally made a gap of 25 seconds. It was a delighted Mintex Series that welcomed him back to Aberystwyth and the evening seemed set for P A R T Y in some style!

Also in party mode was Teleflorist Leading Lady Andrea Hall after a sensible drive to clinch the Teleflorist Coupe de Dames and 3rd in Group N to boot- well done. Drama for the Group N battle, Jeremy Easson had suffered turbo failure, on changing the item it was discovered that the turbo fitted had no seal, thus a panic second change saw him entering the final stages some 3 mins. behind Steve Petch, but it is a funny old world, Steve broke the gearbox on the penultimate stage and his crew attempted a change at emergency service, only to run OTL in the stage. A sad end to what has been a memorable season long battle. Back to the party, John Trevethick was proudly displaying his harem at the Marine, and the atmosphere at Rally HQ. was reminiscent of the 70's. Andrea Hall was seen to be leaving HQ. quite early - and was taken to task by a number of people - "Oh- i'll be back" she said, "I am just walking my Co-Driver Sean Kelly back to the Hotel"?????. and back she came.

Many sore heads were evident in Aberystwyth on Sunday morning, but congratulations are due to John Trevethick and Wolverhampton Car Club for a classic event. "The Bulldog is back " he said and I am sure that all competitors enjoyed the demanding event.

So that was 1996 - please give us a ring if you have any positive ideas for 1997 so that we can take the Mintex National Rally Series forward again next year. Thanks to Michele Gray from Mintex, surely the most enthusiastic sponsor - Keith Mc Ghie who works unseen in the Press Office, for all the quality coverage he has achieved on your behalf in the media - Martin Little TCS. for his superb results service - Dilys Rogers for her care for all competitors and keeping me in line! - Peter Griffiths for presentations and his amusing ramp commentaries, - Mike Harries Series Scrutineer for keeping control of all eligibility.- Bob Betts of Teleflorist for his enthusiasm and support of the Teleflorist Coupe des Dames.- Frank & Gwenda Williams Speedsports Photography for publicity photography - Alistair and Margaret for the superb presentation videos - Andy Marriot for his SKY coverage- All the member clubs of ANCRO who have organised events for the premier UK Series - -if I have forgotten anyone please forgive - and lastly YOU the competitors for supporting the 1996 Mintex Rally Series making it one of the best yet !.

Prize Presentation at Kenilworth on December 14th. Rooms are filling up for the bash- those of you who have not reserved accommodation don't forget the closing date is just a fortnight away. The hotel has undergone a £1.4m.refurbishment since last year and now includes a Sports complex with steam rooms, swimming pool etc. so don't forget your bathers! Membership of the complex is included in the package for the weekend.. There is talk of a Mintex Series golf match on the Saturday at Royal Leamington Golf Club which could be arranged if enough people are interested. Sue Smith of Southern Car Club has offered to organise a Saturday shopping trip for the girls again if enough interest. Please let us know so we can make the weekend more memorable for you all .....Run out of paper.....Rog...

# The BULLDOG MIDLAND RALLY 1996

## AWARD WINNERS

### CLASSIFICATION

Class	Position	Number	Name	Vehicle
	1		Steve Hill/Stella Boyles	Mitsubishi Lancer
<b>S AWARDS</b>				
Class N1	1	77	Clive Bailye/Mark Freeman	Peugeot 106 Rallye
Class N2	1	45	Martyn Price/Allan Cathers	Honda Civic VTi
Class N3	1	26	Roger Davies/Clive Jenkins	Vauxhall Astra GSI 16V
	2	52	Steve Bowers/Bob Stokoe	Vauxhall Astra
Class N4	1	14	Jeremy Easson/Jim Kitson	Ford Escort Cosworth
	2	28	Tony Jardine/Maurice Hamilton	Ford Escort Cosworth
Class A5	1	64	Trevor Godwin/Rick Spurgeon	Rover Mini Cooper 1.3i
Class A6	1	59	Paul Taylor/Andy Cook	Vauxhall Nova
Class A7	1	6	Mark Higgins/Philip Mills	Nissan Sunny GTi
	2	7	Robbie Head/Bryan Thomas	Renault Maxi Megane
	3	9	Serge Jordan/Jack Boyere	Renault Maxi Megane
Class A8	1	3	Brian Lyall/Brian Goff	Ford Escort RS Cosworth
	2	71	Marcus Dodd/Stephen McAuley	Ford Escort RS Cosworth
Class B9	1	66	Michael Plant/Marina Francks	Rover Mini Cooper
Class B10	No award made			
Class B11	1	23	Philip Squires/Michael Squires	Ford Escort RS
	2	33	Graham Bayliss/Graham Hopewell	Ford Escort
Class B12	1	12	John Bennett-Evans/Chris Jones	Ford Escort Cosworth
	2	2	Mark Perrott/Garry Mansell	Ford Escort Cosworth
	3	18	Greg Mills/Andrew Sankey	Ford Sierra Cosworth 4x4
Class H13	1	68	Michael Hinde/Roger Neale	Volkswagen Okrasa Beetle
Class H16	1	61	Peter Lumsden/David Darlington	SAAB 96v4
<b>Highest placed Wolverhampton &amp; South Staffs Car Club Crew</b>				
	1	26	Roger Davies/Clive Jenkins	Vauxhall Astra GSI 16V
<b>Best Mixed Crew</b>				
	1	1	Steve Hill/Stella Boyles	Mitsubishi Lancer
<b>Highest placed Lady Driver - Teleflorist Vase &amp; Express &amp; Star Bowl</b>				
	1	27	Andrea Hall	Ford Escort Cosworth
<b>Teleflorist Coupe des Dames</b>				
	27	27	Andrea Hall/Sean Kelly	Ford Escort Cosworth
<b>Peter Lloyd Rallying Two Wheel Drive Challenge</b>				
No award made				
<b>Maps by Mail 1300cc Co-driver</b>				
	1	64	Rick Spurgeon	Rover Mini Cooper 1.3i
<b>Ford Motorsport Bonus - Group Ford Escort Cosworth</b>				
	1	14	Jeremy Easson/Jim Kitson	Ford Escort Cosworth
	2	28	Tony Jardine/Maurice Hamilton	Ford Escort Cosworth
	3	29	John Lay/Tim Hobbs	Ford Escort RS Cosworth
	4	27	Andrea Hall/Sean Kelly	Ford Escort Cosworth