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STILL A FAMILY BUSINESS

Tunnock's Tour of Mull

MullMurmurs – Chapter 2



"the best rally in the world"

Under the command of Fuhrer Whittaker, the Scroots have been hard at work all day in the Distillery, shoogling wheels, sealing turbos and checking paperwork but they are finally getting through the gathered 160 odd cars and crews. But Roger has a wee surprise in store. It's his 60th birthday in 2 weeks time so Course Car, Neil Calvert is taking him out for a run through the stages tomorrow afternoon. It will be Roger's first run in a competition car since 1970!

There was another shock in store for the Scroots. When they opened Aggie Foster's (57) kit bag to check her Nomex race suit they found a very unusual item of apparel wrapped up in the suit. Nevertheless they checked out the lacy black thong and attached a 'non compliance' note stating that they weren't fireproof.

Iain 'Ogg' MacKenzie (41) has a 5 speed Quaife in the wee Peugeot cos he couldn't get a dog box in time and it's good to see Ian Corkhill (43) here. The Isle of Man resident feels he should support an event on another island so he's here with his glorious MkI. It's also good to see Giles Brooksbank (32) back. The Doc has said he's fit to go rallying again, but then the Doc has never seen him drive, so what would he know?

John Woodward (59) was keen to stress that his sponsor WMD had nothing to do with Tony Blair and Steven Ronaldson (58) was looking a bit nervous about what lies ahead. He's bought Jon Burn's MG Metro 6R4. Dave Thwaites (56) has been busy replacing the Ford power steering pump with a Vauxhall electrical system and is better pleased with the feel. But we all like a good feel don't we?

Spotted an interesting innovation on Chris Paton's (74) Nova. It has only one centrally mounted w/screen wiper. Chris swears by Rain-X (as Calum Duffy does too) to shed the rain water better than a sweeping wiper. Carl Tuer (53) was looking better pleased. He found out why his new MG X Power was a pig to drive. Whoever had prepped it before he bought it had fitted the steering rack the wrong way round!

As ever, last minute preparations feature highly in Mull tales. John Rintoul's (63) centre diff failed last Tuesday despite his best intentions to have the car on the trailer by the weekend, so it was a re-fit and driveshaft replacement all round before he could come over. It makes you wonder doesn't it? Jim Brindle stepped out of his BL Mini wearing a Ford jacket, apparently son Steve works for M-Sport. Divided loyalties, eh.

Good to see Mr Fergus Loudon co-driving for Grant 'Sid the Parrot' Fleming (83). As you know Mr Loudon is the Production Director at Tunnock's. Lovely chap, and wonderful biscuits. After their Subaru exploits last year, they're back in a MkII. Bright red and drop dead racy, that's Foey the Fireman's (119) MkI Escort. As a reward for finishing the rebuild of his new Historic car, Alan Gardiner (47) has let Iain Noble from MacKay's Garage loose in it this weekend.

Andrew Smith (94) was at the Forum last night and when presenting his wee Peugeot at Scrutineering, reminded me that he did the Tour of Mull in 1972 when it was a round of the Shell Scottish Rally Championship while another ol'timer, Bill Lymburn (148) is now in his fifth decade of rallying spread over 31 years (think about it, it does compute!). He competed in a Mini in the 70s, rose to great heights in National rallying and is now back with a MkII.

Bill Langford's Astra (107) appeared with a parrot stuck to the roof. Apparently, codriver Tom Paterson's daughter Lee stuck it on their first car and it has been transferred to every one ever since over the past 12 years. Mike Kent (129) has an ex Mike Taylor Developments Ford Escort Cosworth which he drives in the Rally Car class at Hillclimbs and Speed events as well as rallies. I thought it was only wimmin who could multi task.

Tracey Louise Muir and Garry Muir (105) have both navigated on Mull before but this is their first time together (nice innit!) with Tracey driving and Garry on the Notes. Louise Thomas and Wendy Whittaker have purloined Louise's Dad's Mini which he first drove in 1969 and are raising funds for Maggie's Cancer Care Homes. Go girls, go. And be nice to Richard Egger (121), he bought the whisky miniatures for the Marshal's goody bags! He's still got the Nova, but he seems to be collecting Escorts these days, this is his second MkI.

Norman MacPhail found his Corsa sumpguard grounding out so needed to bend it, but it was too strong. So he went to Harry McDowall's garage and tried to Porta-Power it against the roof. It lifted the roof! The sumpguard is still straight! At 144 is the Bear Club entry. It's John MacCrone's first event as a driver (he navigated for his sister Heather last year) and Zak Hancock's (good Scottish name, eh) first event as codriver. There are 9 youngsters between the age of 12 and 19 who work on the Bear Cub Nova, the excellent project fostered by Steve Davies.



Donna Ingram (130) is taking the issue of weight saving very seriously, even her lipstick holder on top of the dash is made from carbon fibre. Apparently the Mini is called the 'Miniru', as it's the only non-Subaru in Kenny McKinstry's workshops. Alan Cowan's (128) Peugeot has done 3 Jim Clarks and 3 Mulls – not bad for a shopping car with a cage and suspension. Mark Booth (143) is back with his Honda powered Mini. After marshalling for 7 years he built this device and competed in 2004 but broke the steering rack.

Drew Struthers (127) has obviously spent a lot of time and thought on Mull prep. He's fitted an anti roll bar and forest suspension to the Vauxhall powered Sunbeam. And it's good to see Rod Brereton out in his Renault Clio, he started the 3 year build project – 12 years ago! And what about young Ross Hunter's (152) Challenge spec Peugeot 205. It positively sparkled at Scrutineering and looked even better than a factory fresh car. This is his new car for next season and first time out is Mull. Check out the graphics on the roof. Nice one Ross.

After spending 10 months building his Cooper S, Martin Page (146) was looking a mite apprehensive. He's never been to Mull before, even to spectate. The Morrisons were in trouble again (93) and (158), the Toyota Starlet broke a camshaft on Wednesday morning and the Escort wouldn't fire up and wouldn't go.

And finally, the O'Donnell twins appeared at 3.30 pm\this afternoon to get through Scrutineering. By all accounts, at 12 noon yesterday the Escort looked like an 'exploded car diagram'. All we need now is a finish and a result.

And here's a tale I couldn't resist. David Balfour Fotheringham, co-driver to Dave Calvert (86), was out recceing the other day, with Dave driving DBF's shiny and unmarked Audi. Approaching a narrow bridge, Dave didn't hear the word 'narrow' - the wing mirror pinged and snapped back against the passenger window. DBF didn't even twitch, just rolled down the electric window and pushed the mirror back, and rolled the window back up. It was his first mark on the Audi since he got it!

And what about Paul Marshall (80). The Triumph TR7 was prepped and ready to rally two weeks ago, so Paul went out one night to set the lights up - and ditched it. Back to the workshop to straighten the wing and steering and re-prep it for Mull.

Young David Bogie is here, but is a non starter. The Lancer rolled, ever so gently, on the Trackrod a couple of weeks back. They couldn't even salvage the dashboard! Jim Carty (31) is also a non starter in the Metro – I think the wife wouldn't let him come over! Craig Bennett (36) is another non starter, as is Jim McKenna (46).

And if you hear a siren and see flashing lights just ahead of the rally to-night that could be Bulletin Bill and Cruella Crumpet with the 'MullMurmurs', so look out for the Flying Ford Focus and be ready at the road side to grab a Bulletin!

And if you need to keep your sugar levels up for a night of serious spectating, there is only one possible remedy and it starts with a 'T'.

Yer auld pal, Jaggy Bunnet, Tobermory, 5.00 pm, Friday