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STILL A FAMILY BUSINESS

Tunnock's Tour of Mull

MullMurmurs – Chapter 9



"the best rally in the world"

Provisional Leaderboard after SS19 (of 19)

- 1 Neil MacKinnon/Daniel Barritt (Subaru Impreza WRC) 2hr 26m 50s
- 2 John Cope/Robert Fagg (Subaru Impreza WRC) 2h 29m 11s
- 3 James MacGillivray/Ian Fraser (Ford Escort Mk2) 2h 31m 29s
- 4 Daniel Harper/Chris Campbell (BMW MINI Cooper S) 2h 31m 56s
- 5 Tristan Pye/Kirsty Riddick (Subaru Impreza) 2h 33m 07s
- 6 Willie Bonniwell/Kevin Rae (Subaru Impreza) 2h 35m 26s
- 7 John Cressey/Stan Quirk (BMW MINI Cooper S) 2h 35m 40s
- 8 David Miller/Andrew Bailey (Subaru Impreza) 2h 38m 01s
- 9 John Rintoul/Jim Rintoul (Mitsubishi Lancer) 2h 39m 21s
- 10 Tim Stell/Mike Yates (Subaru Impreza) 2h 39m 46s

As ever, the Tunnock's Tour of Mull Rally finished with a sting in its tail. A smirr of rain announced changes for the final Leg of this year's event. In some places, the road was wet, in others, it was greasy, but the biggest problem for drivers was the uncertainty - never knowing if there was grip round the next corner, a large puddle over the next crest or mud spread across the road!

On the first stage of the night, two sudden bangs shook up the leaderboard. Dougi Hall slid off and Paul Kirtley left the road at speed. The Subaru soaked up the impact well but left Paul and Jim truly shaken and stirred, but thankfully hale and hearty.

It also left MacKinnon in control, but as reported earlier, he too had his troubles. On the final stage of the afternoon he was having engine coolant pressurisation problems. These continued at the start of the third Leg and there was doubt whether he should carry on or not, but with the McKinstry Impreza running in 'safety' mode, the job was on. Fortunately he had over 3 minutes in hand over John Cope, but the Lancastrian was aware of the local man's problems and turned up the pressure.

Cope took time out of MacKinnon over the final three stages, but not enough. Neil MacKinnon, with Daniel Barritt alongside, scored a remarkable 12th victory on this year's Tunnock's Tour of Mull epic adventure.

"It spat all the water out after Gribun," said Neil, "I thought that was it, but the McKinstry boys got it going again. The run of the final stages suited the car and once I got off that Hill Road I thought the job was on."

"I thought there was a glimmer of hope," said the runner-up, "I wouldn't like to win like that, I'd prefer a straight fight, but Neil led from first stage to last, he deserved it."

In third place James MacGillivray was having to keep an eye on Daniel Harper, but on the Start line at Scridain, "I got fed up with pussy-footing it, and I just let go." Jock the Bull slid his foot off the clutch at near full revs and with tyre smoke and steam coming from the rear, exploded off the start line sideways to the hoots and cheers of marshals and spectators - and even rivals - sitting waiting their turn behind. Nice one James.

Daniel Harper scored an excellent 4th place ahead of an equally impressive Tristan Pye. Wild Willie Bonniwell was in sensible mode all weekend and the result was 6th, despite a late puncture in Scridain, ahead of John Cressey who still had time for a wild celebratory spin in the closing stages. David Miller's consistent pace ensured a well earned 8th ahead of John Rintoul with Tim Stell rounding off the top ten after welding up his disintegrating inlet manifold before the final Leg.

Tony Bardy was out spectating after his turbocharger failure and John Swinscoe explained the reason for his retirement. A brake master cylinder failure caused a rear wheel brake to seize and spat the Lancer off into the undergrowth. Apparently it left a 100 ft single line of rubber on the road.

So, that's yer lot for now. A full report will follow on Sunday afternoon, but for now, our congratulations to 'MacKinnon the MacNificent' for his record 12th victory – what price a baker's dozen next year?

Yer auld pal, Jaggy Bunnet, Tobermory, 3.30 am Sunday

