

Tunnoch's Tour of Mull

"the best rally in the world"

MullMurmurs – Chapter 9

(Provisional) Leaderboard after 14 (of 17 Stages)

- 1 P MacKinnon/D Barritt (Subaru Impreza) 1h 54m 09s
- 2 C Duffy/I Duffy (Ford Escort MkII) 1h 54m 49s
- 3 W Bonniwell/K Rae (Subaru Impreza) 2h 00m 17s
- 4 J MacGillivray/I Frazer (Ford Escort MkII) 2h 00m 50s

As the 39th Tunnoch's Tour of Mull Rally enters the closing stages all eyes are on the battle at the front. Both Paul MacKinnon and Calum Duffy broke the record on the first stage of the night, the 22 mile Tuath/Calgary blast up the west coast. Paul was 20 secs under his ol'man's record and Calum was 12 under. By the finish Psaul had no brakes and Calum was struggling for grip even in the near freezing temperatures and his hot rubber.

But it looks as though John Cope's challenge has come to grief at Torloisk. The Subaru slid off on loose gravel across the road. So how slippery is it? James MacGillivray reckons "Mishnish was about the slippiest stage he had ever driven." Willie Bonniwell had a fright at the Salen start when the car wouldn't start and he had 3 minutes to change the plugs. Worse was Daniel Harper, the gear linkage broke on the start of the long one and he lost 2 mins stage fixing it. Tristan Pye smashed his bottoms lights when the Subaru landed nose first after a vicious jump and Kris Hall lost 45 seconds with a front puncture.

Denis Biggerstaff was climbing back up the leaderboard after his double puncture on the first stage, but Ireland's finest is struggling again. The Subaru is fast running out of brake pads due to a problem with the calipers binding on. Eddie O'Donnell has been slipping back this afternoon. He lost power at one stage when the starter motor battery strap snapped and then later started losing gears in his gearbox. As ever, the enterprising Eddie was off home to borrow bits from a relative's gearbox to repair his own to make sure he re-starts tonight. Young John MacCrone nearly threw away his 2nd in 1600 class this afternoon when he slid off on Mishnish, but he survived. Paul Miller was in trouble too, he had lost third gear and just as important, he had lost reverse gear! The box was getting noisier by the mile, but he is determined to carry on as far as it will take him. And 'Fuey the Fireman' is still going despite having to replace the gearbox and the throttle linkage in the Escort he borrowed from Iain Gardiner. Fuey is better known as Ian Noble, the Automotive Technician (you can't call him a mechanic these days) who works in that beacon of industrial activity, MacKay's Garage in Tobermory.

Jaggy met Freddy. No it's not the name of a new horror flick. Freddy Ferodo is the team mascot of Chris Shield running at car 140. It's a wee dug wearing clothes and has three 'minders', Emma, Ann-Marie and Jess who take this wee dug everywhere and wave it at the rally cars and take photos of it in different situations. Mad? Yes, but good fun, and Jaggy asked Freddy for his 'pawtograph' – think about it. Oh, please yourself!

Yer Auld Pal, Jaggy Bunnet – Saturday, 11.00 pm, Tobermory

