

# Begonia rally to attract pick of the bunch

## UNBELIEVABLE

Rallying less than three km from the centre of Ballarat on a Saturday morning! Unbelievable.

But, that's exactly what's going to happen on the opening special stage of this year's Begonia Rally.

Directors Geoff Boyd and Ross Runnalls have mapped out a course in the park using the council road into the dump, bitumen roads and a grassy track between two cricket ovals.

Geoff Boyd said yesterday he hoped people would go to Victoria Park on March 3 at 11 am and watch the cars in action and perhaps "wet their appetites to follow the course of the rally during the two days."

European-style rallying comes to Ballarat on March 3 and 4, the first weekend of the Begonia Festival.



Ex-Australian Rally champion, Bob Watson, is just one of the top rally drivers who will compete in the Begonia Rally. Watson rolled his Turbo Peugeot 504 in its first outing late last rally season.

Appropriately called the Begonia Rally, the special stage event will be two days of all daylight rallying.

The 600km rally has been divided into 42 special stages which will be timed to the second.

Each special stage will carry \$40 prizemoney. The field of 60 cars has been divided into two groups which will enable the prizemoney to be spread around.

The winner will receive \$1000 which has been donated by the Light Car Club of Australia (Ballarat branch) the organisers of the event.

It is being directed by two of Australia's top rally navigators, Ross Runnalls and Geoff Boyd.

Special stage prizemoney has been donated by various Ballarat business houses.

The Begonia Rally will start at 11 am on Saturday. Cars will be on display at the southern end of Grenville street where the street will be closed from 10 am.

From there, cars will compete in a special section at Victoria Park, less than three km from the central Post Office!

Then it's out to Creswick and to Grenville and Smythesdale on Saturday, before returning to the Curtis Street car park at 5 pm.

On Sunday, crews will go to Scarsdale and then back to Grenville before finishing in the North Gardens reserve at 5.10 pm.

The Begonia Queen is to flag the first car away and she will present the winner with his trophy and cheque at 5.25 pm on Sunday.

Director Geoff Boyd said yesterday the event had been growing in prestige during its three years and that the organising crew was now drawing on experience gained during that time.

He said there were only two or three other events in Australia which offered more in terms of prizemoney.

"We would like to see the event develop to the recognition given to the Castrol International (a special stage event conducted near Canberra).

The Begonia Rally has already attracted "name" drivers such as Geoff Portman, Garry Harrowfield, Dean Rainford (South Australia), ex-Australia Rally Champion, Bob Watson (Peugeot 504 Turbo), 1978 Victoria Rally champion Warwick Smith and 1977 Vic. Rally champ, Bob Waterhouse.

Spectator instructions will be available a week before the event from the Begonia Festival information caravan, Eclipse Motors and Gardon Motors Rally displays in those two motorhouses will feature during the lead up to the event.

Rally headquarters will be at Gardon Motors and a telephone result answering service will be manned for the weekend.

Radio 3BA will be

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BALLARAT

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