

BEGONIA 'PREVIEW' OF FUTURE RALLIES

THERE HAS been much conjecture as to the future development of rallies here in Australia — what with environmental and conservation considerations, the 'fuel crisis', the growing need to conform to Australian Design Rules, and the coming introduction of mass marketed front wheel drive cars.

The Windscreens O'Brien Begonia Rally has the hallmarks of being just what future 'public' rallies will be — short special stages run in daylight near a major populated city.

Canberra has led the way for many years with the Castrol Rally and now Victoria has introduced a similar type of event.

The Begonia Rally has been organised by the Ballarat Branch of the Light Car Club of Australia for 26 years — so there is sound experience behind the organising team.

In 1979 the Club looked to the future of rallying and re-structured the event. In 1980 the event was further developed and it is now ready to 'blossom' as one of the leading special stage rallies in the country.

The event has all the 'colour' of some European rallies — it starts in Ballarat and the very first special stage is within the city's limits.

It is festival time — for the annual Begonia Festival is conducted at this time and the rally is an official activity associated with the Festival.

The Windscreens O'Brien Begonia Rally will be run over the weekend of February 28th / March 1st.

Starting at 11 am on the Saturday, the very first special stage will be over a bitumen and dirt course set in a park in the city itself, providing spectacular action for the many thousands of spectators that gather to watch the cars.

From Ballarat the rally heads north-east and the course passes through a number of forests, returning to the city by nightfall. The drivers rest overnight.

Sunday's course takes the cars on a southern loop. First car will be away by 9 am, returning late afternoon.

With all 36 special stages conducted in daylight over the

weekend car enthusiasts will have plenty of opportunities to see some of the country's leading rally drivers in action over one of the best rally spectator areas in Victoria.

The Begonia Rally will be organised by the Ballarat Branch of the Light Car Club of Australia and directed by leading Victorian rallyists, Geoff Boyd and Ross Runnalls. The course will be checked by Ian Richards.

The event, fully route-charted together with tulips, will also be marked on the ground with arrows positioned at all intersections where a deviation in the course is required.

The Windscreens O'Brien Be-

gonia Rally will be the first 'Special Event' for 1981 — the second being the Castrol Rally later in March — and the second round of the Victorian Rally Championship.

A total of \$2,500 will be made available for prizemoney.

Entries for the event, which will be over a distance of 550 kms, will close on February 17th. A field limit of 60 will apply.

Supplementary regulations and entry forms are available from the Light Car Club of Australia in Ballarat (P.O. Box 400) or Melbourne (46 Queens Rd., Melbourne).

Enquiries should be directed to Geoff Boyd on Ballarat (053) 30 1800 (bus) or 32 1250 (a.h.).

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