

RALLY ACTION



ONLY ONE POINT gave Bob Phillips and Ross Runnalls their victory with the BM Motors Datsun 1600.

VICTORIAN CLUBMAN SERIES

FULFILLED PROMISE

story

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MITCHELLTOWN, FEBRUARY 8 — BOB PHILLIPS AND ROSS RUNNALLS FULFILLED THE PROMISE of their new BM Motors Datsun 1600 when they narrowly won the first heat of this year's Victorian Clubman Rally Series, the PCCV Summer Safari, here today.

After being equal leaders at half way down only 2 points they managed to drop a total of ten on the night putting them one point ahead of Keith Hendy and Peter Carroll in a Cortina.

In third place were Graham Trounce and Lloyd Minifie in a Datsun 1600. With many of the more experienced grade three competitors moved up to grade two the results show some of the new names that will be filling the results throughout the year. Though none of those gaining series points in this event (the first six placegetters) are exactly novices.

After two years when the Summer Safari had met with a somewhat mixed reception the director, Barry Petersen, who was new to the position for this

year, took pains to make sure that there was no repetition.

TRIANGLES

All controls had, in addition to the mandatory control markers, specially made yellow reflective triangles which were placed 50 paces further out. Gates also had the yellow reflective tape on them and 'wrong way go back' signs and direction arrows were used.

The event used the area around Nagambie and Rushworth, with the Whroo Forest providing most of the "headache" sections in the event. 38 crews left the busy start at Regan Motors showrooms in Balwyn, and transported to the start proper west of Avenel. Dust was to remain very severe throughout the night, with no wind about to disperse it.

The first 4 sections were all confidence builders, with very few crews losing points. Section 5 had many shaking their heads, although the first 3 place-getters, plus Seymour-Adams (flying in the V8 504) and Stearne-Lister (Cortina), managed to clean sheet. Sections 6 and 7 caught many crews napping, but once again, the leading crews were still clean. Seymour-Adams retired their Peugeot here with a broken fan belt.

NO SPARE

Unfortunately for them, the spare was left out of the car during preparation.

Section 8 sent the crews around Reedy Lake, and only

Melbourne-Trevillian cleaned this one, earning the Directors award, whilst 7 other crews dropped 1 point only.

Section 9 provided another easy run for the leaders to the half-way at Rushworth, where the score-board showed Phillips-Runnalls and Hendy-Carroll both down 2 points, Herb Godwin-Jim Maude (Torana) were on 3, and Trounce-Minifie were moving through the field to be on 4 points.

For the 2nd Division, crews headed into the Whroo Forest, and although the first 4 sections saw many crews clean sheet, many more were struggling. Section 15 proved a hard nut to crack, and found Robertson-Robertson (VW) doing best, dropping 4 points.

GAGGLE

Whilst a gaggle of other crews dropped 5, Melbourne-Trevillian brought their good run undone with a meeting with an unyielding stump. The last few sections saw very little change among the leaders, although Godwin-Maude must be regretting the 1 point they lost on the last section, which moved them from 3rd position down to 4th. 31 crews completed the event, and despite the usual large number of Datsuns entered (14), 5 different makes of car figured in the first 6 placings.

Next heat of the series is the WDCC Otway Trial on March 27-28.



GRAEME TROUNCE and LYLE MINIFIE took third place in the Safari with their Datsun 1600, once again the year's most popular rally car?

PROVISIONAL RESULTS

1. PHILLIPS-RUNNALLS, Datsun 1600 — 10 pts.
2. HENDY-CARROLL, CORTINA — 11.
3. TROUNCE-MINIFIE, DATSUN 1600 — 14.
4. GODWIN-MAUDE, TORANA XU-1 — 15.
5. SICHLAU-MCKENZIE, FIAT 125 — 18.
6. BIRRELL-VAUX, DAUPHINE — 20.

