

VIC. RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP DYBALL'S MOUNTAIN

WALHALLA, SUNDAY, APRIL 3: — IN A SURPRISE RESULT, new up and comer David Dyball this morning won the first heat of the Victorian Trials Championship, the Kew Chrysler Mountain Rally.

He was navigated by last year's Expert's Trial winner, Noel Kelly in a privately entered and prepared Datsun 1600.

They won by a clear five minute margin from equal second placegetters, Norm Crofts / Bill Johnston (Torana) and Gil Davis / David Long (Datsun 1600).

Davis looked sure to win when the oil pressure sensor sheered off the block at about two-thirds distance and he lost six minutes on a transport section while effecting temporary repairs.

The event was, as is suggested by the name, run over mostly main mountain roads in the rugged terrain north of Maffra. One of the biggest problems facing all crews was the thick dust that enveloped many of the roads during the still clear night.

The first section was a short daylight closed road section along fast crest-ridden easements just north of Maffra. Most crews made it with about a minute to spare except for the Mini of David Officer which up-ended itself at a T-junction.

Next up was two runs up the Maffra Hillclimb together with a return down the hill via the maze of little tracks in the scrub at the rear. By the end of the runs, the dust was about eight inches deep on those tracks — it was rumored the Maffra District Car Club is bottling it and selling it as genuine Boisdale talc.

All cars made the first run in daylight without incident, Phil Bernadou and Phil Rainer taking fastest time in their Datsun 1600.

The second run was at night after a meal-break and Bob Bird and John White took the honors. Tom Seymour added to the excitement when he half-rolled the V8-engined Peugeot 504, but it returned to its wheels and continued only to retire later with gearbox problems.

The first of the "serious" sections was in the forest north of Boisdale where the dust was particularly thick but young Hugh Bell showed them how to do it in his Datsun 1600 taking best time only to come up against a tree on the subsequent section!

Ninety-three arduous kilometres

formed the next section which took crews to the stage break at Licola. Davis now had the bit between his teeth especially when he got past Bob Bird when the Lancer crew wrong-slotted and punctured.

This gave Davis a dust-free run at the front of the field and he was a minute quicker than Dyball over the long section.

The attrition rate took a turn for the worst as many crews struck trouble. Pierre Dalle and Ian Baldock hit a bank and lost a wheel from their Datsun 180B.

Bernadou took his Datsun 1600 home with a broken exhaust system while Rex Muldoon retired the big Falcon at Licola after encountering clutch problems. Bruce Wilson and Peter Haas were experiencing teething problems in the new 120Y but persevered.

At Licola the scores read Davis 12, Dyball 13, Toner 15, Wayne Muldoon and Dixon each 16. Out of the Licola to the north and up to a 57 kilometre section up to and across the Benison Plains to Castle Hill.

Both leaders cleaned plus Chris Power in the Brad Boyden Datsun 1600 who had punctured on the earlier section.

Three more crews retired — Knowles and Sichlau broke the gearbox on their Cortina while Ken Stone / Bill Aggenbach broke the rear suspension on their Datsun 1600. Bob Bird blew a head gasket on the Lancer.

A short transport took competitors over the rough, steep descent from Castle Hill and it was here that Davis had the oil pressure sensor problems and he lost a lot of oil.

Mike Henry was unlucky when he rolled the Civic on the transport when he caught the wheel in a rut and gracefully toppled over.

Dyball and Power set the pace down to Valencia Creek as Davis took life gently with a half full sump. Dixon encountered more drastic problems when a heater hose blew and the motor of the little Sunny was cooked.

Fortunately, this was not the good engine being prepared but one that was just thrown together in the days before the event.



Chris Power fell out of contention on the subsequent transport through Maffra when he spent time repairing his exhaust.

On the remaining couple of sections to the finish, Davis set a scorching pace but was unable to catch Dyball.

Graham Alexander was stiff when the diff of his SLR 5000

blew only 10 kilometres from the finish while Millis and Trevillian were probably lucky to get away with very little damage when their Datsun 1600 left the road only five kilometres from the end.

Congratulations to Monty Sufren and the organisers from the Swinburne Car Club for a well-organised event.

PROVISIONAL RESULTS: David Dyball / Noel Kelly (Datsun 1600), 26 points, 1; Gil Davis Preps: Gil Davis / David Long (Datsun 1600) 31, Norm Crofts / Bill Johnston (Torana XU-1), 31, equal second; Gil Davis Preps: Graeme Toner / Mike Mitchell (Datsun 1600) 32 pts, 4; Wayne Muldoon / Warwick Smith (Datsun 1600) 34 pts, 5; Doug Chapple / Bruce Ford (Datsun 1600), 37 pts, 6.

DEFINITELY AN UP and coming crew is that of David Dyball and Noel Kelly, a combination that proved strong enough to take out the opening Victorian title round in the Gippsland mountains. Photosport Photo.

NOT FIGURING AMONGST THE place getters, but nevertheless, was the Dixon Richards big engined 120 Y Datsun, unfortunately cooked during the event. Photosport Photo.

