

SMITH/PATERSON AGAIN

IAN RICHARDS REPORTS

BALLARAT: March 12th — WARWICK SMITH AND PAUL PATERSON took their Lancer to another win in the second round of the Victorian Rally Championship here this morning.

This gives them a clear lead in the championship pointscore after John Armitage, who equalled them in the first heat, was a non-starter.

Second place in the Begonia went to the Brad Boyden Datsun of Chris Power and Mike Mitchell just one minute behind the Lancer with more Lancers following third, fourth and fifth.

Locals Peter Corkran and Ian Ellis were third, David Jones and Ian Pearson fourth and Jim Uttlemore/Tony Bond fifth and first of the Grade Twos. The Datsun 1600 of Nicholls and Davidson were sixth and first of the Grade Threes.

A full field of fifty started the event from Ballarat including thirteen Grade Ones. Notable entrants included the Lancers of Bird and Beaumont and Jones and Pearson, and local ace Garry Harrowfield with Noel Kelly calling the turns, expected to do well after his Summer Stages performance.

The competition began with a cresty 7 kilometre run up North South Track with most crews dropping a minute.

Grade Twoers, Hugh Bell / Steven Hollowood and Ian Nowacki / Mike Rebbechi set the pace to clean.

Twelve kilometres through the Ben Major Forest separated the field a little better with Pearce/Pearce, Muldoon/Runnals and Brown/Brown best down one minute, all in Datsun 1600's. Uttlemore / Bond, Armstrong / Lister, Richards / Richards, Nowacki / Rebbechi and Fitcher / Fitcher all dropped two minutes.

Sixteen kilometres of the Mount Lonarch Plantation was slippery ballbearing fun but dust

was becoming a real hazard as the sections lengthened.

Uttlemore, Richards and Nowacki were the only ones clean with a dozen crews on one point.

Muldoon was having problems to drop eight whilst Browns had brake problems and Harrowfield punctured. Bird retired at the service with no brakes whilst Dalle / Baldock took half a hour extra at service with carburettor problems.

Eight kilometres along Fiery Creek, Sandersons and Camp Road was cleaned by Nowacki and Sichlau/McKenzie in the Fiat.

This placed Nowacki in a clear lead.

Uttlemore and Richards dropped one to hold second place outright. They were equalled on the section by Harrowfield, Brown, Heny, Wood, Fitcher and Nicholls.

The next section toured across to the west side of the Mount Cole Forest and totalled over twenty-six kilometres with the dust thick and dangerous.

The best score was eight minutes late for Corkran/Ellis, Davis/Toner in the Holden, Richards, Nowacki, Sichlau and Nicholls.

Dairy Maid Creek Road presented the most problems with its three hairpin bends.

The Browns went off for eight minutes, and just as they got out, Harrowfield took their place for twelve minutes. Richards spun modifying both rear guards but did not lose any time.

There was a dubious instruc-

Provisional Result.

1. Warwick Smith/Paul Paterson, Lancer	51 pts.
2. Brad Boyden Datsun: Christ Power/Mike Mitchell, Datsun 1600	52 pts.
3. Peter Corkran/Ian Ellis, Lancer	54 pts.
4. David Jones/Ian Pearson, Lancer	55 pts.
5. Kenyon Motors: Jim Uttlemore/Tony Bond*, Lancer	57 pts.
6. John Nicholls/D. Davidson ☆, Datsun 1600	59 pts.
*1st Grade 2, ☆ 1st Grade 3.	
Championship Points: Smith 16½, Armitage 7½, Power 6, Corkran 4, Richards 3½, Muldoon 3½, Jones 3, Uttlemore 2, Dalle 2, Nicholson 1, Nicholls 1.	
Grade 2 Award Points: Richards 15, Uttlemore 10, Nicholson 6, Buck 3½, Lees 3½, Evans 3, I. Smith 3, Sichlau 3, Chapple 2, Tassel 1.	

tion in the route chart just prior to the control, but no-one seems to have been affected unduly. Even if you took the wrong track, it was worth no more than thirty seconds.

Next up was a ten kilometre run out towards Warrak with Corkran, Harrowfield, Power, Smith, Jones, Davis, Denvil, Phillips and Uttlemore all down three.

Richards lost fifteen minutes to fall out of contention when the carburettor surged and started a nasty fire under the bonnet, destroying fuel lines and wiring.

The final section of the first division was a mammoth fifty kilometre run back to the central control at Fiery Creek.

Road conditions continued to be excellent but very slippery and the odd road rather rocky. Dust was the greatest problem and scores depended upon which convoy you were in.

Power and Jones scored thirteen late, Browns, Smith and Sichlau fourteen and Harrowfield, Uttlemore, Richards and Nicholls on fifteen. Bad luck struck both Muldoon and Phil Nicholson who both ran out of fuel and went no further. Davis punctured twice on the section — the Holden must go sideways too much.

Nowacki lost his lead when the bonnet came loose and blew open. Bell retired off the road.

Scores at this stage had Colin Sichlau and David McKenzie in the Fiat 125 down 30 points, then Uttlemore on 31. Power, Smith and Nowacki were all on 33. Jones 34, Corkran 35, Nicholls 36, Fitcher 39, Pearce 41 and Richards 42.

Pearce took 18 points at service with alternator problems. Also with alternator problems were Harrowfield who lost little time and Trounce who retired. Dalle

retired with a broken rear suspension.

The second division began with a thirty-two kilometre run over Mount Lonarch. Down seven minutes were Brown, Power, Smith and Nicholls. Harrowfield, Jones and Richards were on eight.

Nowacki stopped with mechanical problems and Sichlau stopped at the start of the next section with a jammed thermostat, ending two great runs.

Twenty kilometres back through the Ben Major Forest was rough, tight and dusty with Corkran down one at the dust free head of the field. Smith did two to Power four giving the Lancer a two point lead with Uttlemore gradually losing ground back in the dust. Brown, Jones, Richards, Fitcher and Nicholls all did three.

After a long transport eastwards, a short but very tight fourteen kilometre section followed, in the Cobblers Gully Plantation near Creswick. The pace was four minutes by Corkran, Brown, Power, Smith, Jones and Richards.

The event's final section was forty kilometres of dust, dust and more dust.

Some got a good run, but the scores varied by six minutes for more or less equivalent crews.

Power dropped four to the fives of Smith and Corkran. Poor Jim Uttlemore needed to drop five to hold third, but the dust slowed his score to eight. Jones also lost third by dropping six.

Herb Godwin and Jim Maude supplied the final drama by rolling their Torana twenty kilometres from the finish.

The Begonia was a well conceived and executed event over excellent and competitive roads, ruined for many people by the dust problem which arises basically from the poor mechanisms used to decide starting order.

BELOW: CHRIS POWER'S EXCELLENT second place in the Begonia puts him up to third in the Championship with the Brad Boyden Datsun 1600 ably navigated by Mike Mitchell. Photo by Brian Robson.

