

THE NINTH BP

In other days, we recall, a "No.9" was a remarkably efficient specific for all sorts of disorders, and indeed was something of a nostrum for whatever ailed the budding private soldier. Having just concluded No. 9 BP Rally, therefore, we are relieved that its effects were not identical with those of the little pill of yore.

It was for some, however, something of a pill to swallow, if the results are any guide. For though the leaders did not finish as far down as others have in the past, the casualty rate was higher and the back-of-the-field finishers almost needed one of those tape-fed monsters to total up their penalties.

We put it down to the weather; because the route itself was no rougher or less well-mapped than in other years, and certainly the field was of even higher a quality, if that's possible. We did pay some heed to those who kindly offered constructive suggestions based on experience; we made divisions fewer and longer, and some sections quicker, and cut off the non-stop entry requirement, and we mentioned semi-officially some military maps too, of which we have in the past been, by a sort of legal fiction, officially ignorant. We wish we hadn't, as things turned out!

The net result was, as might have been expected, that the best crews with the most suitable cars again headed the field - or, at least, those who did head the field came under this category.

We have always felt that organisers of these affairs should have a general aim in view, and perhaps a few particular ones also. Ours has, for 9 successive rallies now, been generally to ensure that good fun is had by all, the sportin' aspect of the affair being of more moment, we think, than the advertising benefits accruing to sundry parties. No accidents, no damage to private or public property, a high proportion of finishers, no clean sheets, all sections proved to be possible - these are the desiderata, as our classical lecturer used to say.

Well, we dipped out on one of these this year, as Tony Theiler and Gary Chapman did have a fairly bad prang on the very last Division. But 70% of the 37 starters finished; nothing but good relations was left behind so far as public authorities are concerned; everyone had their share of fun and misery, which is as it should be. And only one control point - run, horror of horrors, by ourselves personally - was in the wrong spot! It wasn't the Monte Carlo; but according to the cable news, this might be just as well.

Let's go with these very determined and well-equipped crews along the route and see what happened.

ASSEMBLY STAGE

Meeting at a damp, dark, dreary bend on the Murray Valley Highway in the small hours of Thursday, the crews faced the aftermath of a couple of inches of torrential rain - first we've had in the BP since 1960, and quite unforeseeable at this time of year. The short few miles across uncharted territory to Kaarimba proved to be one of the three most

primitive sections of the whole Rally is a result of this deluge. As a sorter of men from boys (and girls) it was a cruel start to the Rally.

Of the 36 survivors who reached Nathalia, only 2 (Bob Holden of N.S.W. and Stewart McLeod of S.A) reached Kaarimba with clean sheets - and they were respectively 24th and 17th through the bog! Gerry Crown and Doug Stewart, who were 23rd and 20th into this section, lost only 2 and 3 respectively, so it can hardly be said fairly, (though it has been said) that the "Victorians were at any great advantage" in having been routed into the morass first. Alec Millea in the Mazda, in fact, started second last and lost only 9 points. Yet some of the greatest crews in Australia came to grief - Carl Kennedy and Jack Murray were bogged to the eyebrows for instance; there's no foreseeing these things.

All the rest of the Assembly stage was a saturated stampede, too, with Wilby an even worse Killer. Here only Bruce Woodfull, Rex Lunn and Stewart McLeod were "clean" - (of points, that is).

At Albury, where breakfast was taken, the leaders were:

1.	McLeod & Lock (S.A.)	nil
2.	Woodfull & Forsyth (Vic.)	4
3.	Klaus Peters & Geoff Sproat (Vic.)	11
4.	Rex Lunn & Nev. Price (Vic.)	15
5.	Gerry Crown & M. Collier (NSW)	22)
	Ray Christie & Joe Dunlop (Vic.)	22)
7.	Jack Ellis & Frank Guymer (Vic.)	24
8.	Ian & Bob Vaughan (Vic.)	25
9.	Doug Stewart & John Bryson (NSW)	26
10.	Tony Theiler & Gary Chapman (Vic.)	27
	& (S.A.)	
11.	Reg Lunn & Geoff Thomas (Vic.)	32
12.	Tom Roberts & Peter Haas (Vic.)	36

With another 10 cars all under 80.

TRIAL STAGE - DIVISION 1

After a meal and a welcome by Mr. Stan Mitchell, BP's Victorian Manager (making his farewell to the Rally), cars were sent off on Division 1 of the Stage, via Bethanga, Tallangatta and Callaghan Ck. Deep into the wet forest country of N.E. Victoria. Not till Control 4, at a place called Lucyvale on the map (but other names by crews) did the Fates strike again, but here they sure struck! Only four clean-sheeted, of whom only Bob Watson's was a Victorian crew; the others were Gerry Crown and M. Collier of N.S.W., and the redoubtable McLeod-Lock VW of S.A. Had we paused to count scores there, we would have found that McLeod, Woodfull, Gerry Crown, Tony Theiler, and Doug Stewart were the leaders, Rex Lunn having retired after a bingle in the fog, and Alec Millea also having retired, while, of the Albury leaders, Klaus Peters and the Vaughans had lost dozens of points.

The rest of the run to Canberra didn't change things much, though the fog lay over the Snowy Mountains and it still rained intermittently. At Canberra, over a pleasant meal at the Civic, hosted by BP N.S.W. branch, the leaders of the field were:-

1. McLeod (S.A.)	9 (including 1 early!)
2. (Woodfull (Vic.)	22
(Crown (N.S.W.)	22
4. Theiler (Vic.)	28
5. Stewart (N.S.W.)	32
6. (Christie (Vic.)	39
(Watson (Vic.)	39
8. Roberts (Vic.)	41
9. Reg. Lunn (Vic.)	48
10. Firth (Vic.)	70
11. Ellis (Vic.)	71
12. Beckman (Vic.)	76

- with Ould & Russell (Vic.) close up. And so to bed!

DIVISION II

Division II started on a beautiful autumn day- fine cool and windless. Yass-Tumut-Wagga was the problem, all well mapped and no great trouble despite the rough old bullock road from Brungle to Mt. Horeb. Gerry Crown, not the BP's luckiest entrant, retired at Minjary, and a passage control at Ellerslie proved a catch to some. Refuelling and eating at Wagga in the fading light, the scores were:-

1. McLeod (S.A.)	15
2. Woodfull (Vic.)	22
3. Theiler (Vic.)	28
4. Watson (Vic.)	39
5. Stewart (N.S.W.)	40
6. Roberts (Vic.)	41
7. Christie (Vic.)	44
8. Reg Lunn (Vic.)	48
9. (Firth (Vic.)	71
(Ellis (Vic.)	71
11. Beckman (Vic.)	77
12. Ould (Vic.)	78

-Bob Watson thus having overtaken Ray Christie and Doug Stewart; and Tony Roberts moving up two places.

DIVISION III

The shades of a Riverina night having fallen, Division III was under way, - a shorter run to Jerilderie, via Tootool, Yerong Creek, Henty, Daysdale and Oaklands. Simple as it was, with eleven clean sheets out of the 31 survivors, it still put paid to Doug Stewart's chances of outright victory with a catastrophe 61 minutes in a creek near Henty. And apart from Jack Ould narrowly shading Beckman, the order was unchanged at Jerilderie, which proves how right they are who say that well-mapped roads make it a sinecure for navigators. Order at Jerilderie:-

1. McLeod (S.A.)	19
2. Woodfull (Vic.)	22
3. Theiler (Vic.)	28
4. Watson (Vic.)	39
5. Roberts (Vic.)	41
6. Christie (Vic.)	45
7. Reg Lunn (Vic.)	48
8. (Firth (Vic.)	71
(Ellis (Vic.)	71
10. Ould (Vic.)	78
11. Beckman (Vic.)	84
12. Russell (Vic.)	87

Apart from Stewart McLeod, it was shaping up for a Victorian win again, despite all the frequently - publicised advantages of local knowledge.

DIVISION IV

Division IV led via Yarrawonga and Telford back to the northern plains of Victoria, somewhat dried out after a day of sunshine. Star sections here were those at Yeerip, Killawarra forest and that weird survival of palaeolithic times round Woolshed. Of the whole field only Tony Roberts survived these three, in fact losing only one point for the whole division (incredibly, on the run into Wangaratta). Bruce Woodfull lost 40, Stewart McLeod 37, Tony Theiler 9. Bob Watson 36, and Ray Christie 15. Result of all this hoo-ha was that at Wangaratta, for breakfast the field stood thus:-

1.	Theiler	(Vic.)	37
2.	Roberts	(Vic.)	42
3.	(Reg Lunn	(Vic.)	56
	(Stew. McLeod	(S.A.)	56
5.	Christie	(Vic.)	60
6.	Woodfull	(Vic.)	62
7.	Watson	(Vic.)	75
8.	Ellis	(Vic.)	89
9.	Firth	(Vic.)	98
10.	Russell	(Vic.)	112
11.	Vaughan	(Vic.)	123
12.	Stewart	(N.S.W.)	140

Obviously, any one of the first half-dozen were well in it, but it was proving a tough rally, and with the Alps ahead, no one was sure of anything.

DIVISION V

Division V led by devious roads through Angleside, Buffalo River, Myrtleford and Bright to Hotham Heights, (covered for the occasion with fog, sleet and snow, and providing Bob Baker with the coldest control in living memory) and thence to Bairnsdale.

No one had much trouble on this bit, but had we ourselves not made a silly error in the location of Control 42, we might well have changed things round a bit between Deptford and Sarsfield, though all the leaders clean-sheeted even with the wrongly-placed control! Really, what can a director do to trick the top crews?

At Bairnsdale, with another welcome sleep coming up at last, and leaving out sections 42 and 43, which had to be done, the leaders had settled in. Poor old Stewart and Jack lost 21 at Stirling which is our nomination of the end of the world (being more deserted than even Wathe); and this ran him down to 6th place, after a really wonderful effort by both. The positions on Saturday night were:-

1.	Theiler	47
2.	Roberts	52
3.	Woodfull	62
4.	Reg Lunn	66
5.	Christie	73
6.	McLeod	82
7.	Watson	85
8.	Ellis	99
9.	Firth	108
10.	Russell	122
11.	Vaughan	133
12.	Stewart	140

Sunday's run, well mapped, promised an easy run home but strange things happen on the last day of a big rally.

DIVISION VI

First, Tony Theiler and Gary Chapman crashed near Briagolong while in second position and after a wonderfully consistent drive in which they were never lower than 10th; only the fourth serious accident in 9 years of BP's. Bruce Woodfull lost 12 at Mountain View, but was left in first place by Roberts losing 23 at Boola Camp - the only car to lose time points there. Reg Lunn, last years winner, plunged from 4th to 6th with a total lost of 54 for the Division, and Ray Christie, winner in 1964, climbed to 3rd. Nobody clean-sheeted what seemed to us the easiest Division of all, though the Vaughans lost only 1.

So to Chadstone, where the usual crowd watched Geoff Russell (14.7) and Ray Christie head the sub-event times.

The provisional order on points was:-

1.	Bruce Woodfull and Bob Forsyth	76
	(Cortina GT)	
2.	Tony Roberts & Peter Haas	78
	(Holden)	
3.	Ray Christie & Joe Dunlop	92
	(VW 1600 TS)	
4.	Harry Firth & Tony Denham	111
	(Cortina GT)	
5.	Jack Ellis & Frank Guymer	117
	(Falcon)	
6.	Reg Lunn & Geoff Thomas	120
	(Holden)	

Stewart McLeod and Jack Lock (VW1300) were next (and best S.A. crew), as well as being model triers; and Doug Stewart and John Bryson (Bellett) in 11th place led the large N.S.W. contingent.

Of the first six cars, three were previous winners, and one (Ellis) had been in the first six four times. The fourth navigator was from N.S.W., and of course Tony Theiler's pilot was Gary Chapman of S.A.

Fords easily carried off the Manufacturers' Award, being left only with Volkswagen and the Belletts to beat.

T VI Bairnsdale -
Melbourne

1. Vaughan - Vaughan)	1
2. Firth - Denham)	
Holden - Adcock)	3

As to the number of "clean" sections, here are the leaders (out of 55 scoring sections.)

Roberts	48	"clean sheeted"
Woodfull	47	" "
Vaughan	46	" "
Ellis) 45	" "
Firth)	
McLeod (S.A.)	44	" "
Lunn	43	" "
Russell	42	" "
Christie) 39	" "
Ould)	
Stewart (N.S.W)	38	" "

After publication of results, a protest, and subsequently two appeals - first to a C.A.M.S. Tribunal and finally to A.M.S.A.C., - led to a change in the winning order. After some see-saw decisions, first by us, then by the Stewards, then by the Tribunal, A.M.S.A.C. finally ruled that either spelling of INNESVAIL / INNISFAIL was acceptable. Consequently, the Roberts-Haas Holden just pipped the Woodfull- Forsyth Cortina, on the gate-post, as it were, so Australia's Own had its first win in the BP.

How we wish we'd never heard of the place, or at least been a bit more specific in our Route Instruction. Ah well, maybe it's just as well that the 1967 and 10th BP will be the last one for us. Time we had some new blood!

1966 BP RALLY

FINAL RESULTS

<u>Start Point</u>	<u>Car No.</u>	<u>Driver</u>	<u>Points</u>	<u>Place Outright</u>	<u>Class</u>
Vic.	36	A. Roberts	68	1	1D
Vic.	6	B. Woodfull	76	2	1B
Vic.	5	R. Christie	82	3	1C
Vic.	13	Reg Lunn	110	4	2D
Vic.	1	H. Firth	111	5	2B
Vic.	2	J. Ellis	117	6	3D
Vic.	16	G. Russell	127	7	2C
S.A.	25	J. Lock	129	8	3B
Vic.	9	I. Vaughan	134	9	4B
Vic.	12	J. Ould	218	10	5B
NSW	14	D. Stewart	243	11	6B
Vic.	28	K. Lott	330	12	1A
NSW	21	J. Murray	393	13	3C
NSW	23	K. Tubman	559	14	4C
Vic.	4	H. Beckman	616	15	2A
NSW	3	D. Chivas	645	16	3A
Vic.	8	K. Peters	668	17	7B
Vic.	27	I. Inglis	774	18	4A
NSW	33	D. Hanson	910	19	8B
NSW	19	R. Holden	1198	20	5A
NSW	35	E. Green	1570	21	9B
NSW	34	A. Treloar	1773	22	10B
NSW	11	R. Hodgins	2559	23	5C
NSW	7	R. Brown	2816	24	4D
NSW	37	B. Barclay	3277	25	6A

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Best Team: Beckman (4), Inglis (27), Lott (28). = 1720.

Manufacturers - Ford Motor Co. of Australia.
Woodfull (6), Firth (1), Ellis (2)

Best Novice:- K. Peters, and G. Sproat.

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