

Heartbreak, Happiness Of The 1966 BP Rally

WARIDA Motors of Clayton, Victoria entry — No. 6, a Ford Cortina GT — driven by Bruce Woodfull and navigated by Bob Forsyth has been provisionally announced as the Outright Winner of this year's BP Rally. Their recorded loss of points was only 76.

Second was the S.A. Cheney Pty. Ltd., Victoria, entry — No. 36, a Holden — driven by T. Roberts and navigated by P. Haas with minus 78 points and third R. S. Christie driving No. 5 — a VW 1600 TS — navigated by D. Dunlop with a loss of 92 points.

Of the 37 entrants who set out from Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide start points for the official Trial Stage from Albury, 25 finished at Melbourne's Chadstone Shopping Centre on Sunday afternoon (May 8, 1966), successfully completing a route of some 2000 miles through Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory.

Divided into two stages — an assembly (500 miles) and a trial (1500 miles) — the rally's initial assembly stage to Albury was beset by wet weather from time of departure from Melbourne. Navigating and driving through heavy rain many cars experienced extreme difficulties in the muddy surrounds of Nathalia some 139 miles North.

In car No. 1 top rallyist Harry Firth became bogged a little more than 50 yards from the control point. It took almost an hour to winch out his vehicle.

SEA OF MUD

Near Tocumwal the route was virtually a sea of mud for almost 10 miles!

With the announcement of provisional points in Albury the following morning (5/5/66) it was a sorry story of mud, slush

and penalties for the majority of the field. However, the sole South Australian entrant — No. 25 — VW: S. McLeod and J. Lock — recorded nil and No. 6 — Cortina GT: B. Woodfull and R. Forsyth, suffered only a four-point loss. Prior to briefing for the trial stage, the Rally director, Mr. D. K. Thomson described the previous night as "the toughest and most difficult assembly stage in any BP Rally; it was incredible they got through!"

DIFFICULT, TOO

With the flag-off of entrants by the Mayor of Albury, Alderman C. Bunton, O.B.E., the next division to Canberra, A.C.T., was just as difficult.

Up through the high mountain areas of the Snowy Mountains and down from Adaminaby it was hard going all the way. Here, the familiar names of Australian motor sport suffered little loss — Thieler (Falcon) 1 point, Russell (Peugeot) 4 points, Roberts (Holden) 5 points — but it was not the same story for the rest of the field, some collecting more than a 600 points loss!

The run to Wagga Wagga was in perfect weather — a fine day for motoring. Here again the leaders shone with a number recording no loss of points. However, the night navigation legs to Jerilderie and Wangaratta — particularly division 4 into Wangaratta — incurred considerable loss of points for almost the entire field. It was obvious that the rigors of the Trial were beginning to register on both navigators and drivers. Out of Wangaratta it was Car No. 20 (Thieler) in the lead with 37 points and next No. 36 (Roberts) with 42, followed by No. 25 (McLeod) with 56.

EARNED

On through Bright, past Omeo and over to Bairnsdale for a well earned overnight stop. Well earned it was after snow, rain and even dust. All the elements necessitating quick navigation and driving skill.

At Bairnsdale the scores read: Thieler (No. 20) — 47, Roberts (No. 36) — 61, Woodfull (No. 6) —

62, Christie (No. 5) — 73 and Lunn (No. 13) — 75.

ROBBED

The last stage over the far from easy terrain North of Maffra and Moe was to rob Thieler of the lead-score when he suffered an unfortunate accident while negotiating a bend near Boisdale. This was to take him out of the Rally.

But for the field it was on and across the Princes Highway to Cranbourne, where Chadstone's finish line was a welcome sight.

The 1966 BP Rally — Australia's Blue Ribbon Road Classic — was far

WINNERS

Class A — (up to 1100 c.c.):

K. Lott and C. Davis, Ford Anglia, (Car No. 28) 330 points, 1.

N. Beckman and P. Davidson, Renault R8 (Car No. 4), 626 points, 2.

H. Chivas and R. Denny, Morris Cooper S (Car No. 3) 645 points, 3.

Class B — (1101 to 1500 c.c.):

B. Woodfull and R. Forsyth, Cortina GT (car No. 6) 76 points, 1.

H. Firth and A. Denham, Cortina GT (car No. 1) 111 points, 2.

S. McLeod and J. Lock, VW (car No. 25) 129 points, 3.

Class C — (1501 to 2000 c.c.):

R. Christie and D. Dunlop, VW 1600 TS (car No. 5) 92 points, 1.

G. Russell and M. Hartigan, Peugeot 404 (car No. 16) 137 points, 2.

J. Murray and D. Johnson, Prince Skyline GT (car No. 21) 393 points, 3.

Class D — (above 2000 c.c.):

T. Roberts and P. Haas, Holden (car No. 36) 78 points, 1.

J. Ellis and F. Guymer, Falcon (car No. 2) 117 points, 2.

Reg Lunn and G. Thomas, Holden (car No. 13) 120 points, 3.

The manufacturers' team prize was won by Volkswagen.

Tough Going Rally



THE 1966 BP Rally was influenced by varying weather conditions. Rain, mud, snow and dust, plus some of the toughest terrain in any rally called for quick navigation and accurate driving skill over the entire route through Victoria, New South Wales and the Australian Capital Territory. Of the 37 starters from Melbourne, Sydney and Adelaide, 25 finished at Melbourne's Chadstone Shopping Centre on Sunday afternoon, May 8, concluding this year's International Motor Sports' Calendar event. The 1966 BP Rally of South-eastern Australia was again organised by the Light Car Club of Australia.

The provisional winners of the 1966 BP Rally, Car No. 6 Ford Cortina—B. Woodfull and R. Forsyth.