

# BP Ultimate Rally

1<sup>st</sup> to 4<sup>th</sup> May 2008

By Phil Nicholas, navigating Graham  
Wallis in car 12, Peugeot 404



Chris Snell fixing a loose driving light at Wangaratta



Graham Wallis/Phil Nicholas Peugeot 404 at Wangaratta on Friday morning.



Coutts-Smith/Snooks Volvo receiving some TLC at Wangaratta. They later went out with a blown clutch.

Peter Riseborough & Mark Laidlay  
comparing notes at Wangaratta





The Riseborough/Kilsby Stanza at Wangaratta. They had problems near Dunbulbalane with loose wheel studs.



Business end of the Riseborough Stanza

Start of the Killawarra Forest stage, just north of Wangaratta. We went up the road to the right, then returned down the road on the left and turned hard right.





End of Killawarra stage. Stewie Lister, Gary Gourlay and Jenny Cole. Philip/Bainbridge Mercedes and Gibson/Cole BMW (who passed us in the stage).



Graham Wallis at end of Killawarra stage. This stage saw the demise of the Officer/Officer Galant with a broken axle.



Jim McAuliffe getting out of Bob Watson's Datsun 1600 at the start of the Dunbulbalane stage. This stage featured a fast flowing, rocky ford that claimed several victims, including Rawson and Wallis. This was Rawson's second attempt at filling the car with water, after drowning in the ford near Mitta Mitta.




Peter Riseborough explaining the wheel stud problem to Bob Watson at the start of the Dunbulbalane stage. They headed off from here to get it fixed, rejoining the rally at Swan Hill that night.

Rob Upstill at start of Dunbulbalane.  
Nice lollies Rob, the Mars bar was  
most appreciated. They are in the red  
tray on the table





The crews getting ready to attempt the Dunbulbalane ford. Graham Wallis went in first, with disastrous results!

A man in a black shirt is leaning over the side of a boat, looking down at the water. In the background, a car is stuck in a river, with people visible inside. The scene is surrounded by trees and a blue sky with clouds.

Dunbulbalane ford lived up to its reputation. Those rocks were big, loose and very slippery, we got bogged, not stalled. At this point the water has started coming in through the floor to flood the car.

Surprisingly, the water did not seem all that cold – maybe it was the adrenalin. That's Dick Denvil with the cute legs!



Bob Watson waiting impatiently  
for us to get out of the way.



End of Dunbulbalane section.  
We managed to delay all  
these crews, sorry guys!  
That's Rob Willet (in the white  
shirt) manning the control.

Ted Perkins/Gerry Bashford after the ford. They nearly got stuck but struggled through.



Chris Snell at Moama, fixing the back brakes after the pad fell out. Note the pie in his left hand.



He's still got the pie, while Graham McGrath his navigator looks on.






School's in! My kids and wife (Sue) taking an avid interest in the brake repair. The kids were fascinated to watch crews pull up, dismantle half the car, then have it all back together and away in less than 30 minutes.

Angelo Curic working on Ted's Cortina at Moama. They were suffering from loose wheel studs as well as Riseborough. Note how he is trying to levitate the tyre.

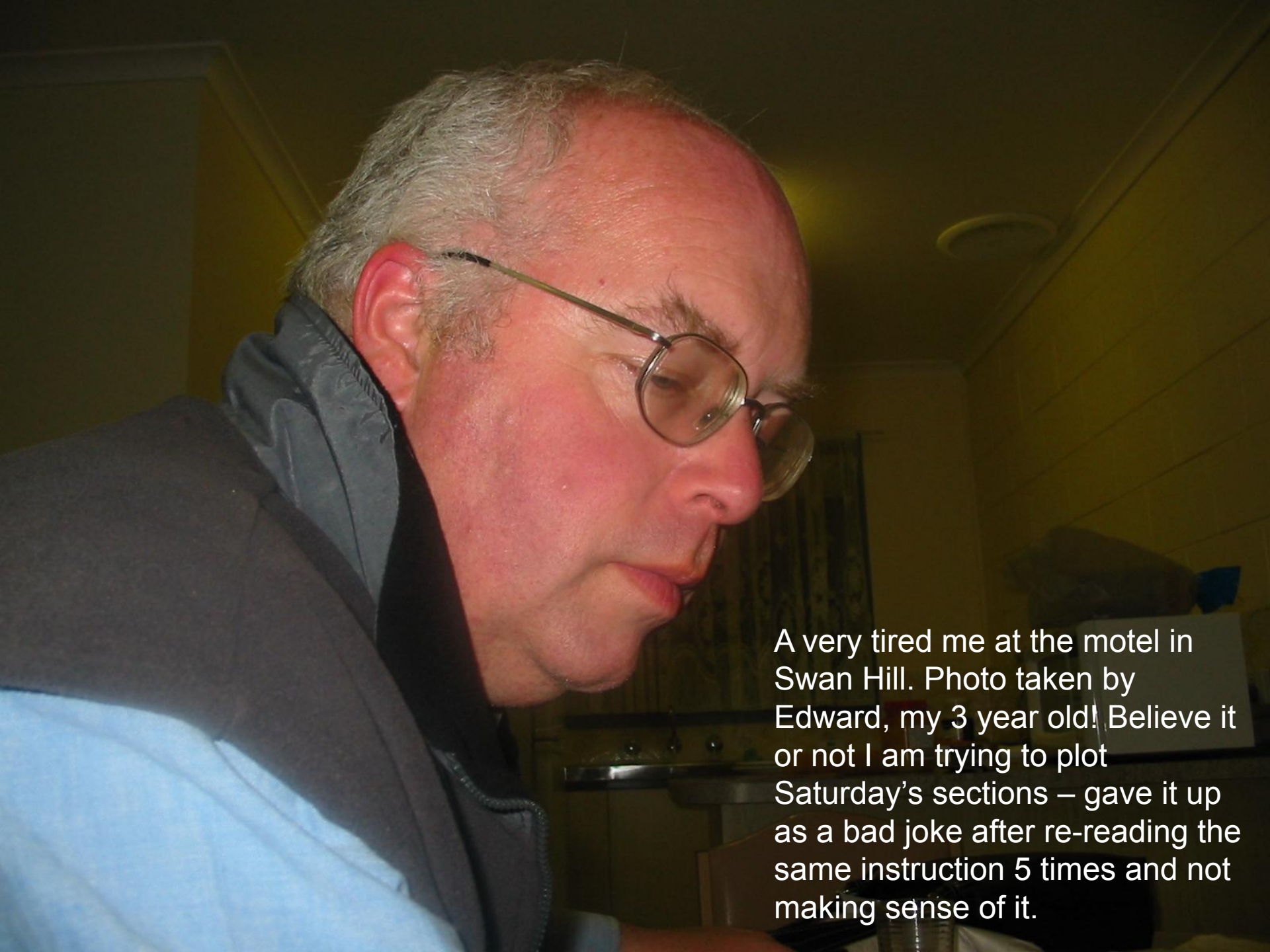


A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a vehicle. The view is through a windshield that has some water spots and streaks. The road ahead is a two-lane asphalt road that curves slightly to the right. The sky is a mix of blue, white, and orange, indicating a sunset. The sun is a bright orange orb on the right side of the horizon, partially obscured by trees. The trees on both sides of the road are dark silhouettes against the bright sky. In the foreground, the top of the dashboard and the steering wheel are visible. The dashboard has some digital displays showing numbers like '0000' and '000'.

Sunset on the transport  
to Swan Hill from Mellool  
(just east of Swan Hill).

My 'office'. Heading to Swan Hill





A very tired me at the motel in Swan Hill. Photo taken by Edward, my 3 year old! Believe it or not I am trying to plot Saturday's sections – gave it up as a bad joke after re-reading the same instruction 5 times and not making sense of it.




First section on Saturday  
(26), west of Swan Hill.  
Crossing Chillingollah  
road at one of the via's.




View to the west on first section  
after Swan Hill. Not much out there.




Some roads were very good, allowing us to make good time.




More of section 26. Still on good roads.

A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a Peugeot off-road vehicle. The vehicle's hood and windshield wipers are visible in the foreground. The road is a narrow, winding dirt path that has become increasingly rutted and uneven as it progresses through a savanna landscape. The terrain is dotted with low-lying green shrubs and scattered trees, some of which are bare. The sky is filled with soft, white and grey clouds, suggesting an overcast day. The overall scene conveys a sense of adventure and off-road driving.

The road standard  
gradually deteriorated.  
Still great fun. Especially  
in a Peugeot.



Thankfully it was not raining, as we skirt along the edge of a dry lake. Here heading north along Paynter Rd



Maybe not so dry.  
Thankfully we didn't  
have to go across there.  
The clay lake was to  
come later.

Infamous Mallee mud.  
Very slippery on road  
tyres! Heading for the  
first control out of  
Swan Hill




Paynter Rd getting a bit sandy. A warm up for Cremanton me thinks.



Still on Paynter Rd. Nothing for the nav to do except enjoy the road and watch Graham have some fun. Driving conservatively as there is still a long way to go.





Road? What road?  
All I know is that  
control 26 (between  
Nyah & Chinkapook)  
is just over that rise.



2.03

minicockpit

T3 RESET

LR PROBE

79.1

minicockpit


Required average to control 26 – 72kph. Made it on time!




Control 26 and drama for the White/Fiddymont Peugeot 504. An injector had blocked, causing the spark plug to melt.




Will it go or not? They manage to get going without 1 spark plug and made it to Hopetoun (over 400km later) like that. Big effort!



Section 27, heading  
west along Ti Tree Tank  
Rd. You call this a  
road? More like a wheat  
field!

A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a vehicle on a dirt road. The road is reddish-brown and shows tire tracks. The landscape is flat and dry, with sparse vegetation and a few trees in the distance. The sky is overcast with grey clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.


Still on Ti Tree Tank Rd,  
not much in the way of  
traffic along here apart  
from the occasional  
harvester.

A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a vehicle, likely a truck or heavy-duty car, on a muddy dirt road. The road is dark brown and shows deep tire tracks. In the distance, there are patches of water on the road surface. The surrounding landscape is flat and open, with sparse green vegetation and a line of trees on the horizon under a cloudy, overcast sky. The vehicle's dashboard and steering wheel are visible in the foreground.

Patches of mud like this were common, causing considerable problems for crews down the field.

Beside the railway line  
coming into the passage  
control at Koimbo.






Section 28, the first of the sand sections, on the way to Cramenton. Just past here a mob of wild pigs ran across the road.

Starting to get some deeper sand. Luckily it was damp underneath providing some grip.




A first-person perspective shot from the driver's seat of a vehicle on a wide, sandy dirt road. The road is light brown and shows tire tracks. The road is flanked by dense green trees and bushes. The sky is blue with some light clouds. The foreground shows the hood and windshield wipers of the vehicle.


Plenty of width to the road  
so we can pick the best line  
through the sand.

Sections of road like this made it difficult to get through, especially for the later crews. We were 8<sup>th</sup> on the road here and it is already churned up.







Beside the  
railway line just  
north of Galah.



Amazing how the road surface changes in such a short distance.

A dirt road covered in paddy melons and tumbleweeds, viewed from a vehicle. The road is a mix of brown dirt and dry, yellowish-brown grass. Numerous round, green and yellow melons are scattered across the path. In the background, there are several large, dark green trees under a blue sky with white clouds. The foreground shows the hood and windshield wipers of a brown vehicle.


Still beside the railway, this time the road is covered in Paddy Melons. There were thousands of these along the route, along with large numbers of tumbleweeds.



Section 31, heading west, just north of Walpeup. Gee its dry out here and I thought it was bad at my place.

A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a vehicle, likely a 4x4, on a narrow dirt road. The road is reddish-brown and appears to be narrowing as it goes forward. The surrounding landscape is filled with green trees and shrubs under a blue sky with scattered white clouds. The vehicle's dashboard, steering wheel, and windshield wipers are visible in the foreground.


The road gets narrower,  
heading west towards  
Kattyong.

A photograph of a dirt road winding through a wooded area. The road is light brown and appears to be a dirt path. The trees are green and dense, lining both sides of the road. The sky is overcast with grey and white clouds. The text is overlaid on the left side of the image.


Heading to via 3 on section 31 along Aikman Rd. This via saw problems for several crews who misplotted and elected to go round the longer loop to the north and got bogged.

Being passed by  
Gibson/Cole in the BMW.



A white car is driving away from the viewer on a wide, unpaved dirt road. The car is kicking up a significant amount of dust, which is visible as a hazy trail behind it. The road is flanked by dense, green trees and bushes. The sky is overcast with heavy, grey clouds. In the foreground, the hood and windshield of a brown vehicle are visible, suggesting the viewer is in the driver's seat of a car following the white car.


Chasing the  
Perkins/Bashford  
Cortina, late in  
section 31.

A first-person perspective from the driver's seat of a vehicle on a dirt road. The road is a mix of brown and tan dirt with visible tire tracks. The landscape is flat and arid, with sparse green and brown vegetation. In the distance, a low ridge or horizon line is visible under a bright blue sky with scattered white clouds. On the left side of the road, there is a cluster of trees and bushes. The front of the vehicle, including the hood and windshield wipers, is visible in the lower foreground.

Between via's 3 & 4 on  
section 34, just south of  
Cowangie. We had just been  
through the passage control  
near Eddie Perkins' (father of  
Larry) old property.

Still on section 34, the actual mapped (impassable) road is in the trees to our left. A big thank you to the farmers for letting us use the road and leaving the gates open.



A wide, flat, sandy landscape under a cloudy sky. In the background, there is a line of trees. The foreground is a vast, open expanse of light brown sand with some sparse, low-lying vegetation. The sky is filled with soft, grey clouds, suggesting an overcast day. The trees in the background are dark green and appear to be a mix of species, some with rounded canopies and others more spindly.

This is the last slide, taken just before we were overtaken by Rawson/Brown, who were travelling about 20 metres to our right. We caught up to them near the end of the section when they were delayed going over a big sand dune. Our moment of glory – passing 3 cars in one hit by going bush.

- Unfortunately there are no more of my photo's as the camera decided not to work after this point (the spare batteries had gone flat after their swim in the ford).
- A huge thank you to Graham Wallis for driving so well and to all the directing team and the officials for the huge effort they put in to make the event happen.
- See you at the next one.