



Specialty Subaru Mountain Trials Rally

June 18th Merritt, BC
Round 3 of 2005 Western Canadian
Rally Championship (WCRC)

For Immediate Release

MERRITT TO HOST 3RD ROUND OF 2005 RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

June 17, 2005

MERRITT, BC – A large field of entries, featuring some of the best rally drivers from around the Pacific Northwest, will descend on Merritt this coming Saturday to compete for glory in the Specialty Subaru Mountain Trials Rally, round three of the 2005 Western Canadian Rally Championship (WCRC). Drivers will be bringing their production-based high performance rally cars to race on a challenging gravel road course in the heart of BC's interior. This event is sanctioned by the Canadian Association of Rallysport (CARS), and is part of the WCRC, and the Cascade Cup for two-wheel drive cars in the Pacific Northwest Region.

Among the entries is Vancouver native, and past Mountain Trials Rally winner, Scott Trinder in an Open Class all-wheel drive Subaru WRX, with Bill Westhead co-driving. Trinder and Westhead recently won the second round of the series, at the Rocky Mountain Rally in Calgary and are now leading the WCRC. Unfortunately, Trinder's championship rival Norm LeBlanc of Pemberton will be sitting out this round while he heals and his car is repaired after a major shunt in Calgary. The two drivers are expected to chase each other all season long in this hotly contested series.

Also appearing will be last year's third place finisher, and Washington native, Gary Cavett in his Open Class all-wheel drive Subaru Impreza Turbo. Last year Cavett maintained a brisk pace and successfully fended off challenges from series regulars to earn a well-deserved podium finish. He also has a proven track record of top three finishes at events around the region and can be expected to challenge for the lead this weekend.

A large, healthy group of competitors will be joining in the battle for Cascade Cup and overall two-wheel drive honours. No less than fourteen of the twenty-six entries will be in the hunt for this championship solely for two-wheel drive vehicles. This grass roots competition features entrants from around Alberta, BC, Washington and Oregon in their front and rear wheel drive rally machines. Close racing action and a wilder "drifting" style of driving are just some of the features in this group.

Meanwhile, in what surely must be the "dark horse" entry are Washington's Peter Van Bogart, with Alan Perry co-driving, in a gorgeous and meticulously prepared Open Class all-wheel drive Mitsubishi Lancer EVO VII RS. Van Bogart heads up the Redmond, WA based rally car preparation shop that has sponsored the Cascade Cup for two-wheel drive entries.

Growing interest in BC rallies has been demonstrated by the number of outsiders making the trip to Merritt. In response to this influx of visitors, the community of Merritt has extended a warm welcome and local interest in the rally continues to grow each year.

Support for the 2005 Mountain Trails Rally has been provided by a number of accommodating ranchers, land-owners, business people and local officials. Thanks to the generosity of a dedicated team of volunteers, including the St. John Ambulance society and members of Amateur Radio, this complex and high energy event has been made possible.

New this year the PIAA Corporation has come on board as a supporter of the event. PIAA is a global manufacturer of automotive products, including halogen lamp lighting systems and windshield wipers. Professional quality PIAA lights are commonly used on performance rally cars, demonstrating the durability of their products, and creating a natural fit between this sponsor and the event.

West Coast Rally Association

www.rallybc.com



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Meanwhile, thanks to infrastructural support provided by Active Mountain Resorts (AMR), developers of the Active Mountain Raceway and resort project in Merritt, the 2005 Mountain Trials Rally will feature a challenging spectator stage right near town. Rally organizers and AMR are working together to help bring the rallying experience closer to fans. Details on the raceway and resort project can be found at www.amraceway.ca but fans can start by catching some of the rally action this weekend!

Spectators will be able to watch the rally at one of several designated viewing areas, including the awe-inspiring vantage point at the AMR special stages. Anyone hoping to catch a glimpse of exciting rally action should drop by the site of the Merritt Mountain Music Festival campground at 11:00am Saturday morning. The rally cars will be making several passes of a short race course that can be seen safely and comfortably from high on a hillside.

Once these stages are complete, fans can make a short drive of about forty-five minutes to the "Drift Masters Corner" viewing area at the remote forest stages near Loon Lake, off highway 97C. Detailed instructions and signs will be available to help guide those interested in seeing the rally cars in their natural environment.

For more information about this event, check out www.rallybc.com or contact organizer Paul Westwick at (604) 682-3296, or via e-mail: paul@rallybc.com

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Contact:

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Spectator Guide

Will be available at registration, OR
can be downloaded here (PDF file):
www.rallybc.com/MtTrials/2005/MTR05_SpectatorInfo.pdf

Additional Resources:

Canadian Association of Rallysport www.carsrally.ca
West Coast Rally Association www.rallybc.com
Cascade Cup www.cascadeautosport.com/cascadecup
Merritt Chamber of Commerce www.merritt-chamber.bc.ca

2005 BC Rally Supporters:

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