

A year in the Novice Championship. By Shawn Edstrom

I learned to drive in the hills of Kamloops and have always been a spirited driver on loose surfaces. When I learned that a regular guy could rally, I jumped on the rallybc website and was at the next event, Gold Digger Rally 2003.

I turned up with a good friend as navigator and we did well for our first time, a respectable third in class. As the end of the season rolled around I was looking for a regular partner and fortunately so was Geoff Gauthier and that is when we formed Team Lummer Racing. Since I tend to lose my lunch pretty easy, Geoff jumped into the passenger seat with calculator and pen. We decided we would try and contest every event in 2004 in our goal to win the novice class of the BC TSD championship.

Next was Heart of Darkness. It ran throughout the night, and was pretty tiring. I don't remember more detail than that, except that when it was all done in the morning, we were happy to find that we finished first in class and fourth overall!

Coast-to-Coast was the third stop in the Championship. We missed the ferry we wanted and had to sleep in the car the first night, but it did get better as the weekend went on. The roads we encountered in C2C were excellent and we had all sorts of weather. It made for a great adventure. We arrived in Victoria at the end of day two and found that we had again won the novice class and were very excited!

Gold Digger 2004 marked our fourth event in the championship. I drove from Kamloops to meet Geoff in Pemberton and this was an amazing drive but also a long one. For the first time ever, my car overheated and I spent a bit of time sitting on the side of the road for it to cool down. When I arrived in Pemberton the car was running well again and my worries had been put to rest. Not a good idea. On the first uphill stage the car started to overheat again. For the rest of the rally, we had to make the CAS second priority and drive to the speed the car wanted. Luckily we did finish but came in a disappointing 8th place. When we looked at our score of under 200 points through the whole night, it was a decent event for us, but it just wasn't good enough to beat the rest of the field. Gold Digger brought us some of the toughest competition we had seen so far in the novice class as it was the debut of the Doug Tewnton and Brian Carriere team. These guys did an excellent job at Gold Digger and were starting to put some pressure on us for the next event in the series.

Midnight rally brought us back to Vancouver Island, which I am starting to enjoy as the ferry rides make for much fun. The rally was also a

lot of fun, with a ton of great roads that I have never seen anything like before in my life. Geoff and I had an awesome time and finished well enough to lock up the title of BC TSD Novice that night.

For Totem rally, with the standings likely to not move at all, and the money bags drying up, we decided we would check point and help out all those volunteers that had helped us through



photo - martin chung

"Geoff, Shawn, Ren and RJ headed to the island"

the year. Check pointing this event gave us a greater appreciation for the work that the volunteers, rally masters and stewards put into all the events that we enjoy. It also proved that you can get more lost check pointing than you can competing...oops!

I would like to thank the people that helped us through the year, whether by putting on events or helping us when we needed a tool or a dollar. I want to send an extra thanks to Ren & RJ and all of Team Fugawi for their knowledge. As well Brian and Doug, and Mark and Keith for such great competition all year long. For 2005, we will take a step back from competing and focus on running what we hope to be again, a very exciting and educational TSD novice series. Stay tuned to RallyBC.com for details!



photo - Shawn Edstrom

"Geoff Gauthier in the navigator's hot seat of the Lummer Racing Legacy"

Thunderbird was our first event, and also Geoff's first rally navigating. Thanks to friends in Team Fugawi, and Kamloops Rally Sport, we were able to pick up enough of the math to hit the road with some idea of what to do. We finished the first day second or third in class, which we were pretty happy with, and we just had one little mix up. Towards the end of day one, we looked down the road and could not see a car in front of us, and could not see a car behind us. We doubted our navigation and decided to turn around. Big mistake! We ended up meeting a car that was seeded 4 spots behind us. So we turned around again and tried to stay on track for the rest of the weekend. We learned that we need to really believe in our skills and to keep going, and not doubt so quickly. This has helped us more than once through the rest of the season. When the end of the rally came, we had finished a very pleasing second in novice class.



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