

2005 Thunderbird Rally

**Round 1 of the British Columbia TSD Rally Championship.
The 34th Thunderbird Rally runs February 19-20.**

The Thunderbird Rally is a winter driving adventure through snow and ice covered back roads in the British Columbia interior. Following the Thunderbird route is simple, but staying out of the snow banks is not. This event is suitable for ordinary road cars. There are classes for Historic cars, Novice teams and different levels of navigation equipment. Enjoy friendly competition with teams from BC, Alaska, Alberta, Washington, Oregon and beyond. Thunderbird has been the premier winter driver's rally in B.C. since its inception in 1957. From the mid 60's to the early 70's, it was part of the Canadian Rally Championship, until the format of that series changed from TSD (Time Speed Distance) to stage (performance) events. It was resurrected in its original format in 1987 by members of the UBC Sports Car Club (hence the Thunderbird mascot) and

since then, both organizers and competitors have been leaving car-shaped indentations in snowbanks from Tulameen to Okanagan Falls, Christian Valley to Robbins Range, Tranquille to Green Lake to Beaver Valley... you get the picture. Paul Westwick returns as Rallymaster for the 18th time and promises new challenges to both drivers and navigators on a route that runs from Merritt to Kelowna and back over the course of two days. This will not be a "deceptive" rally; instead it runs on straightforward instructions and relies on careful selection of roads and timing to provide the excitement. There is room on the start list for 70 entries and in recent years this has filled up quickly. Specific details are available in the Thunderbird TSD Supplementary Regulations located on the www.rallybc.com website



Please NOTE there are some subtle changes to the required equipment carried by competitor vehicles on this year's rally in compliance with new safety regulations.



Top 10 Alternatives to a Subaru WRX to enter Thunderbird with...

10. 2005 Smart for Two.

- It's light enough to float over most snow banks.
- It's got traction control for the icy bits.
- If you do bury it in a snow bank you can pull it out without sweep's help
- Diesel is SO cheap!

9. 1980 Mercedes-Benz 500SLC.

- Its got a really good heater

8. 1988 Mazda 323 GTX.

- All wheel drive & a turbo
- Fantastic handling
- Cops don't give you a second look

7. 2005 BMW X3.

- Comfortable, sportscar handling and the smartest centre diff on the road

6. 1979 Ford Escort RS.

- Rear wheel drive and no traction control but that's not the point.
- Just listen to how good it sounds!

5. 1999 Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 6.5.

- If you are reading this list you already know the reasons why the Evo made the cut.



4. 1971 Saab 96.

- Its got a really good heater. Oh yeah, it also goes really well in 2 feet of snow.

3. 1976 Lancia Stratos.

- Triple WRC champion and that Ferrari motor...

2. 2005 Bentley Continental GT.

- Fourteen cows gave their skins for the interior but it does have all wheel drive and turbos so I guess it stays on the list

1. 1980 Porsche 911SC.

- In all seriousness this has to be the best rally car of the pre-group B era. Anyone who has seen one launch from a stage start will testify to the mind-bending traction these cars can generate. They are light enough and powerful enough to win. The electric cabin heater booster means they stay warm in winter. The 911 is a true icon which was only limited by the factory's misguided disinterest in rallying.

by Tony Latham

SS11