

then the mystery was solved by a slow-moving lowboy, followed very closely by a very frustrated STi, half a minute down, also unable to pass. Car 14 is missing, then 93-late, behind Car 15 with the only "zero" on our CP. As we closed our control and rejoined the road, we found a Blue WRX wagon less than 50 meters away, stuck, facing traffic, in the snow bank. A quick tug and we added "Sweep" duties to our rally résumé. While we were pulling onto the road Car 23 rejoined the rally, very late. Sweep and CP duties completed, we chased the rally through the revised Reg One – snow depth on previously used Road 7 forced a 10km shortcut — staying on the Camp 2 mainline.

Catching the last competitor on the road, we followed, slowly at times, with no place to pass until late in the regularity, then quickly zeroed the odo at Canimred Creek Bridge. We sprinted 0.27km (long transit) passed nearly all the cars waiting out their pause, re-zeroed and proceeded as fast as we could to our CP 30km into the 46.43km Bowers Lake Regularity. We were running late after waiting the required ten minutes to close our control, half a minute to extract Car 16, and being slowed by Car 24. Rallymaster Paul Westwick would set up our CP and time the first cars – while we attempted running above the CAS, but not much – another CP crew entered from off-course, just ahead of us, and we both caught Gary Webb and John Kisela in Car 7. Near Wolf Lake, Gary found a wide spot and pulled off in the deep snow to let us pass. Fortunately his Alcan5000 experience put him back on the road with no harm to their time. At 15km the other CP crew pulled into their location, but having missed the first three cars, their control would be dropped. At 16km the first of the speed adjustments took place. Speeds were dropped 5km/h due to snow depth over the next 26km. At Bowers Jim FSR we found the Rallymaster, traded parking spots, did a tag-team switch of CP logs and watched as he disappeared in a cloud of powder snow, before the next rally car arrived. From this point out, the route covered a hairpin right then a sharp left, turned left onto Mahood Lake Road and wound through cabins and lakes to end at Hathaway Lake and pavement.

Horse Lake Transit took the rally west 42km into 100 Mile House for fuel and refreshments, then 37km Lone Butte Transit south and east for the next regularity.

Checkpoint crews were on their own set of instructions to shortcut the course, leap-frogging ahead of the rally, via oft used rally roads through Bridge Lake and North Bonaparte. Our CP location at 7.68km into Bonaparte Lake Regularity required driving reverse course to beat the first car. The remaining CP cars had a more leisurely drive on course to their locations.

Bonaparte Lake was smooth, 61.73km (second longest of the rally), and CAS 68 was apparently mild, as the first 12 cars logged nine 0s, two 1s, and one 3 under winter scoring's one-second window. At 16km the rally turned southwest toward 70 Mile House, then 3km later due south onto Boule Young Lake FSR, crossed the Rayfield River at 55 and wound onward to a left on Egan Bonaparte FSR running east again with speeds increasing to 68, a brief stretch at 60, then 72 before down to 62 for 5km and "a bit more slowly" through Hairpin R, Long Hairpin Left, and Hairpin Right (none of which were noted in the route instructions).

A short 2.47km transit led to 41.84km Loon Lake Regularity. Beginning with 72km/h nearly due west, slowing to 62 for a bit as the route drops slightly, then a long 90-right, dropping, with big exposure on left. Watch for rocks. Dropping further through Hairpin Left into easy right, climbing, and straightening out for 72 again until the 30km mark. Left toward Loon Lake, passed Brigade Creek FSR (a familiar route to Deadman-Vidette) and dropping to 40 as we entered civilization again at the east end of Loon Lake.

The 51km Transit to Bear's Claw began with 13km at 50km/h (31mph) passed all the cabins, big and small, through the resort area. As speeds increased the route dropped through multi-colored rock walls and into the valley, dotted with small cabin sites and large cattle and horse operations complete with pumped irrigation for their short hay season. South on Hwy 97, into Cache Creek, for dinner and awards.

Totem covered 763.11km, just less than 474 miles, in 15 and half hours. Closer resembling a February Thunderbird than past Totem's, the snow presented a challenging but rewarding weekend.

Having an excellent Day Two (11), RJ and Ren Carroll, 2004 Subaru WRX from Kamloops took First Overall/Unlimited away from Eric Horst and Steve Willey, 1989 BMW 325ix from Seattle, with scoring of 47 versus 49. The win clinched a First Place for the Carrolls in the 2005 BC TSD Championship. First Calculator class and Third Overall went to Vancouver Island's Martin Chung and Christa Monasch with 73 in their 1995 Subaru Impreza. First Historic went to Albertans Richard Childs and Helen Welter in their 1974 BMW 2002 with 302. First Novice went to Kamloops' Jason Mardon and Ken Carroll in their 2002 Saturn SL2, with stock odo, taking 317. First Paper (Seat of Pants, no calculator, pencil and paper only) returning to their 2004 class for this event went to Washington's Steve Perret and Kathryn Hansen, with their 1986 Subaru wagon taking 362 to clinch First Place in the Pacific Coast Challenge series covering rallies in BC-Vanc Is-WA-OR-CA (ahead of the computer guys). First Historic Equipped went to Mike Palm and Garth Hales in the 1974 VW Super Beetle with 545.

Since its move to November, Totem has been described as "a Thunderbird without snow banks – winter roads, summer ditches". Both events now have a snow history and draw large fields from both sides of the border for a fun rally weekend, a "must" on any brisk rallyists calendar.

by Ron Sorem © 11.21.2005

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