

# Quinton Stages Rally

July saw the SM Rallying Saxo team head off to Llandovery, to 'knock off' another event from the unfinished list of 2006, the Quinton. The week up to the week involved a few calls to Silverstone Tyres and keeping an eye on the weather to find out if this was to be another wet rally, and we were informed to turn up with the car prepped for a wet event. The car flew through scrutineering on Friday, and the normal pre-event evening of beer and food took place.

Up nice and early on Saturday, showed that a heavy layer of dew was present, but no rain, so perhaps this would be a dry rally after all. The guys unloaded the car, as I took a walk to rally HQ to see if there were any changes from last night. Start 1 min earlier, and a couple of small amendments but nothing spectacular.

The run up to the main stage area showed us that the forest roads were dry, as we could see dust rising from the cars running in front of us. Were we on the right tyres?

Stage 1 started with a very twisty section, and we found that the car had a lot more grip than the last event, and decided to push from the start. We were held up in the stage, as one car was off and the car in front of us also went off trying to miss them. Good start to the rally! The time at the end was a bit disappointing, but at least we got there!

Stage 2 was where we had problems last year, but not this time. The stage is very fast at the start, and then goes down the hill into a tight bridge. The Pull up the other side really showed the car to have some pace. Past the point where we had the problem last year, and off onto the WRC stage. There are loads of rocks hid just where you wanted to be, so air on the side of caution on this section.

Stage 3 started well, but a few corners in Steve shouted that he couldn't hear me. We had to resort to me shouting and using hand gestures for the rest of the stage (No rude ones honest). We were approaching a tight uphill hairpin, when I noticed a warning triangle, and then the car. Steve kept in tight, only for the co-driver to jump out in front of us! We ended up spinning the car into the bank to miss him. More time lost! Shunted about to get it out, which lost my place in the notes, but we were OK by the next corner. The guy apologised when we saw him later.

Stage 4 was the longest of all, and I tried to fix the intercom on the road section, but no luck so we just carried on shouting. We had no real problems on this stage, but felt that we could have gone quicker if Steve could have heard me. The water handed out at the end was very well received!

Stage 5 was a rerun of 1, and was stopped just as we got there. 10 mins later we were off. Still unable to fix the intercom! No adventures on this stage. A clean, if slightly slow run through.

Stage 6 was a rerun of 3, and was going very well, until what we were waiting for happened. Steve misheard a note, and went too fast into a square right. We went into the trees, but luckily we didn't go down the bank, and Steve kept it going and came out with just a few extra scratches. Within a few corners we were back up to speed.

Stage 7 was the same as 2, but in reverse. Big downhill sections! We nearly didn't get that far, as we were far too quick over one of the first jumps, and put it on two wheels in a ditch, but the car pulled itself out. Caused the photographers to scatter! No damage as well. Bonus!

The end of the day saw us 68<sup>th</sup> overall, 2<sup>nd</sup> in class B8 and 18<sup>th</sup> 1400. The best results to date. We both feel that even though we are not the quickest by any means, this was the quickest the car has been driven.

Thanks to Leigh, John and Adrian for running around all day, and to everyone behind the scenes.