

Woodpecker Rally 2008

The team decided to put an entry in for the event quite late, as holiday season had interrupted the rallying calendar. We were all looking forward to getting back in the car after the disappointment of the previous events.

All the normal running around was done, but there was a problem with tyres. Kumho were unable to supply us with any, as there were none in the country! A quick phone call to Mr Motorsport Tyres saw us pre-order some Hankooks for the event.

Friday was made up of cleaning, loading and driving up to Ludlow Racecourse for scrutineering, and off to find the B&B. A lovely meal in the evening meant that the whole team were relaxed and ready for Saturday's event.

We got to the racecourse and unloaded the car, as I went to check any updates or changes to the event road books and recheck our start time.

Steve felt a bit dodgy, and was unsure if I was nerves, or Friday night's curry!

Stage 1 started on some very slippery tarmac and was quite a challenge with very tight hairpins, which caused a couple of slides wide. A bit further there was a hidden left which Steve missed and we had to reverse out of a closed road. At the end we had dropped to 4th in class.

Stage 2 was a longer stage and we started pushing. A good run through saw us back up the leader board to 3rd in class and catching the class leader.

Stage 3 was great fun with loads of hairpins towards the end. The rear tyres had completely lost most of their grip, so we had great fun sliding the rear end around everywhere. Went a bit wide on a few corners, but I had trouble reading the notes whilst laughing!

Stage 4 was again a long one, so a major push to take the class lead was called for. A new set of Hankooks were fitted, and we felt the car was working well, until.....

On a downhill left/right we slid wide on the right and hit the bank. This caused the car to flip onto its roof, and roll over and finish up on its roof on the outside of the bend. After a quick call on the safety radio to say all was OK, we ran up to flag down and warn the following cars. After 25 mins a recovery crew turned up and rolled the car back onto its wheels.

The car was pulled back to where the safety crew were based, and as we stopped, Mr Burtons Peugeot 306 went up in smoke just down the road! Steve ran down with our handheld, but the safety crew had already got the fire out. What a day..

The car was eventually towed out to the main road, where the service crew met us with the van and trailer. The car was loaded and we headed off home via the American Diner for food.

After a good exam of the car, we have decided that the shell is totalled, and found that the front part of the cage is also damaged, so we have now got a big rebuild project to get ready for the Wydean 2009.

Massive thanks to all that have phoned to check that we are all OK, and for the offers of help. We **WILL** be there!

Mark and Steve.....

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