

Hire we go, Hire we go, Hire we go.....

Well the year has started with the Get Connected Wyedean and for us no car for the event!

The Citroen Saxo, which is being built for the BTRDA 2006 season by Severnside Motorsport, hit a snag a couple of weeks before the event. The build was coming together, when we had a phone call to say that the engine would not be ready for the event, as the builders were having trouble with the head modification. Panic stations pursued, and after a few frantic phone calls a deal was sorted for us to use the MG ZR of Andy Dawe.

The car arrived, and after a quick spanner check, we felt that the car would be good to go, so intercom and safety equipment were fitted and seats were adjusted. It turned out that the car was a group N, but because of the fitting of different top mounts and rear discs, meant that we had to run in class A5. Should be interesting! The first time Steve really drove the car for any length of time was the run from the unit in Lydney to Chepstow on Friday afternoon, and for me sat in the car, was the run from the car park into the racecourse!

At the service park, a new set of tyres were fitted by Silverstone, so unknown car and tyres. Not too bad then!

Saturday started with a bacon, sausage and mushroom roll, as this makes the car go faster!

A sort of paperwork and things made us ready to go, so we queued up ready to start the event.

Off we go, with the short run into the racecourse. 3, 2, 1 off we go. It wasn't till we got to the first bales, that a thought crossed my mind of, how good are the brakes! By the time I got my notes off the dash, we guessed that they were OK. Bit wider than the 106 from last year though. Woops. Mirror.

Stage 2 was a bit of a bind because of the accident, but after an hour we found out why they went off. We had a really good run through, and nothing went wrong. I even managed to get the notes right all of the way round. Bit quicker for the corners coming up though. Got one corner wrong and Nick Giles was there to see us.

The following stage went without any problems and we really were starting to enjoy ourselves. Nothing more than fuel was required at emergency service. Off to our favourite stage of the rally at Sallowvallets. We both know the stage quite well, so were looking forward to a good run through. The car flowed very well, and Steve was getting more confident with the car, throwing it about a lot more. The last section is very flowing and was great fun. The scores compared to last year was just over 7 seconds a mile quicker, which is a very good gain for us in a car that we don't know.

Back to service, and again only fuel for the car and food for us was needed.

Stage 5 was Chepstow Park, which Steve doesn't like, so a slow steady run through which turned out cost us over a minute. That's life.

Stage 6 was another run through Serridge, which was one of the most entertaining stages for us. We had quite a few of our sponsors out on the stage, and the wife's and kids were also watching, so we had to keep them all happy! We had a good run until towards the end, when the sun blinded Steve, and the next thing one of the conformation arrows went over the roof of the car. Up the hill and over the finish. Unbeknown to us, we must have buzzed the engine up the hill, so for the following 2 stages we were down on power due to a bent valve.

Stage 7 went all OK apart from the lack of power on the run up from the river, and stage 8 was a clear run through.

The end of the day saw us finish 121st overall and 4th in Class A5, which for a group N car we thought was great. Steve was over the moon with the result and was smiling for the following week! When we read through the results later on in the week, if we had registered for the MG Super cup we would have finished second in the event!

To sum up, the event went very well in an unknown, under powered car which had not been driven by us before. We had great support from our sponsors whom are too many to list but include Severnside Motorsport, Express Windows, Cherry Pie, DJ Vaughan, Barnes Imports and many more, so thanks to everyone involved. You know that without you we would be sat watching not competing.

Let's hope that the new Saxo will be ready for the trip down to Somerset Stages in April, so watch this space....