

Scottish Rally Working Group

Entry Trends over the past 10 Years

- Entries into single venue tarmac rallies are up dramatically in recent years with events often oversubscribed
- A graph of average event entries in SRC was reviewed with the following conclusions drawn:
 - Over the past 10 years 2009 saw the highest entries with an average of 121 entries per event that year
 - There was a significant decrease in average entry numbers in 2011 (80 entries)
 - Since 2011 entries have steadily increased, with the exception of 2015, where there was a small decrease in average entries. Entries in 2016 are averaging at 110 so far.
 - The SRC committee have concluded that economic growth is the biggest influencing factor on entries. It is felt that the impact of the 2008/2009 credit crunch was the biggest contributing factor to the significant dip in 2011 entries
- 3 Forest Rally events lost over the last 2 years. However, it was felt that this was not solely based on a lack of entries. There are other factors that contributed to their demise.
- SRC have identified a 50% churn in event entries – these competitors do not return to do the same event for 2 years
- It was agreed that some drivers compete in both Forest and single venue Tarmac events but generally these competitors have two cars.
- It was agreed that some drivers see single venue Tarmac Rallying as a feeder into Forest Rallying
- If there is a decline in entries, it was agreed that the biggest proportion of this decline will be seen in the competitors towards the back of the field.
- Overall it was felt that Scotland are running some of the highest quality forest rallies in the UK at the moment and that both forest and single venue rallying is in a healthy state

Key Challenges for Competitors

- Cost was identified as the key issue
- Entry fees have gone up (65% beyond inflation). However, it was agreed that competitors towards the back of the field were more price sensitive to entry fees.
- FIA regulation surrounding seats & belts has had an impact. Competitors who only do a couple of rallies per year see this as a big issue but the deterioration of the seats has nothing to do with usage – it is time that causes the deterioration (must be changed after 5 years regardless of number of times used/events entered). Agreed that safety is paramount and this cannot be changed.
- Attempts to restrict spending on cars have been made through the development of classes like the Subaru cup within the SRC

- The Ecosse Challenge has demised due to a lack of parts. There is potentially a need for a cheaper entry level class into forest rallying, particularly as a stepping stone for junior 1000 drivers.
- Control tyres were discussed as a means to reduce costs but it was felt that this would restrict competitor's abilities to do individual sponsorship deals with tyre suppliers. In some cases, control tyres put the price up for some competitors as the tyres are so expensive.
- There are no single venue Tarmac Rallies in the North of Scotland – competitors who are not interested in travelling therefore can only enter Forest Rally events, which are more costly to enter.
- Closed road events are cheaper for the competitor per mile than doing a forest rally due to less wear and tear on the car and tyres. (Public roads are less abrasive than single venue rally surfaces also)
- There seems to be a Low retention rate from Junior level to the next stages - Drop off in young drivers after age 17 (could be due to college/uni/gap year other interests etc.)
- There is a lack of support by means of a junior programme in both SRC and STRC to support junior driver development.
- The idea of running rally taster sessions to help get new people involved was discussed. However, it was felt that rallying was one of the more complex motorsports to get involved in (BARS Test, licence, suit, modifications to car etc) and that it would be easier to convert people into the more grassroots disciplines, such as road rallying, initially before they progress on to compete in stage rallying.

Key Challenges for Organisers

- Lack of Marshalls and other officials (stewards, time keepers etc.) – Forest and Tarmac Rallies share the same pool of volunteers which makes it difficult to staff all events. This means that there is little capacity to run more events.
- Increased safety requirements mean more man power is required to set up and run events.
- Volatile economic climate affects disposable income which can result in reduced entry levels
- Individual events may struggle to survive if they are not part of the Championship
- Forestry Commission charges – the new forestry master agreement is up for renewal and with recent occurrences in wales, the prospect of a price increase for rallying is a real worry.

Actions

Junior Programme

SRC, STRC and SMS work together to look at the creation of a joint junior programme for developing junior drivers.

- **Step 1: STRC and SRC to let Rory Bryant know which coaches they would like to nominate to go through September L2 coaching course**
- **Step 2: SMS to provide support for the creation of a junior programme**

Shorter Rally events

There is a need for a lower cost entry point into stage rallying to encourage both newcomers and juniors. The idea of running half mileage rallies was discussed to cater for this market. There could be a potential permit issue with this idea – the MSA may want events to have two permits, which would make the idea unviable.

- Step 1: Dave Weston to discuss idea with MSA and look at feasibility of running such events
- Step 2: If it is viable, SMS can do a survey of jnr drivers etc to see if there would be sufficient demand for these events

Road Rallying in Schools

The need to channel peoples interest into grassroots disciplines was identified. John Fife previously went into schools to teach pupils about rallying via running a table top with classes. Schools liked this concept as it teaches pupils many skills (Ordinance Survey Map Reading, Time Keeping, Communication, Mathematics, Road Safety e.g. average speed limit, speed/distance/time, road signs etc.) Agreed that it would be worth looking at potential to run a similar programme in schools. Key is to run activity in an area where there are active road rally clubs.

- SMS to speak with MSA about creating road rally pack for schools & identify how such an initiative could be rolled out
- SMS to see if there is potential to set up relationships with Active Schools Coordinators in Local Authorities to help with delivery
- Communicate with Dave Mackintosh re' Clubs that host Road Rallies – need to have activities in an area where there are strong clubs that can take on members who wish to sign up after taking part in Table Top sessions

Volunteer communication

Ongoing SMS work to increase the network of student motorsport clubs and their membership will help to create a relevant pool of volunteers for events in the long run. SMS can distribute info on upcoming volunteering opportunities to student clubs. It was agreed that the lack of a comprehensive and shared marshalling database hinders organisers ability to effectively communicate upcoming volunteering opportunities

- At the next SACC meeting, it should be proposed that all clubs should share their database of volunteers into one central point for the purposes of sending out a specific volunteering bulletin. Some clubs may choose not to (some may be unable to, for data protection reasons) but if some do, then this is a start.
- John Fife to write a short marshalling bulletin each month that highlights upcoming events and that is distributed to all the volunteers on this database, and potentially through the main SACC newsletter also.