

Pembo- Rallying at New Brighton Promenade Stages

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New Brighton Promenade Stage - Wirral 7th & 8th September

2012

It has been several years since I have competed in this rally and thought that a return to the closed public roads was overdue. 2001 saw the 30th anniversary of the event and a special 'one off' super special stage was organised. This saw two cars start together and complete two laps of the stage. This made it quite entertaining for the spectators and the drivers too. The super special stage was such a success that they decided to run a longer version of it in 2012 on the Friday evening.

The 2012 event was fully subscribed to within 3 weeks with over 110 cars wanting one on the 90 places. Held over 2 days the area welcomed crews and spectators from all over the country to a unique driving challenge of closed public road 100% tarmac rally.



Friday was the usual noise and safety checks with scrutineering taking place on the Promenade for everyone to see. Roads are not closed until 16:00 so a drive along these public roads before they closed was in order. Any competitor found 'testing' prior to the event is instantly disqualified.

The Friday run was in reverse seeding order so car 91 and car 90 ran together for their 4 loops of the New Brighton waterfront. They were able to have their run in daylight starting at 17:15. I was seeded at car 41 which according to the schedule showed a start time of 19:52, just after sunset but enough daylight to drive without the lamp pod on. As with these events it only takes one accident or breakdown and the running order slides. I had not removed the lamp pod and made a decision to leave it on until we left the service area. We checked the time and sure enough we were on the start line at 20:25. Darkness had fallen and the lights were needed. A very disappointing run put us well down the field overnight! Lets hope for a better Saturday!



Before I go into the Saturday report I'd just like to tell people about the car. Some of you will remember the dark blue car, well that has now been weighed in at the scrap yard after a 'small' accident at over 100mph on Epynt Military ranges in Wales. This 'new' car, known as the red arrow, started life as a 10v quattro and was bought off Ebay for £400 as an MOT failure. Fully stripped and rebuilt from the salvaged parts from the 'old' car, plus a few new extras, the car has the following specification.



Car Specification:

Engine— Originally an S6 AAN but fully balanced, Scat steel rods, ported and polished head and inlet manifold, blueprinted piper cams, tubular manifold, hybrid KKK24 hotside KKK26/8 coldside with bespoke compressor wheel, ARP bolts and studs throughout. 4 core radiator, 19 row oil cooler, 6 row power steering fluid cooler. Engine runs 10w/60 oil. Engine mounts are 034 heavy duty. Full length aluminium sump guard fitted. Engine uses the new 'red' coil packs. Engine bespoke remapped by MRC (Banbury). Engine build by Impulse Race Engines (Rochdale). Turbo by CR Turbos (Hampshire). Intercooler is a dual pass which has been custom made to fit behind the RS4 style bumper. No known power as never had it on a rolling road but for rallying the engine needs to run with a 32mm diameter air restrictor within 50mm of the compressor wheel. This is measured and then sealed by an MSA scrutineer and recorded in the vehicle competition log book.



Gearbox– RS4 B7 6 speed gearbox 40/60 front/rear split centre TORSEN differential, bespoke front driveshafts and bespoke propshaft. Gearbox mounts are Aldred specials.

Rear Differential– TORSEN differential (from an Audi V8)

Suspension– 2.5” adjustable coil overs with Bilstein gas dampers all round. Front has 500lb springs and rear 400lb springs. RS2 front antiroll bar with adjustable drop links and powerflex bushes. Rear has 7A 20 valve front antiroll bar fitted to the rear with adjustable drop links and powerflex bushes



Subframes– Fully welded and aluminium bushed.

Wishbones– Fully welded and strengthened with hard proflex bushes.

Brakes– Front are 332mm diameter fully floating on alloy bells, BTCC specification, with Porsche RS2 (Big Red) calipers and choice of pads to suit event

Brakes– Rear are 299mm rotors with alloy bells and Porsche Cayman S calipers. Also for MOT and road compliance an individual handbrake caliper.

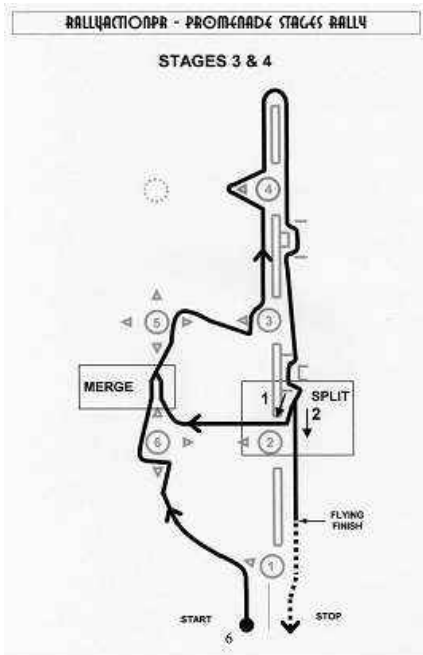
Brake system is servo assisted with hydraulic handbrake operating rear calipers filled with Castrol SRF competition fluid.

Exhaust– Full 2.5” straight through with 4” through back box. Max 100 db for rallying

Interior– Full FIA/MSA multipoint, multi diagonal weld in roll cage. Cobra Evolution seats. TRS 5 point magnum 3” harnesses. Full FIA 4 litre fire extinguisher and 2.5 litre hand held extinguisher. Battery and Fire extinguisher operation from interior and exterior. Brants trip meter. Brantz timer. Map lights. No carpets, no air con and no stereo

Wheels– 8” x 17” compomotives with various tarmac rally tyres to suit event.

Saturday:



So onto Saturday! With 10 tough stages in front of us and the temperature rising from early morning it was going to a hot day, perhaps the hottest that the car had ever run in.

For those of you not familiar with the stage rally format, let me explain briefly. You have a strict time schedule to adhere to, so service time is limited and time controls at stage start, stage finish, service in and service out are all times to the minute. If you arrive early or late you get time penalties which are added to your special stage time. The special stages are timed to the second and fastest overall over all of the different stages wins the event. Quite simply, arrive on time everywhere, drive as fast as you can on the stages and then go home!

Stage diagrams are provided by the organisers just prior to the event start. These are roughly drawn sketches that the navigator has to interpret and read out to the driver in the form of instructions or 'pace notes'. The more accurate these are, the better the driver can read the road and route that lies ahead. An incorrect route will give the crew a 'stage maximum' time which puts you way down the field.

From of lower than expected position after the Friday run we drove to be where we should have

been, in the mid-thirties. The car performed solidly until stage 7 when for no known reason the car refused to tick over and started to cut out on the down changes. Coming into the roundabouts the car stalled with the engine cutting out. This dropped us down the rankings and we finished 48th overall.

Alan Pemberton

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