

25-3-2012

motorspo

RALLY REPORTS

FAST START FOR LATE ENTRANT

Marshall and Hicks Print Media Tour of Caerwent

By Simon Gronow

Organiser: Forresters Car Club **When:** March 25 **Where:** Caerwent, near Chepstow **Championships:** Steve Harkness Competition Tyres Welsh National Tarmacadam; CMSG BP Motors and Bodybuilders Stage Rally **Stages:** seven **Starters:** 69

Despite running low down the field, late entrants Dave Willett and John Davies overcame brake problems to take an excellent win on the Tour of Caerwent in their Ford Escort Mk2.

After setting second fastest time behind Bob Fowden/ Jason Sugden on stage one, they set a blistering pace over the next four stages at the former Ministry of Defence base, setting fastest times on each of them to open up a healthy lead. With their Escort's brakes overheating on the long stages in the warm conditions, they slowed slightly over the last two tests before completing a comfortable win.

A split turbo pipe proved costly for Fowden. The lost boost slowed his Impreza, and he dropped back behind Steve and Michael O'Leary into third place. However, fastest times on the

final two stages helped the reigning Welsh Tarmacadam champion recover to second after a challenging day.

After winning last weekend's Bovington Stages, Steve and Michael O'Leary continued their run of good form, and were up to second overall after four stages. Unfortunately for them, an untraceable day-long misfire and lack of braking power early on meant their Darrian T90 was overtaken by Fowden's Subaru and they had to be content with third.

The first time pairing of Mark Roberts/Tom Wood also suffered from a misfire, but the pair overcame this handicap to take fourth in their Escort Cosworth, finishing ahead of Dave Allmark/ Leigh Woodington, who had a "perfect" run in their Escort Mk2.

Ian Godney/ Ceri Simpson could have done with more power in their Renault Clio, but still took sixth place. It wasn't a good day for Bryan Davies, who retired his Mitsubishi Lancer E6 with head gasket failure, while Richard Merriman retired his Darrian following a puncture and a lack of a suitable spare.

Class One winners Dyfed Pritchard/ Aled Pennant were lucky that they

RESULTS

1 Dave Willett/John Davies (Ford Escort RS) 1h 26m 56s;
2 Bob Fowden/Jason Sugden (Subaru Impreza) +29s; 3 Steve O'Leary/Michael O'Leary (Darrian T90) +47s; 4 Michael Roberts/Tom Wood (Ford Escort Cosworth) +1m 22s; 5 Dave Allmark/Leigh Woodington (Ford Escort Mk 2) +1m 54s; 6 Ian Godney/Ceri Simpson (Renault Clio) +2m 31s; 7 Martin Evans/Chris Metcalfe (Ford Escort Mk2) +2m 57s; 8 Lyn Morgan/Karen Morgan (Peugeot 205 GTi) +3m 41s; 9 Gary Parker/Tony Bassett (Peugeot 205 GTi) +3m 58s; 10 Dyfed Pritchard/Aled Pennant (Vauxhall Nova) +4m 34s.

Class winners, One: Pritchard/Pennant; **Two:** Howard Cartwright/Hugh Austwick (Talbot Sunbeam); **Three:** O'Leary/O'Leary; **Four:** Fowden/Sugden; **Five:** Marcus Naylor/Mark Williams (Peugeot 106 GTI); **Six:** Graham Watkins/John Hawkins (Ford Escort Mk2); **Seven:** Gareth Reed/David Bradley (BMW 325i).

didn't damage their Nova's suspension near the finish of SS4 before continuing to take a fine tenth place, while locals Howard Cartwright/Hugh Austwick won Class Two in their Sunbeam despite filling it with diesel at one point.

After catching numerous cars during the day, Graham Watkins/John Hawkins won their class in their Ford Escort. Other class winners included Marcus Naylor/Mark Williams in a Peugeot 106 and Gareth Reed/David Bradley in a BMW 325i.