

Rallye Breslau 2015

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Italy is beautiful....



....And so is the food!



8x8 Man cat race truck

It's a great feeling to have the Team together. Wayne Smith has made the epic journey from Australia to Munich, being collected by Jim Marsden and Oscar Thurlow as they travel north from Italy after they already competed the week before at King of Italy. Kev Barrett flew in from Malaysia and joins Iain Cherry on a 600 mile road trip from the UK to meet with the gang at Hohenmolsen for the start of this year's Rallye Breslau. Ahead lies 1500km of racing, across Germany and Poland with cars, trucks, motorbikes, SSV's and quads. It's going to be long, it's going to be tough, it's Rallye Breslau 2015



Getting ready for the off



Wayne trying to get them
stickers straight



Ready and waiting

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Day 1

This event is full on from the start and we work hard to get the vehicle scrutinised, stickered and ready for the start along with the other 200+ competitions.

Day 2

The first stage is in a quarry and it is simply huge! A single lap is more than 20km and we aren't even using half..... 5 laps with cars, lorries, motorbikes, quads, side by sides and G.o.r.m racers racing head to head, cross country vehicles locking horns with Xtrem class vehicles. The weather is beautiful and it's clear that dust is going to be a huge issue in this sandy coal quarry. But the gods are on our side and a welcome rainfall hits the course a couple of hours before the start then disappearing 30 minutes before the off.



Flying on Day 1



Loved the cleaning bays



Powerful Gorm Racer



Apocalypse Now - 4x4 style

Our start arrives and we are lined up behind 4 other vehicles..., it's all very strange. The flag drops and we thunder from the start. We overtake the first four cars on the first bend and head out in pursuit of cross country vehicles. It's an awesome track and we hit nearly a 100mph more than once each lap. On our second lap we start tangling with the Lorries, its great fun racing these guys and they're soooo fast! We take it easy and finish well, leading the field by 24secs.

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Day 3

It's back to the mine but this time for seven 25km laps and with Cross country and Xtrem cars taking different courses. There is no rain and the dust swirls as we wait for the flag to drop. Four cars side by side, the flag drops and thunder fills the air. We take the lead but a French car cuts our nose off into turn two and takes the lead. During the lap we come to an Xtrem zone and the leader dithers giving us the chance we need. Once in the lead we never look back, but the dust is terrible. In fact it's so bad we are expecting the race to be stopped. The red flags never came and we tore through the clouds to take another win and extend our lead by 20 minutes



Coming through!



On a charge



Waving Wheels

Day 4

After a 220km liaison stage we arrive at the parking area at 2am. We drag out the camp beds to sleep under the stars. At 3.30am the heavens opened and we retreat for a few hours' restless sleep in the support trucks.

Morning arrives all too soon but a mug of steaming tea soon has spirits rising. It's a quick fire special stage, four 9km laps with different courses for Xtrem and Cross country cars. The motorbikes and quads open the course followed by the Cross country side by sides, cars and trucks. With the course clear it's time for the Xtrem class side by sides, cars and trucks.

It's as dusty as hell, but lessons have been learnt from the previous day and with dust masks fitted we lead from the front. The course is fast with lots of whoops and fast straights and a wicked steep downhill section. Wayne is starting to really enjoy himself and the navigation is awesome. With a partially blocked radiator I keep the pace steady and we head home to take another stage win. But there is no rest. The racer is loaded and we are back on the road. It's a 400 km drive to Pozan in Poland for the 70km night stage starting at Midnight. Can't wait to hit those forests!



Attack, attack, attack!



Jump to the right, turn to the left



Full power down hill

Lazer Lights night stage

We finally line up for the night stage at 12.41 am and we can't wait to get into the forests after the heavy dust of the open quarries. What a difference! Heavy rain reduces the 70km track to deep mud. It wasn't a good start and on the third tulip we lost 20 minutes finding the correct track. Then further disaster as the wipers came to a halt. We find the fault quickly and are soon underway.

The tracks are seriously tough with large rolling whoops and open tank tracks with deep water and clawing mud. We pass 13 cars in one mud section and get right back on it. We finish strongly 18min 4seconds ahead. But then are horrified to find that we have received a 20 minute penalty for speeding in a control zone. It's an unusual mistake and it's the first stage we haven't won!



Nice make up!

Day 5

With only 2hrs sleep we line up for 105km in the Poznan Polygon. A vast military area full of forests, sand and tank tracks. We leave the start and only ten metres from the line the clutch pedal hits the floor and stays there!! "Wayne, we have just lost the clutch!"

It's a hammer blow as our chances of completing a 105km course without a clutch are mind boggling. We drop into survival mode and start ticking of the K's. At every check point I would slow to a crawl while Wayne ran ahead to get our card stamped. Then we would continue. At the heavy winch points we struggled, with only planning and our Gigglepin winches to pull us through. The tracks were tough and a 6" branch punched a hole through the windscreen narrowly missing Wayne's head.



Love those Lazer lights



Muddy and wet

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Wayne running to a check point

But despite the difficulties we are in great spirits. Wayne and I thrive on the pressure and keep working hard. We spend the day locking horns with a very fast French Proto Toyota and can't believe when we cross the line winning the stage by 1min 5secs! This stage was a memorial stage in memory of Klaus Peter Kessler and it was an honour to win this trophy. An incredible result on any day, but without a clutch?! Wow!



Heavy mud in the tank tracks



We got a trophy!

Day 6

Another tough day at the office. The Team worked through the night to repair the car. We source a windscreen after some very helpful Polish ladies help us and are fully battle ready once again. The stage starts well and for the first 44km we are killing it, brutal pace, tough tracks and the car was loving it. We then enter an area that can only be described as hell and the clutch pedal hits the floor again!

We were in big trouble. Car was stuck in gear, would not start and both winch ropes broken. We tried several different lines before being able to wrestle the car out of gear and get it started. After what seemed forever we cleared the tank tracks and continued our fight. We finished the final 40km strongly, got back to base and are again staggered to find we have won the stage as the deep mud and tricky navigation slows the other teams. At camp we find the clutch cover sprung forks are out of shape and working unevenly. New cover fitted and its game on!



Open plains driving fast



Mud and more mud



Tank tracks suck the power

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Day 7

It's an early start to break camp and hit the road. We travelled 140km to the race start while the service crew punched on a further 50km to the next camp. The stage is incredible! Ultra-fast sand tracks bogging you down or making you fly! Huge jumps and some vicious navigation mixed with speed limit sections and deep stinking mud holes. This stage had everything!

It's a split stage and we finish the first 72km leg only seconds ahead of the flying French Toyota Proto team. Then it's a 40km liaison before we start the big one... 211km of Ultra tough tracks, deep water and sand. But we stop too long on our liaison stage and end up starting behind many cars and trucks. Thick dust causing us great difficulty and until 100 km into the stage we get clear air! The clutch behaved itself today and the car was a pleasure to drive. The suspension soaks up the rolling whoops, while the powerful 6.2 litre V8 delivered the power through the Quaife sequential gearbox. The Maxxis Trepador tyres putting the power down, as the Odyssey batteries keep everything running smoothly. It's a great feeling when it's all going your way. We finish the stage and extend our lead by another 1.5hrs! go go GO!



Plenty of deep water



Dust is flying



The service crew work long hours

Day 8

Yesterday's stage was a killer and the crew work through the night to get the car ready for the final stage. 130km in 33 degree heat. Everyone is very tired and nervous but spirits are high and we can't wait to get started! But we are running wounded. Two broken rear springs and a cracked exhaust manifold. Once again we line up and this time we are lined up with a huge truck with 800+hp and a desire to beat us off the start. But I'm not playing games and slay them off the start as we start our final charge. We have a four hour lead so we take it a bit easy managing our engine temperatures and suspension. It's all going text book until at the 78km mark, the back falls out of the exhaust silencer and we can't hear a thing! Worse still the exhaust gases blowing on to the radiator start to cause us to overheat. We are now in full management mode. The km's take forever but finally the finish comes into sight. We cross the line and we have done it!! We are the Rallye Breslau champions 2015!

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Rallye Breslau does a prize giving like no one else. The band blazes rock classics as we enjoy great food and drink waiting for the ceremony to start. The final stage had extra meaning as it was the Klaus Liheiner memorial stage. We were convinced we had no chance after having to slow for the last few km's. So it was total shock when we are called up to receive this honour. Only a short time later we are on stage again to receive our first place trophy.

What a week, what Team, what a car! We won 7 of the 8 stages including the KPK memorial and the Klaus Liehnier memorial and won the overall title by 4.5hours. Simply staggering.

The forests are beautiful



Finding lines



8 days of hard work, big smiles

Hundreds of KM's



Thank you to our service crew Oscar Thurlow, Kev Barrett and Iain Cherry for their tireless hard work. Thank you to the rest of the Team at home who kept everyone up to date and helped in every possible way.

Special thanks to our wonderful sponsors for their continued support and help. Its great working with all of you!



Klaus Leihener trophy

Its all about the Team

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