

DUNLOP Targa NZ

TARGA BAMBINA SUNDAY - DAY 2.

SS8: As predicted the Ararimu Hillclimb would be a horsepower race and at the bottom of the hill the sheer acceleration of many of the cars was quite something to see and hear - incredible. Plenty of spectators as well.

Two cars never even made it to the start-line. Dr Nick Cooper's Valiant Charger had water-pump failure in the Touring Stage and Brent Early's 1992 RX7 FD never made it back to Parc Ferme after an approved departure for repairs.

Surprising all was the blistering time of 5:55 was Malcolm Smith. Gill was 2nd with a 6:00 and Hopper, a 6:06. Dodson a 6:17 and Mehtens a 6:19. In the Classics, Parsons did a 6:19 and Tallot a 6:22. Viewing of Groundsky's images at the Prizegiving shows Parsons overcooking a 90 degree left corner and having to reverse out of it so that could explain it.

I later 'learnt' that Malcolm Smith lives in Hunua, so must know that road backwards. He was quick all day in his Evo IV but it was still only his first Targa ? Same source said "have a look underneath, it has WRC type centre diff !"

This was the first time the Ararimu Road had been used and all the driver's were in raptures after it.



SS8 - on the lower slopes of Ararimu Road. Chris Wilson /Richard Wilson in their very nice 1971 RS2000.



Gordon Burr / Steven Forbes in the Ferrari 308 GT4.



Mark Parsons / Cully Patterson in Neil Tolich's 1970 Ford Perana Capri V8. The Perana looks better on the road since it has been lowered, even under power.



Bob Boniface / Simon Butler – 1987 Ford Sierra with an Evo powerplant.

SS9 was from Miranda on the Firth of Thames, to Mangatangi. In both Classes it is amazing how such differing cars run such close times. 6 Classic cars were covered by 15 seconds. Parsons 07:24, Tallott 07:29, Butler 7:32 Barry Kirk-Burnnand in his left hook BMW 3 had cured his fuel pump problems was 07:35. Eyre 07:39 and Rex Alder in another left hook BMW 3 a 07:42.

In the Moderns it was slightly closer with 6 covered by 13 seconds. Jason Gill 07:14, Smith 07:16, Giddy 07:20, Dodson 07:24, Murphy 07:25, Mehrstens 07:26 and Boniface 07:27. Where was Leigh Hopper ? He had gone through a fence into a paddock – the damage to the WRX meant they could not continue.

SS10 from Mangatangi to Kaiaua, which is north if Miranda, was cancelled. It's an open flowing road and used by Targa in the past. In the fast section that had put in two chicanes put there to further reduce speeds. Why ? – in order to maintain Motorsport NZ's rule of 132 kph average. Remember that the Targa maximum speed limit is 200kph and the fast cars all now carry a GPS which is monitored. At Driver's Briefing they were all told there were penalties for hitting the barriers or for any wheel spinning. It was/is also very, very clear in the Route Book. Motorsport NZ officials deemed it would still be too fast so it was cancelled. It was then a Touring Stage through to a 30 minute Pit Stop.

SS11 was a repeat of Stage 9. Again it was Parsons but only by two seconds from Tallott. Rex Alder was now showing his hand in the M3 and only 5 seconds back. Stuart Eyre had dropped 3 minutes in his very tidy RX3 – a broken alternator bracket would sadly end his day. I say sadly, he knows stages 14 to 17 like the back of his hand as he farms in Naike. In the Moderns Smith took another 3 seconds out of Gill, again much to everyone's surprise. Smith did a 7:19 and Gill a 7:22. The next, and there was a big group of them, were all 15 seconds away. Then it was down to Te Kauwhata for the Lunch Re-Group.

SS12 and 13 were the fast 20 km run up the Eastern side of Lake Waikare. In the Classic it was Parsons and Kirk-Burnnand on identical times of 9:27 and Tallot on 9:32. It was then 10 seconds back to Butler and then 2 to Alder. The Moderns had a new stage winner in Rick Giddy who was 9 seconds ahead of Gill with a 9:03. Was there something wrong with Gill – he's was a Te Kauwhata boy ? It was then 6 back to Smith who continued to surprise on his first tarmac event. Then there was four cars around the 9:26 mark.

Second time through for the Classics and Parsons took 11 seconds off his previous time. Kirk-Burnnand and Tallott both took only took 1 second off their's. Moderns turn and Giddy put down the identical time of 9:03 but Gill took 5 seconds off his previous and went 9:07. Smith was not far behind on 9:11. It was then back to Te Kauwhata for fuel then the final four stages – actually two – run twice.

SS14 was the 19 km West up Hetherington Road then up through Naike and Glen Murray. In the Classics it was Parsons with a 9:13 and Kirk-Burnnand 9:19. Tallott was a 9:30. In the Moderns another identical time of 8:58 from Gill and Giddy. Smith was close on 9:00 and Dodson 9:04.

I was in the middle of this stage with probably 50 other spectators and the top boys were really going hard. Chris Lane's Audi RS2 was another that sounded just sooo good. Allan Lewis had his Datsun 240Z with it's supercharged Chevy was running about 15th but the crowd loved the sound. You could hear the supercharger whining above that big V8.



Garth McGregor / Jen Chisholm in the 1971 Torana XU1 - fancy footwork.



Allan Lewis / Colin Cole – 1972 Datsun 240Z V8



Barry Kirk-Burnnand with son Carl in their 1988 M3. Note the front left wheel.



Anthony and Joanne Butler in the 1973 Holden Cheetah.

SS15 was down Glen Murray Road past Ron Roycroft's old sheds – memories of his Bugatti !! Tallott like many other Targa competitors had been on this road before. Tight at the top but opens up towards the bottom. Tallott beat Parsons by 1 second with a 5:05. Kirk-Burnnand was also quick with a 5:09. Both his and Rex Alders M3's have a great 'stance' on the road when under power. Mike Sexton's is a 6 cylinder and his 6 speed sequential gearbox was 'music to the ears'. In the Moderns Gill put down a 4:57 with Giddy and Smith both on 5:04's, Boniface a 5:06, Dodson a 5:07 and Mehrrens a 5:10 which was very fast for the heavier Mercedes on such a tight road.

SS16 and 17 were repeats of 14 & 15.

SS16 and Anton Tallott had a Classic win taking 16 seconds off his previous time. Parsons did a 9:16 which was actually 3 seconds slower. Kirk-Burnnand did a 9:27. Modern's Giddy did a 9:05 and Gill a 9:06. Gill was holding still holding the overall advantage. Smith and Boniface were back on 9:15 and Dodson a 9:18.



Rex Alder / Ron Bartels in the 1986 M3.



Anton and Anne Tallott in the 1979 RX7.



Harry Dodson / Glenn Cupit in the 1991 Nissan Skyline.



Jason Gill / Jason Robb – 2005 Mitsubishi EVO 9 GT – 1st Modern Class and Overall.

All photos: Alan Henderson

SS17 and all Gill had to do was keep it on the road and the same applied to Parsons. For Parsons there was a worrissome oil leak from yet another split oil cooler. In the Classics, Tallot took 9 seconds off his previous run with a 4:56. Parsons did the same and took 8 seconds off with a 4:57. Kirk-Burnnand took 4 seconds off his with 5:05. In the Moderns Gill had done a 4:57 and this time did a 4:53. Giddy a 4:56 and both Smith and Boniface on 4:58.

Whew, that's it, only a Touring Stage to the Waikare Golf Club and it's all over. It's difficult that I am always quoting the front runners as in the middle of the pack they were all having their own battles with fellow competitors. An example is Gary Murphy in his M3 was always trading times with Mehrtens in that fabulous Merc.

The change of having all the fast boys in the middle of the pack appeared to really work well. It did not put pressure on the timing crews like it had in the past.

Classic:

1st Mark Parsons	01:42:32	a win by 1:25 - well done – a brilliant drive.
2nd Anton Tallott	01:43:57	another great drive from the Tallotts
3rd Barry Kirk-Burnnand	01:45:39	he looked fast, he was fast. This a 2.5 litre M3
4th Anthony Butler	01:46:02	23 seconds off a podium - can't be the easiest car to drive – well done
5th Rex Alder	01:48:04	never far off the pace is Rex. His is a 2.2 litre M3

At Prize-giving Mark Parsons said. "I want to thank my Co-Driver Cully Paterson and our Service Crew. I also want to thank my Partner Karen, if it wasn't for you I would not be here, thankyou." Mark then went on to thank the Perana's owner Neil Tolich who had generously allowed Mark to drive the car. Neil was in attendance having just got back from the UK.

Modern:

1st Jason Gill	01:40:13	a deserved win by 57 seconds.
2nd Rick Giddy	01:41:10	
3rd Malcolm Smith	01:41:58	so well deserved
4th Harry Dodson	01:43:21	
5th Bob Boniface	01:43:43	

Jason Gill said "I want to thank my sponsors City Wide Cars, Mag and Tyre Direct, Schaeffer Oils and Yamaha NZ. Thanks also to my Co-Driver and Service Crew. Thanks also to my wife Chrissie and the children for coming out and supporting us. Personally, I like the reversed seeding as I never passed a car over the two days. Thanks Peter (directed at Event Director Peter Martin) it's been a well run, fun event."

ENDS.

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