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MEDIA RELEASE

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PLENTY OF NEWCOMERS FOR CATLINS RALLY

A healthy number of newcomers to the sport of rallying will be amongst the field for this years Catlins Coast Rally on Saturday.

While the number of novices is great news for the sport there is also good news for the novice drivers as they will be in contention for some great prizes on the day.

The Catlins Coast Rally is organised by the Eastern Southland Car Club each year and former club member James Holder, now the New Zealand distributor of Monit Rally Computers, has offered prizes of trophies and Repco vouchers for some of the leading novice drivers and co-drivers in Saturdays event.

With the number of novice crews in the event these prizes are bound to be hotly contested and one driver who will be keen to take a prize will be David Holder, the younger brother of James Holder. David is starting just his second rally with sister Rachel alongside him in the co-drivers seat, ironically in the Toyota Levin that older brother turned sponsor James used so successfully in the Kiwi 2 category of the New Zealand Rally Championship in recent times.

However David and Rachel will have tough competition from several other novices on Saturday.

Brodie Anderson of Dunedin competes in just his third rally in a Toyota Starlet while Warner Reid will be at the wheel of his turbocharged Toyota MR2 with Adele Byers performing the co-driver duties. A close neighbour of Reid, Paul Gouman from Greenfields at Clydevale will compete in his fearsome Mazda RX7 fitted with a Lexus V8 engine with co-driver Lyndon Dunlop alongside.

Gareth Currie of Invercargill will make his rally debut alongside co-driver Crystal Withington in a Toyota Celica GT4 with Tim Harris and younger brother Dave Harris of Invercargill next up in a Toyota Corolla DX. The Eastern Southland Car Club Under 18 Champion Joshua Lankshear makes his first appearance in a rally at the wheel of a Ford Escort MkII with Matt Crosbie his co-driver while Catriona Flynn of Invercargill also debuts in a Subaru Legacy RS with Eric Clark.

Reid, Gouman, Currie, Harris, Lankshear and Flynn are all starting their first rally on Saturday while all their respective co-drivers apart from Eric Clark are also competing in their first rally. However all have competed in club events in the past and Reid and Gouman will be familiar names to those who have spectated at the Kaitangata and Bluff hillclimbs in recent years.

The Catlins Coast Rally begins from Owaka Motors premises in Campbell Street, Owaka at 9am on the day. Ahead of the competitors will be eight high speed Special Stages. New this year are stages such as Lochindorb, Purakauti and White Flat while well known stages such as Tawanui, Catlins Valley, Cannibal Bay, Barrata Creek plus the Super Special Stage introduced for the first time last year at Balclutha's Riverside Reserve remain.

The Super Special Stage will be the last of the rally and will provide a fantastic venue for spectators to watch the last few kilometres of action.

Loyal supporters, the Rosebank Lodge in Balclutha, MWH, Southroads, Owaka Motors, the Clutha Licensing Trust and Century Batteries all return with all important sponsorship to allow the event to take place again.

The rally will be Round 3 of the Mainland Rally Series and Round 2 of the Laird Motorsport Southern Rally Series which is fought out by drivers and co-drivers with a residential address in Southland, Eastern Southland or Otago.

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