

MEDIA RELEASE

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PROMINENT MOTORSPORT PERSONALITY FOR CATLINS RALLY

Well known motorsport personality Graeme 'Robbo' Robertson will travel south to take part in this years Catlins Coast Rally on Saturday 24 July. Robbo, as he is known throughout the country, is the Chief Clerk Of Course in the sport and is also the Event Director for the annual Summer Motor Racing Series on the country's motor racing circuits.

Robbo will co-drive for Gore driver David Kirk in a Mitsubishi GSR.

Robbo and Kirky have become great friends over the past few years as Robbo has been Kirky's boss on the management team of the Summer Series. When he is not travelling the country with his summer motor race series duties Kirky, a former co-driver himself, has been dabbling behind the wheel in the occasional rally.

"We've become good friends and this has extended from there says Kirky. "I tried to get him down last year but I couldn't do the event and when I was looking for a co-driver this year I thought I know who I can get. I'm looking forward to having the old bugger down here. A lot of people here know him and he will add some flavour - he's an interesting character. Best of all he's not a bad co-driver either!"

Robbo says Kirky had been promising him a ride for ages and when he rang it took me "half a nano-second to accept his offer." Robbo is an experienced co-driver who has co-driven for Chris Clarke in the Sumo Rally Team for 23 years but he predicts he will be in for "a bit of a shock" when he jumps in the passenger seat alongside Kirky. "Chris and I have rallied together for 23 years - that's a long time. Our philosophy has always been to rally Nissans with two doors, big motors and rear wheel drive." However at Catlins Robbo will find himself with a new driver in a Mitsubishi with 4 doors, a turbocharged engine and four-wheel-drive. The closest Robbo has come to a similar combination was when the Sumo Rally Team rented a Mitsubishi VR4 in 1992 when the VR4 was the fastest car around.

Robbo is looking forward to the Catlins experience. "I know it is an extremely friendly event and it is one of the few events left without stage notes so I am bringing my colouring book and crayons," he jokes. "Everyone is always looking for a good result but I've never been with Kirky and he is pretty new to the sport. I'm looking forward to having fun and competing with a whole lot of different people."

Kirky has a similar philosophy. "I'd be quite happy to finish in the top twenty. I'm looking forward to having fun and doing some skids and catching up with a few friends on the rally scene."

The duo will be part of another impressive entry when the 2010 Catlins Coast Rally takes place on Saturday 24 July. Kirk's Mitsubishi will be supported by Syngenta, Invercargill Oil Shop, Custombuild Engineering, Russell Keeler Automotive and Harrison's Supplies.

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, Purakaiti 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.

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David Kirk & Graeme Robertson