



MEDIA RELEASE

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GORE RALLY DUE TO RETURN

After resurrecting the Gore Rally as part of their 50th Anniversary Celebrations in 2006 the Eastern Southland Car Club suddenly found themselves with a problem. Already boasting one very successful rally each season, the Catlins Coast Rally, the Gore event also won high praise from all involved. That left the club in a quandary. They now had two events that were popular with competitors, officials and the local communities to which the events contributed major economic benefits.

The solution has been to alternate the events each year. Accordingly, the club returned to the Catlins area to run it's major rally last year and this year they return to the Eastern Southland and West Otago area for another Gore Rally.

The 2008 Gore Rally will take place on Saturday 2 August and will be Round 3, and the final South Island round, of the NZ Truth Rally Xtreme Qualifying Series. The event is also Round 3 of the Palmside New Zealand Limited Mainland Rally Championship and the third and final round of the Laird Motorsport Southern Rally Series.

As the competitors prepare for Gore Paul Nicoll of Nelson heads the Rally Xtreme Championship while Cantabrians Jeff Judd and Deane Buist head the Mainland Series points. Meanwhile the Southern Rally Series is poised for a great finale. After last weekend's second round Paul Cross now leads that championship with fellow Gore driver Andrew Graves just five points behind. Early leader Duncan McCrostie of Kaitangata is now third, one point ahead of Dunedin driver Mike Wellington.

The first car will depart from the Scenic Circle Croydon Hotel at 8am on Saturday 2 August and competitors will be faced with nine Special Stages before the first car returns to the hotel at 5pm that evening. The event comprises approximately 146 kilometres of Special Stage competition along with another 135 kilometres of touring. The Special Stages take competitors into areas such as Pukerau, Conical Hills, Rankleburn, Tapanui, Dusky Forest and back to a stage not used for fourteen years - Beaumont.

Entries close on Friday 18 July and there are nine separate classes. These encompass various engine capacities for 2-wheel-drive cars, a current 4-wheel-drive class plus one for 4-wheel-drive cars from the pre-1996 era, two classes for classic cars defined by engine size and both the 2-wheel-drive and 4-wheel-drive Rally Xtreme classes.

The Gore Rally has a long and colourful history. It was the first special stage rally south of Christchurch when the first event was held in 1975 and it continued virtually every year until

1996. On occasion the club has held two major rallies each season - the Gore event plus the Wyndham Rally. When the Eastern Southland Car Club reinstated the Gore Rally as part of their 50th Anniversary Celebrations it was the Club's President, Derek Ayson of Clinton, who took his Mitsubishi Lancer EVO 4 to victory.

Major sponsors for this year's Gore Rally include Scenic Circle Croydon Hotel, SouthRoads, MWH and Ernslaw 1 Limited whose support allows the use of the forestry where much of the rally is held.

Lindsay Beer
Publicity Officer
ESCC Gore Rally
021 351 499

For further comment: Roger Laird - phone 03 208 5247/0274 368 876

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