

MEDIA RELEASE

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NO SLOWING DOWN FOR CLUB CHAMPION

He may have celebrated forty years of rally competition back in 2017 but Dave Jenkins of Gropers Bush near Riverton is not slowing down one bit.

Jenkins will contest the Catlins Coast Rally for the first time since 2015 when the event takes place on Saturday 10 August and he will do so on the back of having won his first ever championship – the Eastern Southland Car Club Championship in the 2017/2018 season.

For the last three years at Catlins Jenkins has been in the Zero Car, the lead car which lets spectators know the field is on its way and also to alert organisers of any problems on the stage. Jenkins drove the Zero Car in 2016 and 2017 while his son-in-law, Sam Henderson, a well-known driver in his own right, took the wheel last year while Jenkins, known to all in the rally fraternity as “Farmer”, sat alongside. Dave also did several years of Zero Car duty at the Rally Of Southland many years ago.

It will be Sam sitting alongside Dave in the co-driver seat of Jenkins’ Subaru Legacy RS when they take on Catlins next month. Sam’s presence continues a family tradition as Sam’s wife and Dave’s daughter Brodie had been Dave’s co-driver for many years from the age of thirteen, a partnership Dave regards as a highlight of his career. Dave’s wife Gaye also did a few events with him in the early 1980’s.

Dave has done little rallying of late, the Lawrence Rally last year being an exception, but he has done a lot of club type events and that is what led to his Club Championship win last season.

It was the first time he had chased a championship and by entering every event and finishing reasonably well in every one he accumulated enough points to take the title. “It was a real thrill to win, I’ve never really gone for a championship before,” says the modest Jenkins.

Jenkins first ever rally was the Eastern Southland Car Club’s 1977 Gore Rally in which he drove a Datsun 1600. Throughout his lengthy rally career there have only been seven different rally cars – four Datsun 1600’s, a Datsun Sunny, a Datsun 200B and the Subaru Legacy

The mid 1980’s were a particularly successful time for Jenkins winning two or three Claytons Rally’s and finishing in the top ten of the Rally Of Southland when it was part of the National Championship. He won the 1988 Gore Club Rally and did well in the Wyndham Rally too, coming close to winning in 1986. After losing time in the first stage he then won every other stage but missed the victory due to the time lost early on.

This year’s Catlins Coast Rally is the fifth and final round of the Mainland Rally Championship and part of the Eastern Southland Car Club Rally Championship.

The Eastern Southland Car Club is delighted to have the support of the Clutha Licensing Trust through their Rosebank Lodge Balclutha establishment, plus Southroads, Owaka Motors, Yuasa Batteries and Stadium Finance. The club is also especially grateful to Rayonier Matariki Forests and the Clutha District Council for their assistance with the event.

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Photograph: Felicia Goffin



Dave Jenkins with his silverware at the Eastern Southland Car Club 2017/2018 prizegiving