

MEDIA RELEASE - JULY 2015



2002 WINNER RETURNS TO CATLINS

Ashburton driver Wayne Muckle has only driven in the Catlins Coast Rally twice before. The first time, in 2002 he won it and the following year in the same Mitsubishi EVO 3 he was a close second to Deane Buist.

Muckle only made a late decision to come south in 2002 after he won the Canterbury Rally. "I won every stage that year." He had been to Catlins once prior to that, as a co-driver in 1999, but co-driving was not for him, "I hated it!" However once he had the opportunity to drive the roads in his two appearances in the EVO he absolutely loved the Catlins experience. "They were the best roads I had ever rallied on and the atmosphere made it a great event. Everyone was so accommodating."

Muckle has never returned after 2003 and he has done little competitive running of late. He did enter Catlins again a few years ago in the ex-1989 NZ Rally Championship winning Mazda 323 of Neil Allport that he now owns but failed to make the start. In recent times Muckle has been busy helping his son in his motorsport endeavours. However he did buy a Porsche 911 that had been used in four Targa events, fitting a close ratio gearbox and rejigging the suspension in readiness for rallying. Muckle contested two rallies in the car last year, the Hanmer and South Canterbury Rally's. At Hanmer he broke a throttle linkage and in South Canterbury lost a gear and wrong slotted at an intersection. "I have been keen to do something this year too but car setbacks and work got in the way. There haven't been any days that we haven't thought and talked about getting back into rallying with the car."

Why choose a relatively rare rally car such as a Porsche 911? "I always wanted one as a kid." Catlins will be just the third rally in the car. "I'm still learning, it is an acquired taste. It is the most difficult car to drive that I have ever had. It is very different. It is not a car that will make a difference at the pointy end of the field but it is a great midfield car."

However like most drivers the primary goal is to reach the finish. Spectators are in for a treat too with the Porsche just something a little different from the majority of the cars in the field.

Lindsay Beer, on behalf of Eastern Southland Car Club 021 351 499