

MEDIA RELEASE – 31 JULY 2015



DEAN BOND TOP SEED FOR CATLINS COAST RALLY

Dean Bond of Balclutha, the 2009 and 2011 victor, will be the top seed for Saturday's Catlins Coast Rally in his Mitsubishi EVO 6.5. Since he took his second victory in 2011 Bond's last three outings in his home rally have been hampered by a variety of problems but 2015 presents him with a great opportunity to secure that elusive third win.

The second seed will be the well performed Richard Bateman of Blenheim in a Mitsubishi Lancer EVO 8. Behind him come six extremely competitive 2-wheel-drive competitors who will engage in a furious battle for 2-wheel-drive honours. They are also capable of making life difficult for the top two seeds. Mike Verdoner of Balclutha starts at three after a fine third placing in his Ford Escort last year and has son Jareb co-driving again. At four is Deane Buist of Christchurch in a Ford Escort, a former winner of this event in a Mitsubishi EVO, and fifth last year in the Escort. Regan Ross of Kaikoura is next up in another Escort, followed by Derek Ayson of Gore at six in his Nissan powered Ford Escort fitted with a rebuilt motor after a failure at the Otago Rally earlier in the year. Ayson has twice finished third overall in 2-wheel-drive cars in this event and has also won it in a 4-wheel-drive. Behind him is Barry Mills of Balclutha, a frequent top ten finisher in his indecently quick Hillman Avenger in which he has a best finish of fourth in 2013. Bert Murray of Waimate is seeded eighth in his rapid Mazda RX7 ahead of Mainland Rally Series sponsor David Clearwater of Christchurch (Mitsubishi EVO 4) with Wallacetown driver, Neville Krammer, rounding out the top ten. Krammer has accumulated a string of impressive top ten results over the last few years in an older Subaru Legacy RS.

John Giltrap of Lincoln (Subaru WRX), David Gee of Blenheim (WRX), Scott Simpson of Oamaru (EVO) and Jason Clark of Havelock in an EVO 5 are drivers just outside the top ten who could work their way into a good result.

There are several other entries of interest including Australian John Spencer in his Nissan 240RS and veteran Trevor Crowe of Christchurch, this year in his Subaru Justy WRX.

The class battles are always intriguing with Class B for 2-wheel-drive cars from 1301-1600cc sure to be one of the best yet again. There, former Southlander Garry Cowan, Jake Thomas of Mosgiel, Kevin Laird of Alexandra plus Graham McRae and Craig Cormack of Gore in a variety of Toyota's will fight out an intense battle.

The rally is Round 4 of the Clearwater Painting Mainland Rally Championship and Round 2 of the Laird Motorsport Southern Rally Series.

The winner will take home the highly sought after Darryl Robinson Memorial Trophy while the first South Otago crew will earn the Kerry O'Donohue Memorial Trophy and the leading Otago Sports Car Club crew the Glen Shirlaw Memorial Trophy.

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