

MEDIA RELEASE

31 JULY 2017

IT IS TIME TO HAVE A DRIVE



Gavin Read first became involved with the Catlins Coast Rally in 2003 but on Saturday 12 August 2017 he will finally take the wheel and drive in the event for the first time.

Read moved back to Balclutha after time away in 2003 and called the Eastern Southland Car Club to see if they needed a hand with the event. His offer was gratefully accepted and he spent his first rally running time control. The next few were spent running Special Stages and organising many of the facets of the event. From 2007 to 2010 he drove the Safety Car and was also Assistant Clerk Of Course before jumping into the co-driver seat alongside talented Winton driver Brendon Mitchell in 2011. After three years with Mitchell, Read then sat alongside Steve Morris in the 2014 event before two more years as Chief Marshall and Safety Car.

The time has now come to have a drive in the event and on 12 August, Read and his BMW 328i will be among the field. It will be his third rally as a driver after the Rankleburn Rally in 2014 and the Rally Of Otago this year. Both rallies were spoiled by mechanical issues so the focus over the last couple of months has been on solving those to ensure a good run at Catlins.

He is looking forward to the event with the emphasis on bringing the car home. "It is the first time I have driven the roads at real speed. It is the first time I have to make sure I get round every corner. Catlins is one I want to tick off the list," he says. Read admits co-driving has definitely helped hone his driving skill while it has also helped with his knowledge of the roads.

While Read will be lining up for his first Catlins Rally, through his company Window Tint South he is also assisting fellow BMW driver, Ari Pettigrew of Rangiora, by paying his entry fee. "Ari is a young guy who struggles for funds but he showed last year that he and his car are capable of achieving a placing. We decided to help get him down and so now we have a Window Tint South BMW Works Team."

The 2017 Catlins Coast Rally is Round 5 of the Stadium Finance Mainland Rally Championship and also a points round for the ESCC Rally Championship Trophy.

The event is scheduled to depart from Owaka Motors in Campbell Street, Owaka at 10am on 12 August. The rally will be based in Owaka this year with servicing of the rally cars taking place in the township between stages. Six Special Stages await competitors before the rally finishes in Owaka at approximately 3.44pm.

Major support for the 2017 Catlins Coast Rally comes from Rosebank Lodge Balclutha, Fulton Hogan, Owaka Motors, Yuasa Batteries and Stadium Finance.

Lindsay Beer

Catlins Coast Rally
021 351 499

Photograph

Gavin Read of Invercargill in his BMW 318i

