

MEDIA RELEASE - JULY 2015



BUSY WEEKEND AHEAD FOR GLOBETROTTING RALLY MAN

Gore driver Craig Cormack hopes to bring his Toyota Levin AE86 to the finish of this year's Catlins Coast Rally at around 4.00pm on Saturday 8 August. Once that has been accomplished, just twelve hours later he will begin the long journey to his next rally mission, the Malaysian Rally, the following weekend.

For many years the Southlander has balanced his motorsport efforts in the south of New Zealand with life as part of the Team MRF crew as they compete in the Asia-Pacific Rally Championship.

At home Cormack has driven his Toyota to many Class B placings over the years including a class win at Catlins two years ago. Last year a blown engine ended his rally early and consequently he has not driven since then apart from a recent sprint in Dunedin. "I will be a bit rusty but I will be aiming for a good finish," he says.

Shortly after the end of the Catlins Rally Cormack will undertake a now familiar journey to join the highly successful Team MRF in Malaysia. He became involved with the team through fellow Gore man, Lane Heenan, now based in Perth with his company Race Torque Engineering who prepare the cars for the Asia-Pacific Championship. "I've known Lane for many years, we worked together on rally cars during the mid-80's for competitors such as Graham Crawford in the New Zealand Rally Championship." Team MRF currently runs Skoda Fabia S2000 cars in the six round championship which consists of three in the Pacific and three in Asia.

A typical week for Cormack with the team means arriving at the venue for the latest round early in the week to prepare the cars, stripping them down and repairing any damage. Engines are changed for every third round.

Generally each rally starts with a ceremonial stage on the Friday with the full event on Saturday and Sunday. During the events themselves Cormack is involved with the tyres. MRF is an Indian tyre company so at every service new tyres go on each car with twenty-four for each car per event.

On the Monday after each rally Cormack is back on a plane and on his way back to Gore.

Cormack has been doing this every year since the early 2000's. He is able to do it as he has his own business, Custom Build Engineering in Gore. "I am lucky. I have a supportive wife and a good staff who keep things going while I am away."

Working for Team MRF has had positive spin-offs for Cormack's own rally effort. "I am fortunate, I have learnt the tricks of the trade. You need to prepare your car as good as you can get it and have it mechanically ready to prevent breakdowns."

This year's Catlins Coast Rally begins at Owaka Motors at 9am on Saturday 8 August and traverses nine Special Stages before the finish at the Riverside Reserve in Balclutha at 3.41pm. The event is Round 4 of the Clearwater Painting Mainland Rally Championship and Round 2 of the Laird Motorsport Southern Rally Series.

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