



Promoted by the Marathon Rally Car Club Inc.

Murland & Rawstron tied for lead

Paraparaumu's Shane Murland and Christchurch's Brent Rawstron are tied for the lead of the week long epay Silver Fern marathon rally for historic cars after the first day's stages on the Bank's Peninsula near Christchurch today.

Rawstron was competing in his own back yard – he owns a vineyard at Taitapu only half an hour's drive from the six stages the field of 55 cars contested.

Murland took the lead from the outset in his Escort RS1800 and built up over a minute's advantage until he recorded a slow time in the fifth of the six stages. But he won the final test of the day at Bossu Rd to put himself back in the reckoning.

Former Australian double national champion Geoff Portman lies third in his Holden Commodore, just 19 seconds back.

Top seed Geoff Bell from South Africa had a disastrous start to the event, going off the road and getting stuck on the first stage at Okains Bay. He had to drive through a fence into a farmer's paddock to rejoin the road with the time lost relegating him to last place. By the end of the day he had fought his way back to 28th, nearly 15 minutes behind the leaders.

In the challenge event for vehicles of the same era, but with more modifications, the 2006 winner, Brian Stokes from Kaiapoi had a suspension failure on his Escort and left the road on the third stage at Pipers Valley. He missed the following two stages but rejoined for the final stage and was lying in 15th place in that event at the end of the day.

The lead is held led by Christchurch's Deane Buist in an Escort, a single second in front of Australian Brad Goldsbrough in a 2.4 litre Datsun 1600 with Cambridge's Brent Taylor third in a Toyota Corolla.

Tomorrow's stages take the field through six stages in the foothills of the Southern Alps from Christchurch to Timaru. The rally finishes in Queenstown next Saturday after 1060 kms of special stages.

epay Silver Fern Historic Rally – Leg 1

1=, S Murland, J Benton (Escort RS1800) Wellington and B Rawstron, I McKee (Escort RS1800) Christchurch, 54 mins 40 secs;

3, G Portman, R Runnalls (Holden Commodore) Australia, 54.59;

4, S Tysoe, C Parsons (Escort RS1800) England, 56.18;

5, J Judd, M Smith (Escort RS1800) Christchurch, 56.45;

6, J Scannell, C Lancaster (Escort RS1800) England, 57.18;

epay Silver Fern Challenge Rally – Leg 1

1, D Buist, A Bulman (Escort RS1800) Christchurch, 54 mins 58 secs;

2, B Goldsbrough, A Topliff (Datsun 1600) Australia, 54.59;

3, B Taylor, C Ramsay (Toyota Corolla) Cambridge, 55.48;

4, A Hawkeswood, S Johnstone (Mazda RX7) Alexandra, 56.41;

5, D Martin, B Gibb (Ford Fiesta) Christchurch, 57.55.

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For more information on the event visit www.silverfernally.co.nz

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