



PROMOTED BY THE MARATHON RALLY CAR CLUB INC.

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BIGGER AND BETTER SILVER FERN RALLY PLANNED FOR 2008

Following a successful event in October last year (2006), organisers of the NZ Silver Fern International Marathon Rally, have released plans for an even bigger and better event for their next rally, which is set to run between October 16th and 23rd 2008.

Silver Fern Rally organisers are currently looking at different route for 2008, encompassing more of New Zealand's scenic South Island, while at the same time utilising some of the more popular and challenging rally roads used in 2006.

The proposed event will take place this time over eight days, though some will only be half days, during which time competitors can expect between 1200 and 1500km's of spectacular gravel special stages.

With the final route is still to be confirmed, the event looks likely to start in the major southern city of Christchurch, followed by overnight stops in Timaru, Dunedin (2), Invercargill, Queenstown (2), and back to Christchurch before finishing in Blenheim.

The 2008 event is likely to run along similar lines to that of 2006, with the organisers' philosophy of 'bringing back the days of old when rallying was an adventure, with the emphasis on endurance and reliability, but still with a fun side to it'.

As with 2006, the emphasis will be on encouraging Classic and Historic rally cars, which added to a mix of modern 2 wheel drive's, will see the organisers again looking to attract entrants from Europe and Australia, with many already indicating their return.

While there will again be a special class for later model cars with significant competition history, this time they will be subject to an equalisation formula to be applied to the results, with the exact formula still to be finalized.

Rally Manager Timaru's Carl Rabbidge, and Event Chairman Hamilton's Gary Smith, have already been in discussions with Local Councils and Car Clubs around the proposed route, to ensure their support.

Smith said "already a number of these Councils have indicated lost opportunities from the event in 2006, and we will be working hard to involve them and their local communities, with plans for more relaxed service breaks during the day's competition."

In addition a number of sponsorship opportunities have been discussed, with negotiations underway to secure the funding required to run such a huge event.

Organisers expect to release more information about their plans for the event over the coming months and for further information visit:- www.silverfernally.co.nz

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*From the 2006 event Swedish driver Stig Blomqvist powers his Classic Ford Escort RS1800, through some of New Zealand's scenic countryside on his way to second place overall.
(Photo - Skidpix)*