



PROMOTED BY THE MARATHON RALLY CAR CLUB INC.

19 October - Immediate release

MEDIA STATEMENT – RALLY INCIDENT

During the running of today's section of the NZ Silver Fern International Marathon Rally, an incident occurred where car 12, the English teaming of Stephen French and Colin Booth crashed their Ford Escort RS1800 at high speed.

The incident occurred on Hunt Road near Owaka in the Catlins area of Southland, and was during one of the special competition stages on a section of road closed to the public.

French's Ford Escort RS1800 slid wide on a fast corner, and the wheels dropped into a rut causing the car to roll over several times, ending up some distance down the road, with as a result both members of the team injured.

The next car along the stage one minute later (Dermot Martin – Christchurch), said he "knew the road and was already cautious on this section", however he had to use all his skills to avoid the crashed Escort, damaging his own Ford Focus in the process. Martin and co-driver Barrie Gibb were uninjured.

Organisers were notified of the incident quickly by both cell phone and the event's radio communications system so that emergency processes were quickly put in place, the competition stopped and medical assistance on the scene promptly.

Both French and Booth received injuries, and were transported to Hospital. While Booth remains in Balclutha Hospital, French has been transferred to Dunedin Hospital for surgery.

The event Clerk of the Course David McCahon commented "that the safety belts and strong roll cages in these vehicles helped protect the drivers from more serious injury, while the operation of the events emergency processes, meant the incident was dealt with in the quickest possible time." He also praised his team of marshals and officials for their prompt, efficient operation.

The Rally continues tomorrow from Invercargill towards the next overnight stop in Dunedin.

For further information contact Rally Clerk of the Course
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