



TURBO DYNAMICS

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Hants Fire & Rescue Rally Team Tackle The Betta - Somerset Stages Rally

Having successfully secured sponsorship from leading turbocharger specialists, Turbo Dynamics and then won the 'Highest Placed Novice Crew' award at Rallye Sunseeker this year, Hants Fire & Rescue Rally Team (HFRRT) have pushed themselves further by competing at the Betta - Somerset Stages Rally.

The Somerset Stages, which took place near Minehead last weekend, saw the team ease their way into the rally in car 88, taking it steady and getting average stage times. Retained Firefighter and team driver, Mark Daniels said, "Everything was going well; the car felt good and was riding the bumps well. We finished the first three Gravel stages and went to the Service Area knowing that we were well placed in the Championship."

Stages four and five, taking place in Porlock, were on tarmac and incorporated three miles of up-hill roads with drops of up to 100ft, 60 corners and 10 hairpin bends! One of the more trying parts of the rally, several cars came out of the running during these stages. However, HFRRT not only managed to stay in one piece but gained respectable times for both of the stages. Unfortunately for the team though, without realising they had booked in too early at the Time Control Point and consequently, received a five minute road penalty.

Back at the Butlins Service Area in Minehead, not knowing about the penalty, the team's hopes were high. Their VF34 turbocharged Subaru Impreza received a quick change of tyres and then they were off tackling the next seven Gravel stages. Daniels commented, "We through caution to the wind! Running right up the front in the championship we started to chase down Duncan Waite, getting closer and closer to his stage times... We were being chased by various competitors for the championship and we were going to take the maximum points!"

Another dangerous stretch of the rally though, HFRRT's competitors, Neil Harrold and Dennis Sanford in Car 37 ended up barrel-rolling down the hill after a desperate bid to get more Championship points. A regretful Daniels explained that if everyone had known about the time penalty they'd received, their competitors wouldn't have competed so hard and the accident might have been avoided. He continued, "It was close rallying and very fast with 90° right and left-hand corners. There were big drops off the road into thin air; very spectacular and very scary. We were fully committed all the way though and I'm glad to say we finished with no offs, at all."

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It was not until the results from the different stages started to come in that HFRRT realised they'd received the road penalty for arriving early at a Time Control Point and along with some of the other teams – 15 teams in all received penalties for arriving early - an appeal was launched. Unfortunately for the teams involved though, it was confirmed on Wednesday morning that the penalties would not be dropped. Therefore meaning HFRRT currently have an estimated position of 5th or 6th within the championship (the official results are yet to be announced).

Turbo Dynamics Marketing Manager, Natasha Miller said, "It is a great shame about the road penalty and I can imagine all of the teams who received the deduction in points feel rather hard done-by.

"HFRRT performed brilliantly during the rally and I have no doubt that they would have been within the top three in the championship had this not happened. They are however, wonderful sports and have already said they'll be back fighting harder than ever at the Essex Stages and Abingdon Rally."

Team sponsors, Turbo Dynamics also had a presence at Butlins in Minehead – the Rally Service Area and HQ - with banner stands, flags and one of their TD gazebos.

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