

CLASSIC DRIVER

Tony Jardine prepares for a first-ever carbon-neutral run at the Roger Albert Clark Rally

Lead

In a first for classic motorsport, Jardine and Harryman will be running a completely carbon neutral campaign during the 350-mile Roger Albert Clark Rally thanks to NET-HERO.



In a pocket of North Wales, a rally car is being prepared. The Car, a 1973 Hillman Avenger, is having the final touches applied to it ahead of one of the toughest classic car rallies on the calendar, and in the absence of the WRC this year, the biggest in the UK. The rally is the Roger Albert Clark - 350 miles of special stages across five days, into the night and early hours. The team includes driver Tony Jardine and Co-driver Alan Harryman, who are hoping for a strong finish. However, the message that the team bring is perhaps more important than any podium or any story that has come before.



The Roger Albert Clark Rally is an event for pre 1981 rally cars, bearing the name of the first British driver to win a round of the WRC, the 1976 RAC Rally. It carries the initials of the RAC Rally, which will forever be associated with special stage rallying in the UK. Whisper it in the pubs and taverns around this area of North Wales and it will cause hairs to stand as tales are told of the triumphs of past greats on the much-revered stages, such as Kielder, Ae and Dyfnant.



Many of the famous old stages are being revisited, including Killer Kielder, in a route that will mirror closely the 1991 Lombard RAC Rally, won by Juha Kankkunen and Juha Piironen. The participants will be subject to 350 miles of terrifying special stages, on the slick surfaces of muddy forest roads on tracks that trace a line between the ancient trees, a line that becomes ever narrower as darkness descends on what is set to be the longest and toughest special stage rally to take place in the UK since that 1991 spectacle.



But could this rally and events like it be in danger? We are at somewhat of a crucible for the internal combustion engine, with the world now focussed on reversing climate change it seems petrol power must comply or die, and this is where Tony Jardine's small team step in. In a first for classic motorsport, Tony and his team are tackling the climate issue head on by conducting an entirely carbon neutral campaign. Competing under the NET-HERO banner, they are determined to prove that Motorsport can be green, shining the spotlights of their car on a route for the future of the sport.



Using the NET-HERO platform, a subscription service that allows drivers to offset the carbon footprint of any vehicle they use through carbon credits, Jardine will offset the footprint of all of the teams' vehicles and travel and, with endorsement from Motorsport UK, it is a plan that is attracting plenty of interest at a crucial time. As Tony puts it, "Together we can help care for the environment through motorsport in a simple and cost-effective way. I can't think of any better way of demonstrating an effective environmental programme in motorsport other than alongside my fellow competitors in the glorious forests of Scotland, England and Wales."



The forests, so vital in allowing our planet to breath, are indeed a wonderful stage for this initiative. With a car prepared by Tim Tugwell coupled with the experience of Jardine and Harryman, the pair will be hoping for a strong finish as well. The switch to the forests in 1959 ensured the survival of rallying in the UK, and now the switch to green running could perhaps help guarantee its future and ensure that wonderful events like the Roger Albert continue for many years to come.

Photos by Will Broadhead and Russ Otway

Gallery

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