

Rally of Kent

Welcome to the 'Rally of Kent', which includes the 14th running of the 'Kent Forestry Stages', which for the seventh year in succession, is sponsored by Barrett's of Canterbury.

Whether a first time spectator or a seasoned campaigner, we hope that you enjoy your day out in Kent for this annual motor sport event. For the regular rally fan, many of the tips and much of the information contained within this page will be known already. For those who are watching for the first time, we hope that the information contained within this leaflet will help you to understand what is happening, why it is happening and how you can become more involved in the future if you wish to.

WATCH OUT – THE CARS ARE COMING

Before the first rally car appears, there will be traffic driving through the stage at reduced speed. The first vehicle that you are likely to see will be the stage commander. He is responsible for the operation of the stage and he will take this opportunity to satisfy himself that all arrows and taping are to the required standard and that his marshals are briefed.

Car 000 is the official timekeeper. He drives the route in advance of the rally traffic providing stage start and finish marshals with the timing clocks for the rally. The next vehicle through will be car 00. This is the safety car and the crew of this will need to be satisfied that you, the spectators, are not standing in any position that could be dangerous for you and/or the competitors. If they are not happy, they will stop and ask people to move. Please observe their requests as they have your safety in mind.

Warning – The next car on the stage will be car 0. This is the course car and it will be travelling at a competitive speed. The stage is now 'live'. You must expect high-speed rally traffic through the stage until the course-closing car passes you. This will carry the letters 'CC' in place of numbers.

The top seeds on this event are very fast. Loose stones on the stage will be thrown up by them during the morning so we recommend that you stand well back!!

WHY IS THERE A CAR 0

This is the course car and is the first vehicle that you will see travelling at a competitive speed. The duty of the course car crew is to ensure that all of the arrows in the forest are visible at speed and that there is nothing on the track to prevent the passage of the rally.

Once the Course Car has completed the stage, the start crew will be given the 'all clear' and the action will commence.

WHAT DO THE MARSHALS DO?

The marshals on duty may have no involvement other than on the actual day itself, but they are vital to the running of the rally. They have to be in place long before the first car arrives in the forest and once the action is over, they are responsible for clearing away all signs that a rally has past by, so that the forest is not spoilt for the many other people that use it. This quite often means that they are with the rally from 6.00 am to well after the last car has been thought the stage.

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Competitors know how important the marshals are and on this event they have voluntarily contributed to provide each marshal with a small packed-lunch to help them through the day. We need you to follow the marshals' instructions, as they are there to ensure the safety for all that attend the rally!

All of the organising committee would like to thank the competitors for their generosity, the spectators for the cooperation and the marshals for their tremendous support of this event. **We could not run the event without you!**

WHO CHOSSES THE NUMBERS

Cars start the rally at one-minute intervals. The organising committee undertakes the seeding of crews. When an entry is submitted, the crew is asked to provide details of their results during the last three years. This information is then used to form a seeding and once the entry is finalised, numbers are allocated accordingly. The favourites are seeded at number one. Theoretically, the cars should remain in number order throughout the day. However, emergency servicing can sometimes cause a car to run late and you may find that the cars drive past you in a slightly different order.

HOW IS A RALLY ORGANISED

The easy answer is "a lot of hard work by a band of enthusiasts". Planning for next year's event will begin the week after this event has finished, although in reality, some groundwork has already been undertaken. Key requirements are identified and personnel are appointed to undertake certain necessary duties.

Throughout the planning stage, the County Councils, Highways Authority and the Forest Enterprise are kept fully informed of the club's intentions. Information is shared to ensure that the event does not clash with intentions of others such as cycling clubs, athletic clubs or even the pre-planned movement of heavy or wide loads on the main roads that the event uses. This has become more relevant with the ongoing construction of the Channel Tunnel rail link.

As the event weekend approaches, the number of people involved in the organisation increases, as does the number of hours that are put in by each of them. When the morning of the event dawns, more than two hundred people will be in place to ensure the smooth running of the Rally of Kent.

WHERE TO WATCH

Regular spectators on the Kent Forestry Stages will be familiar with our usual two 'spectator' stages, in Bedgebury Forest and Kings Wood, Challock. This year, there will be another opportunity to watch the rally, this time at Brands Hatch. More details of where to spectate and the times between which cars are due there will be posted on the website closer to the event.

THE ORGANISING CLUBS

The organising Clubs, Bexley Light Car Club, Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club and Sevenoaks & District Motor Club have a long tradition and rally pedigree. Like all MSA affiliated Motor Clubs, they cater for a wide range of disciplines.

Bexley Light Car Club has organised the Kent Forestry Stages Rally since its inception in 1987, and also runs the Anniversary Stages, a Multi-Use event held at the Longcross vehicle test track.

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Maidstone & Mid Kent Motor Club organises a National Championship sprint at Lydden circuit, as well as autotests, trials and scatter rallies.

Sevenoaks & District Motor Club organises the Kent Rally (not to be confused with The Rally of Kent) which is a Road Rally, plus Race Meetings, Twelve Car Rallies, Autotests and similar events

If you are interested in motor sport and wish to become involved as a competitor, organiser or marshal, we will be only to pleased to point you in the right direction. Whilst always keen to increase our own membership, there are many good clubs in Kent and we will be happy to direct you towards your most local club so that you are able to easily attend club evenings.

For further information, click on the links to the individual clubs' websites

Without the support and assistance of other clubs in Kent and elsewhere, this event could not take place.

There are many other people and organisations that we are indebted to for their assistance both today and in the build up to the event. They are (in no particular order):

Formula Rally

Ashford Borough Council

Forest Enterprise

Lattice Properties Ltd

McArthur Glen plc

Barretts of Canterbury

Octagon Motorsport Ltd (Brands Hatch)

Kent County Showground

The MSA

Kent County Constabulary

Kent Highways

Friends of King's Wood

Friends of Bedgebury Forest

All rescue units

All radio crews

All doctors and paramedics

The people of Kent