

LAKE MACQUARIE CLASSIC 3 –

A Touring Road Event promoted by the MG Car Club

And directed by Martin Reeves

Under ominous skies, 12 competitors gathered at “Reeves Rally Headquarters” on Saturday June 30th, for the running of the third “Lake Macquarie Classic”.

As has been the case previously, Martin had something special planned for us a 5pm, that’s right, a **pm** start time.

Competitors began to gather around 3pm and whilst some scrutineering of the vehicles was carried out, one of the more anticipated arrivals, Peter Fraser (known as the “noodle man”), a third generation local rally enthusiast, kept quite a few cooking enthusiasts entertained by making noodles from scratch, prior to jumping in his Granddads (Ron Fraser’s) Peugeot 404 for a run in the classic.

The drivers briefing was typically ‘Martin’ brief. Martin’s son seemed to be suggesting to Dad that he mention “the water on the road”. Martin seemed happy to leave that hanging in the air.

As the crews made their way to their cars, those ominous skies gave us our first little dose of a scattered shower, something that would be repeated often throughout the night.

We made our way around the Lake to Speers Point turning south onto the Five Islands Bridge, then right into Teralba and along the north side of Cockle Creek. Remember, that “water on the road” mention from Reeves Junior, well, what wasn’t told to us was the condition of the causeway on Wier Road. Now let me assure you, looking at it from the cosy interior of the M Coupe, it looked just a touch menacing. However, we made it and therefore so did everyone else as they all had more clearance than us, I reckon.

We then continued through Barnsley and into West Wallsend for a little detour through the back streets, then up to Cameron Park across the Link Road and into Minmi before a drive through Blackhill.

Martin had mentioned we would not get all the passage control boards, none of us got the one in Blackhill as it had been removed some people will take anything as a souvenir.

We then made our way down to Thornton and where we were instructed to “KR on overpass join highway, move immediately to left lane on highway” unfortunately a few competitors just could not get left and missed the TL into Beresfield. That was a shame as that meant they missed the manned passage control that one of Martin’s little helpers, Howard McLean, was at. As well as a signature, Howard also had five trivia questions for us.

We then had some interesting navigation around the back of Beresfield to Woodberry including a ‘*turn left*’ onto a “*no through road*” in small print “*for vehicles over 8 metres*”.

We ended up going through Nelsons Plains into Seaham and turned onto East Seaham Road to find ourselves on Lime Burners Creek Road and then headed into Glen Martin.

Around 100kms in, Martin advised not to turn right towards Thalaba as there were no church services on this night.

After 113kms we were met by Martin’s other on road helper Col Bray in Dungog and he also asked us a series of trivia questions.

We were instructed to have a coffee break at the Bank Hotel, Dungog. This was appreciated by all the teams as those scattered showers were still around and it was time for a well deserved break.

Soon after, it was full on concentration as the eastern side of Bingleburra Mountain was shrouded in thick fog and yep, that was the side the visual route check was on.

We continued down to Gresford and then took the Singleton Road through Elderslie, Rosebrook and into Lorn. We crossed the New England

Highway at the Heritage Motors car dealership and onto some roads that I'd never seen before, before coming out on the Kurri – Maitland Road.

On to another road I'd never used, Dagworth Road which took us over to Buchanan across George Booth Drive and back towards West Wallsend.

Just as I was beginning to wonder if we would have to cross the causeway on Wier Road again, Martin took us out to Barnsley (pew) then down a winding road into the back of Teralba to cross the Five Islands Bridge to Speers Point then around the Lake to arrive all safe and sound at Reeves Rally Headquarters.

On behalf of all the competitors, a big thanks to all the volunteers, Howard McLean, Col Bray, Peter Houghton (who swept the event), the CAMS officials and of course, The Reeves Family for their hospitality.

Madelon and I are already looking forward to the fourth edition of The Lake Macquarie Classic next year.

Bernard and Madelon Corbett.