

The Trail of the Gnu Rally

Saturday March 28 2009



Presented by The Calgary Sports Car Club

<http://www.trailofthegnu.ca>

The Trail of the Gnu is a challenging winter navigational rally, round 1 of the Rallywest TSD Rally Championship, and also part of the CSCC TSD Rally Series. The rally will be run under Rallywest rules, which can be found somewhere on www.rallywest.com. Competing teams will be given straight-forward instructions in a standard routebook, as well as some area maps. The approximate length of the rally is 600km, of which no more than 20% will be on clear pavement, with the remaining 80% or more on snow, ice, mud and gravel. There will be a maximum of 250km between fuel stops.

Introduction

Inspired by the challenging nature, long history, and successes of events such as The Thunderbird Rally in BC, and the 50+ years of the Loop Rally in AB, the current generation of The Trail of the Gnu rallies have been reborn with a new, and popular, format. Gone are the navigational tricks and puzzles of Gnu rallies in the past, replaced instead with the challenges of difficult, slippery, and exciting roads. The back country roads in the Rocky Mountain House area of Alberta have given us a beautifully scenic and thrilling location to host this test of rally teamwork.

“The roads you found were outstanding, and the conditions this year made it even better (at least, as far as I’m concerned). The combinations of average speed changes, road choice, and surface conditions made for challenging teamwork and really enjoyable driving. “ *Josh Keatley, Winner of the 2008 Trail of the Gnu.*

Format:

The Trail of the Gnu is a TSD (time speed distance) rally, meaning that teams will be scored on their ability to match, as closely as possible, the given route, schedule and speeds. Regularity stages will have various average speeds for competitors to match, and hidden checkpoints along the route will record the specific times that teams pass by. Penalty points will be assessed for every second early or late. Transit sections will not be scored, but teams will be given a generous time allowance to transit to the start of the next regularity, or fuel stop, etc.

Equipment:

Required: minimum of 1 reflective warning triangle, basic first aid kit (competitors are urged to include emergency blankets), fire extinguisher (2.5lb/5BC or greater recommended). Open cars require a roll bar. If auxiliary lights are mounted, they must be wired such that they are only operable with the high-beams on.

Note: If you are having any difficulty obtaining any of the required equipment, please contact the organizers as soon as possible - we might be able to help.

Recommended: winter tires, tow strap, snow shovel, ice scraper, octane boost for premium fuelled cars (fuel stops in the bush don't always have high octane available), warm clothing, driving lights, map light (or headlamp). For tires, studded with an open pattern are typically a good choice for Gnu, such as Kumho KW19 or Nokian Hakka series, but the basic idea here is that an all season tire is a possible, but likely very poor choice.

The Fuel and Food situation:

If you have special dietary needs, it would be best to take some snack foods with you. There will be some food available to purchase at the designated refuel stops, but choice is limited. The rally will end with an awards presentation and dinner at the Boston Pizza in Rocky Mountain House, across the street from the official rally hotel.

Scoring:

Timing controls will be in regularity stages only, at various unannounced, and hidden, locations. Scoring is one point per second early or late, with a grace allowance of 1 second in either way. With winter scoring, this grace allowance increases depending on the circumstances, such that a competing team will never need to 'catch up' more than 10 seconds per control to avoid collecting points. This is so that if a team were to lose a large amount of time (for instance in a snowbank or after a wrong turn), they would be assessed full penalty for being late at the first control they pass, but then would only need to get 10 seconds closer to 'perfect time' to zero the next check point. For example, if a team were 60 seconds late at the first control, they would be assessed 59 points. At the next control, the team would have anywhere from 'perfect time' to 50 seconds after to pass the control without any penalty. If they did cross at 50 seconds after, then the control after that would be 0 to 40 seconds late for a no penalty points, and so forth.

Scoring reverts to absolute time at the beginning of each leg. This may require habitually slow competitors to forfeit some of their gas or meal time allowance. The organizers may decide to delay sections in order to keep the competitors together. If so, an information control will be set up to inform all competitors.

The maximum penalty that will be assigned at a single control is 300 points (5 minutes) and the maximum penalty for a regularity stage is 600 points (10 minutes).

The team with the fewest points wins, and ties will be broken by the most zero scores, then the most 1 second penalties, etc.

Exceptions to scoring: A competitor coming upon an accident is required to stop and render aid

if necessary (e.g. in case of injury.) In such cases, the competitor should record the mileage in the section, and the time when they stopped as well as the time they restarted, and give a written declaration of this to a rally official. Scoring adjustments will be made in such cases, and the crew should not try to regain the lost time until they reach a sufficiently long break (e.g. gas stop.) Declarations of time lost will also be considered for organizers' errors which make official time unattainable and other discretionary safety concerns.

There will be a light duty 4x4 sweep truck following the rally through every section, able to help competitors recover from mild trips into the snowbanks or ditches. Please try to avoid needing such assistance. Youtube from Gnu 2008: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qydgURcbb4I>

Awards and Classes:

Trophies will be awarded for overall position (1st, 2nd, and 3rd) as well as for the following classes:

Paper: No calculators, rally tables or accessory odometers.

Calculator: Accessory odometers, non-programmable calculating devices that are not driven by a wheel.

Unlimited: Unlimited equipment.

Novice: neither team member having entered more than 5 TSD rallies prior to the start of the competition year and navigation equipment to conform to calculator class.

Officials of the Event:

Rallymaster/Registrar: Eric Grochowski (403) 277-2710 or (403)808-2710, errik1@gmail.com

Co-Organizer: Kris Schofield (403) 466-5747 istarallysport@gmail.com

Schedule:

Friday March 20: Close of early entries. Entries received before midnight on this day are entered in a draw to win a rally prize (details to be released, prize will be awarded at the rally banquet).

Tuesday March 24: Preliminary start order to be determined and released online.

Thursday March 26: 19:30 Novice TSD Rally school, to be held at the Calgary Sports Car Club building (4215 – 80th Avenue NE Calgary), free to all competitors. This school will teach you all the basics to get through the Gnu. Essential for the first time competitor, especially navigators.

Saturday March 28:

8:30am - 10:30am: Registration and Scrutineering, Best Western Hotel, Rocky Mountain House AB.

11:00am: Drivers Meeting and distribution of Route Books

12:00pm: Car '0' start time, rally begins.

8:00pm: Approximate finish time, awards and banquet, Boston Pizza, Rocky Mountain House AB.

Fees and Costs

Entry Fee: \$75 for Calgary Sports Car Club members (or members of other C.A.R.S affiliated clubs). \$90 for non-members. Fees are per team (car, driver, and navigator).

Teams that entered the 2009 CSCC Novice Rally are entitled to a \$10 discount.

Maximum entries accepted: 25. Any entries received above the maximum will be notified by phone and held on a waiting list. If entering late, please confirm by phone. Entry forms are available on the event website.

Mail entries to:

Trail of the Gnu

c/o Eric Grochowski

3128 49 St. SW

Calgary, Alberta T3E 3Y3

Accommodation

Official Rally Hotel:

Best Western, Rocky Mountain House, AB

<http://www.bestwesternalberta.com/hotels/best-western-rocky-mountain-house-inn-and-suites/>

phone: **1-866-303-3100**

Special rates and a block of rooms have been reserved for competitors. Please mention the Trail of the Gnu when booking. The special rate of \$119.95 (reg is \$140) is available for either or both of Friday or Saturday nights (the 27th and 28th of March). Please book before March 18th, afterwards the rooms will be released.

Finally – send Eric an email at errik1@gmail.com to be added to the GNU electronic mailing list, for email updates. Also, check the event official website at www.trailofthegnu.ca for new information and pre-run photos, particularly as the event draws near.