

Targa Tasmania 2015

Team 222: Andrew White / Ashley Yelds
1961 Volvo 122s

Leg Four: Cethana over to Strahan



On Leg Four Targa Tasmania leaves Launceston and heads to the West Coast and an overnight stop in Strahan. Leg Four is the longest of the event, with over 140km of racing, including some of Targa's most famous tarmac rallying stages – Cethana, Riana and Hellyer Gorge. In years past this has been the penultimate leg of the event, ahead of the following final day to Hobart. For 2015 however, there are another two days: one the push back inland to Hobart and then another loop south on day six. Hence, both the approach to the day's stages and end of day checking and tweaking requires a different strategy and the likely final finishing order is yet very much to take shape.

For us, with the dominant theme this year being all dry roads favouring the big horsepower teams, it's not difficult to simply indulge in the exhilaration of charging through the countryside on roads that enthusiasts' dream of – as fast as we can go, with the permission of Police (rather than being chased by them). But apply a little testosterone, and it's also great to measure ourselves to others and see how we compare to similar or not so similar teams doing the same thing. Last year, with an abundance of wet weather days of competition, we secured an 8th Outright set of times, Entering Day Four we're sitting 17th ahead of a bunch of Porsches, 240Z's, Ferraris and big V8 muscle such as a VH Commodore SS and a factory lightweight Ford Galaxie (lightweight being a relative thing: the Galaxie has both the weight and power of municipal power station). Ahead of us is a similar mix of canyon carving Alfa's, Porsche and Mazda turbo's and seriously quick V8's, including of course the low flying Woodward/Gibson Monaro GTS and the magnificent Ulrich Jensen CV8.

The first stage of the day at Mole Creek was unfortunately downgraded to a “drive through”; oil was found on one of the corners early in the stage during pre-road closure checking that would have made it too dangerous to use as a race track for the morning. On then to Cethana, also shortened this year losing one of the long climbing sections of the stage. There we placed 17th, just seven seconds back from the Kent/Snell Falcon 351 GT and the Hammond/Lennox XJS Jag’ V12. On handicap, we came in 2nd, 22 sec’s back from the Ulrich’s and just one second ahead of the Freestone’s Holden.



Germany vs. Oz

The next stage, Castra, saw us back in 3rd place on Handicap five seconds down from the Freestones and five seconds up on the Monaro. Gunn’s Plains saw us again in 3rd, but Riana saw us up to 2nd behind the Freestones, with the Kent/Snell Falcon GT 19 sec’s back in 3rd. The Jensen had seemingly disappeared running second last, their time though impacted by stopping for an accident mid-stage – not their own but



Alfas, Anglias, Falcons and Volvos

another competitor that had fallen off the road. Event protocols are that we immediately stop to render assistance if we are one of the first three crews on the scene of a crash. The organisers will give the Jensen team a “derived time”; one that will not place them unfairly ahead of or behind what they should have expected to achieve on that stage had they not stopped given their performance on the previous sections. As that time won’t be calculated until overnight, their ranking will be artificially incorrect as we move through Leg Four.

Hellyer Gorge saw the familiar pattern of TT 2015 continue: Ulrich’s in 1st, the Freestones 2nd, and us in 3rd, as did the 8.7km Mt Black stage with us just two second

off the Freestones. Charging ahead again in 4th place was the mighty Priddle/Priddle Zephyr, just six seconds off of us. Unfortunately, the Zephyr suffered an electrical fault on the pre-lunchbreak Riana stage; an alternator wire pulled out mid stage, eventually running the battery down. Side of road repairs without wire cutters required Priddle jnr sticking his head into the engine bay down next to the hot engine exhaust



Kent / Snell Falcon 351 GT

extractors to bite off the plastic wire insulation enough to get the connection working. Rolling backwards down the hill got the car started again and more permanent repairs were made at the lunch break. Mt Black saw us take another Subaru WRX Sti – actually it was the same one we passed the day before so the poor buggers will really need therapy after the event is done: a Volvo in GT40 wannabe livery passing them was not an apparition they could put down to stress and “losing” two stages of in-car camera footage will be hard to explain to friends and family. To their credit, as soon as they saw us closing, they got well clear out of our way.

The final stage of leg four, Roseberry, saw our Subie come-uppance though: their teammates caught us in the final part of the 17.5km section, plus our RallySafe device (an in-car GPS tracker and timing apparatus) went into “crash mode” sending out a signal that we’d had an incident and not recording our time. We’ll get that timing issue sorted overnight



“Lightweight” Galaxie

and the organisers have already installed a new RallySafe unit. Our theory is that as the unit triggers high G-force incidents, we must have been generating +1.5 G's in the corners in our little Volvo to set it off.....

End of day then has us in 2nd in Performance Index handicap, but showing an incorrect six minutes off of the Freestones. That will be corrected to about a two-minute gap, and the Ulrichs who are showing as 3rd will be returned to 1st once the Riana derived time is calculated. Similarly, our Outright position showing as 18th

should improve once the timing on Roseberry is sorted, and should put us about 13th Outright, just behind the Gennochio/Hamilton HHDT Commodore that beat us into 10th place by nine seconds in TT2013.

Servicing in Strahan at the end of the day involved careful assessment of our tyres and subsequent rotation front to rear – wear is not as much a factor as recent years due to the harder compound we selected anticipating the dry weather. Our specially rebuilt overdrive, one of the few non-Volvo components in the car, is still not 100% with an occasional reluctance to engage – we can only think that we must be doing things to it that no one else has before, or perhaps the rugged ol' Volvo just enables us to go harder than can be imagined by the experts in the industry. It limits occasionally our top speed which could be an issue on tomorrow's Mt Arrowsmith stage but apart from that all else seems right for now. Next two nights are based in Hobart – hopefully our IT issues will be sorted and we'll get out timely updates of our progress (or lack thereof!)

Overall at end of Leg Four					
Pos	No	Crew	Vehicle	Total Penalty	Gap to Prev/First
1	215	Freestone Freestone	Holden 215	16:23	
	222	White Yelds	Volvo 122S	22:45	06:22 06:22
3	383	Ullrich Ullrich	Jensen CV8	01:09	02:24 08:46
4	449	Woodward Gibson	Holden Monaro GTS	01:10	00:01 08:47
5	421	Lowe Lowe	Datsun 240Z	03:49	02:39 11:26
6	361	Steuart Steuart	Ford Anglia 105e	04:45	00:56 12:22
7	311	Chugg Williams	MG B GT	06:39	01:54 14:16
8	439	Banks Douglas	Porsche 916	07:49	01:10 15:26
9	367	Appelgren Prendergast	Volvo 122S	10:47	02:58 18:24
10	407	Goodwin Smith	Datsun 240Z	12:45	01:58 20:22
11	303	Moylan Behets	Ford Galaxie Factory Lightweight	13:48	01:03 21:25
12	259	Rochester Rochester	Triumph TR3A	15:05	01:17 22:42
13	438	Ogg Farrell	Alfa Romeo Giulia GTV 1750	16:40	01:35 00:17
14	313	Gover Bryan	Alfa Romeo Giulia Sprint	47:39:00	06:59 07:16
15	255	Priddle Priddle	Ford Zephyr	51:21:00	03:42 10:58