

Agespeed Stages - Wigan
Peter Jackson – Steve Coombes
Ford Escort Mk II

As anyone who follows the rallying exploits of the Jackson Family will know, when on events it very rarely goes easily. This event was no exception. Upon arriving at Mr Jacksons there were still things to do. No fuel in the service van, car not on trailer and Alex just about waking up realising it was Sunday. However, some 50 minutes later the car was loaded and I set off, with Peter and Alex following in the little Micra. We stopped for fuel on the way and all was not well with the Micra. The fan on the engine was on and the little car was struggling. As we were late for Scrutineering I left them at the services looking at the car and continued to Three Sisters with the escort in tow.

I arrived at the circuit to be told that the Micra had stopped on route with a blown head gasket and my driver for the day was stuck near Wigan, just off the M6. With nothing I could do we unloaded the car and I went to park the trailer. During this I stalled the van and couldn't get it started. Of course it was stuck in the middle of the car park. With the van recovered Neil and myself took the car to Scrutineering and of course we were at the back. Time was starting to go against us so I wondered up the queue and managed to talk one of the competitors into letting us jump in, Thanks. Scrutineering passed and Peter arrived just in time to sign on and attend the drivers briefing.

After all that the rally might be the easy bit. No. The first few stages we struggled for grip and lost time to the leaders. We tried different tyres without much success. No matter what we tried we seemed to be on the wrong tyre. A spin on SS5 didn't help costing 8 secs and it got worse on stage 6. Due to leaving our tyre choice to the last minute the front left wouldn't fit as it needed an extra spacer which we couldn't find. We dropped 2 minutes in service (no penalty but lost road position). We were finally on the right tyre for the stage, if we had gone in at the correct time, but it rained as we pulled up to the line and we dropped a futher 13 secs.

Eventually we got our act together and had a steady run across the final 6 stages, apart from the bonnet not being fastened on one side and hampering our view. This saw us climb back to 4th by the end of the day and 1st in class. Not a bad return on a very testing day for us all. Thanks to all involved for helping and keeping us going.

I'm not sure what the next event with Peter is but I'm off to Mull for the first time.

Steve.