

Pendragon Stages

Peter Jackson - Steve Coombes

Car 32 - 12 O/A, 1st Class 4, 1st two wheel drive car.

Despite years of experience navigating this was my first time properly on notes and I must admit to being nervous. The rain on the way to SS1 didn't help as we were on slicks. Luckily there was a delay on the stage and the road dried up enough to give us an advantage on those that had changed to wets.

Our start time came and we were off into the stage. The first stage was a big learning curve as things came a lot quicker than I expected, but I managed to get to the end without getting lost. SS2 was better as we set 8th fastest time. The weeks of preparation on the car were showing as it ran and handled just as intended.

SS3 went ok despite the late KL/C call at the finish. SS4 saw us spin right in front of the event photographers. I must admit looking to see if there was anything we might hit, but we survived. SS5 went well and a bit of luck saw a marshall slowing us down just before a very muddy farm yard. With the notes amended for the mud SS6 went well and we were off to service. This was routine and 20 mins later off to Warcop again.

SS7 & 8 went well as I got into a flow reading the notes. Pete was flying, even to the point of trying to get 7th in the new 6 speed box. Again top 10 times were set and we climbed the leaderboard. I managed to get lost on the way to SS9, but we made it in time (Well it happened to Vatanen in Birmingham). SS9, 10 & 11 were iffy for me on the notes as my learning continued. Pete did ask for the notes to be altered to warn him of something that led to our second off. He thought I was joking when I replied "what off?" I had felt the car get out of shape but was concentrating that hard I didn't realise it was a 4 wheels on the grass job. SS12 was a nightmare for me as I got lost on the notes. Didn't panic, found where we were and carried on.

Service was again a formality as the car continued to run well. The last two stages were excellent and saw us set 7th fastest time on both as Pete went for it. I hope it looked as good outside the car as it felt inside the car. They were by far our best stages of the day and it was a shame we couldn't run them again. A cheer from me as we crossed the finish line meant we had got to the end of an event and I was pleased with how it had gone.

When out on events we never bother finding out our results until the end so you can imagine our surprise at finding ourselves in 12th O/A, winning our class and being the first two wheel drive car. The result was only achievable due to a great team effort. Neil had put in a lot of time prepping the car and it showed in the way it car ran and handled. Not sure whats next but until our next adventure.....