

The Barbara Carter Memorial rally will always be one of my favourites, mainly because it was the first event I won back in 2015. This year a few entries came in from Wales and as well as the top crews from the area the night was looking like a good battle.

The weather was wet. And with the narrow banked lanes in Devon it's always going to be muddy, even if it wasn't wet!

Noise Test, Scrutineering and Signing On went well for all crews except for Car 1 who was a no show and another crew had a navigator struggle to get to the event, so one of the supporters who travelled down from Wales jumped in the silly seat for the night.



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Plotting was fairly straight forward and a lot better than previous years, managed to actually get it all on the map before leaving the start this time!

The route started off in the usual Barbara Carter patch with a short run out along the A3052 to TC1 just off Harpford Common, down to the white just before Newton Poppleford, past the codeboards that's always tucked back in the layby, let loads of us overshoot again! Around the Colaton Raleigh loop and back to the triangles and then into the Stoneyford whites to

TC3. Down through Barbara's fords and down to a large diagram involving slotting in the left around some trees and then back across the road around trees on the other side and then back to the road. Down around Yettington to where Clerk of the Course Peter Barnard was to let crews know there was a tree down blocking the rest of the section, so the section then finished and followed a slight detour to the start of the next section at TC6.

Dan & Nick Darkin (Impreza) were quickest at the start dropping 3:38 with Damian Cole & Michael Gilbey (Mk2 Escort) second on 3:46 and Adrian Beer & Paul Hoad (MG ZR) in third just 1 second behind. Quickest Semi's were Phillip Luxton & Alex Giles-Townsend (Rover 25) on 4:46 with Luke Quinnell & Kayleigh Dingle (MG ZR) second on 12:27 after missing a code board picking up a 5 minute penalty (no fail's in this area, just time penalties). Quickest novices were David Webb & Sophie Louise Buckland (Sirion) on 8:23 with Steve Wellman & Derek Mines (206 GTi) in second on 9:50. The Clubman section of the event (still using the whole route, just not needing a competition licence) saw the last minute paring of Phil Jones & Jamie Mills (Impreza) well ahead dropping 5:11 with Dave Boucher & Chriss Beer (Mk2 Escort) in second on 6:27 and Michael McNaulty & David Bisp (MG ZR) in third on 15:55.

A short section now around the back of Woobury with a few plots with approaches and departs



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defining the correct route around a few loops. Before long it was TC7 just outside of Exton and the end of the section with most crews cleaning it.

A neutral section took crews along the A376 away from Exmouth and to the back of Westpoint showground for the start of the next section. Running around the Holbrook Farm white and down to Hill Barton before heading north to finish next to Exeter Airport. Another hort and sweet section with several crews cleaning it again. Beer/Hoad dropped 14 second though which dropped them down the order and moved Brendan Wellman & Daniel Pidgeon (206 RC) up to third. Unfortunately this is where we lost Mike Saywell & Andy Ballantyne in the 106 Rallye with gearbox issues. The next section saw the next real droppers of the night. Starting just north of Broadclyst running through Ashclyst Forest, past White Down Copse and across to Clyst Hydon, Langford Green and around the Weaver triangles before heading east to Dulford, across the A373 at the Priory and back to the A373 to finish the competitive sections of the first half.

James How & Jake Ramsden (MG ZR) were quickest through dropping just 7 seconds.

Wellman/Pidgeon dropped 10, moving them up to first overall due to previous leaders, the Darkins, losing three minutes looking for a Route Check that was missing for some reason. Cole/Gilbey dropped 13 seconds which moved them up to second just 1 second behind the 206 RC crew.

Luxton/Giles-Townsend dropped 54 seconds in the Semi-Expert class with Quinnell/Dingle dropping 5:19. Webb/Buckland had a great section in the novice class just dropping 53 seconds extending their class lead ahead of Wellman/Mines who dropped 3 minutes. Simon Beecham & Greg Evans (Satria) were quickest Clubmen moving them up to second in class dropping 2:33 with Jones/Mills dropping 5:11 and McNaulty Bisp dropping 17 minutes. Boucher/Beer had a bit of a stinker section picking up 20 minutes of penalties.



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Down to Petrol at Culmpton Services just off the M5 where we lost another crew, Jordan Gullick & Jordan Dziadulewicz with their BMW 318ti playing up, an engine blowing up in their car a week before the event they did a great effort to get it running for the event, but seems like there wasn't quite enough time to iron out an issues.

After topping up with fuel, cleaning off the lights and enjoying the 24 hour McDonalds crews were back out again starting on the motorway bridge just outside of

Westcott. Down towards Bradninch and slotting right onto Strawberry Hill which is used as a trial section on other events. It was pretty muddy and slippery and with the extra addition of what looked like a garden shed dumped half way up it was one of the best roads of the night. Looping around Bradninch and around the large triangle next to Rode Moors through Bunneford Cross around the North of Cullompton and back over the big yumps by Leonard Farm and then through East Butterleigh & Butterleigh before the end of the section just before the A396.

Wellman/Pidgeon & Darkin/Darkin both cleaned the section with Beer/Hoad third dropping just 5 seconds. Semi's saw leaders Luxton/Giles-Townsend drop 1:10 with Quinnell/Dingle dropping 1:42. Novices saw leaders Webb/Buckland drop 1:39 with Wellman/Mines dropping 4:36. Clubmen leaders Jones/Mills extended their lead dropping 1:04 with Boucher/Beer moving back into second in class dropping 2:40 with Beecham/Evans dropping 4:12.

Heading north up the A396 the next section started by Yearlstone Vineyard heading up to Patcott, down the valley past Huntland and back up the hill to Well Town, Way Village and over onto map

191 heading down to Stockleigh English and to the finish of the section just south of Woolfardisworthy, a pretty easy section to clean with just 5 crews dropping time.

A neutral ran down through Kennerleight to TC25 next to Pidsley with the section running around a few mapped triangles and finishing just outside of Crediton, another 'filler' section with just 4 crews dropping time. The next section started just south of Crediton next to Fordton which headed south quickly passing Pathfinder Village, over the A30 and down to a mega not as map section next to Windout Farm. What looks like a steep downhill



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into 30 right into 90 left on the map turned out to be a 30 left into

45 right into steep downhill 45 left into 60 right, 45 left into 60 left, hairpin right, hairpin left, 30 left, 30 right over bridge. All a bit of a surprise under trees with a lot of leaves on the ground! A few crews hear thought they were in Sweden and used the banks to bounce down the hill. Down to the edge of Dartmoor and round a large mapped loop before crossing the top of Dunsford and down to the B3212 to long way. Past Cotley Wood and back across to map 192 with a slot right on the turn to catch some crews out. Around a few loops north of Haldon Forest and to the bridge over the A30 just North East of Shillingford St George for the end of the final section. Unfortunately due to a few timing issues the last three droppers in the last section were lost meaning no positions changed late on.

A final bit of drama with some members of the public involved in a RTC on the run back meaning crews had to take a different route down a yellow which turned out to be one of the roughest roads of the night. A run back around the edge of Exeter and back to Greendale Business park for the finish of the event.

After a great breakfast and a bit of chin wagging with fellow competitors the results were announced and it was time for everyone to head off. A great route put on by Pete Barnard with the help from the Barnard family and other members of Exmouth Motor Club.



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After 3 years of trying we managed to win the event again by 33 seconds, a big thanks to Brendan for driving around the route and listening to almost all of my instructions! Thanks also to SC Performance and Titan Exhausts, both in Taunton for sorting the car out after our long run of bad luck. Well done to all the other crews for a great battle all night. We'll see you again out in the lanes on the Bagger in January!

Daniel Pidgeon, Car 4 – Peugeot 206 RC, 1st Overall