

BLCC's recent commitments to local rally action have been huge with the Begonia last November, our ARC commitments for the Eureka Rally in March and our own Tunbridge Trial along with our Rallying for Steve Novice Trial. Three rallies in 6 months was not something that BLCC planned for last year. When applying in July to host this year's Tunbridge, the Eureka Rally was several months from being confirmed in the Australian Rally Championship. While our club was delighted to assist with the running of a "local" ARC Round, we knew that our resources would be stretched for it and the Tunbridge nine weeks later. We did consider applying for the Tunbridge to be re-scheduled, but dismissed that due to the high risk of losing our grass-roots event. With BLCC's many other activities on and off the track, members can be proud that our efforts ensured that all three rallies ran smoothly. But we won't repeat that intensity anytime soon! The good news for 2018 is that the Eureka is very likely to be in March, so that we will nominate November for the Tunbridge. The rest of this report covers the 2017 Daryl Tunbridge Trial and the Steve Richards Memorial R4S Novice Trial. The two trials used the same Road-book, but the R4S Trial used less stringent CAMS rules and lower entry fees. The event saw rallying return to the goldfields roads around Talbot, with drivers being challenged by different surfaces and track widths – often within the one Section. The navigators had it relatively easy, with 50% route charts and simple map work for the rest. Weather for the evening was dry and 14C, after Severe Weather Warnings had threatened the event for two days before scattering a few light showers on Friday – to top up a few small bog holes around the course. 35 crews started the event, with 23 for the Tunbridge and 12 for the R4S Novice Trial. The latter included four crews from SEAC, Mount Gambier – including the winners and runners-up – with another six crews from HRA contesting their Standard Car Challenge. 27 crews finished the event: 18 for the Tunbridge and 9 for the R4S. Unfortunately, Rob Prosser was the only competitor nominating BLCC as his club, and his night finished after Section 4 with a bent lower control arm. At least two other BLCC members nominated via the HRA for their series points. The event was meant to comprise two runs over 4 competitive Sections totaling 50km with 24km transports (148km total), with roads and cautions chosen to suit standard cars. Unfortunately, someone throwing rocks at competitors early in Section 1 (25km) meant that it was unsafe to allow a second run (Section 5). Many of the 70 people waiting in vain at the Spectator Point were locals, with some commenting that have a fair idea who the offender might be, and that they hope the police get to him before the locals do. Competitors were otherwise happy with the quality of the roads, and our organization. The shortened event meant that most BLCC officials were home before 1am, with competitors not long after then. The Tunbridge required officials to be stationed at 46 course locations, with another 16 people contributing at Rally HQ and/or beforehand. So once again a mighty performance by BLCC members and their families and friends, as well as the many assisting from other clubs.

Particular mention needs to be made of those people contributing for many weeks and months: Clare Bennett; Event Secretary (aka Wonder Woman). Clare took on this role reluctantly, soon after big contributions to three other major events, and not knowing who she'd be working with, nor how much help she could rely on. Arron Secombe; Mentor then Officials Coordinator from May 8. Another outstanding effort in leading our club and recruiting the many and varied officials needed. Arron had originally intended to compete, but then claimed that his car needed too much work after the Mitta Rally on May 6. Simon Pilepich; (Melton Motor Sports Club) Took on the role of Clerk of Course after CAMS rejected my credentials. BLCC will therefore assist MMSC similarly with their 2018 event. Trevor Woods; CAMS Checker, who went above and beyond with detailed checking and mentoring, and patience after two re-routes of the course following DELWP objections relating to a firewood collection area. Thanks also to: Eclipse Ford and Pedders Ballarat; Our two Gold Sponsors enabled us to cover our costs for the event – see below. Please consider them when you next need a product or service that they offer. Fire Logic, Delacombe; waived our costs for re-charging an extinguisher used for a small under-bonnet fire in the Service Park. John Roberts; VCRS Representative on the VRP – facilitated VRP approval for our event when we were struggling to find key officials, and calmed us during the Extreme Weather Warnings Talbot Football Netball Club; Great hosts, who also helped get their community on board Maryborough SES; Provided and staffed our First Intervention Vehicle (FIV) Results for the event are available at <http://www.vicrally.com.au/event/daryl-tunbridge-trial-2017>

Terry Brain Assistant Clerk of Course