

# RALLY SPORT

**London  
to Sydney - the  
background story**

**Porsche Supertest -  
we try the 911L**

**Central Tyre series -  
is it working?**

## THE WRONG MAN WON?

Soren Nilsson has certainly acquired the sort of luck that makes men champions, if the results of the South Swedish Rally, a first-time entry in the European series are anything to go by. Briefly what happened was that he had a five-year old Ascona and thought he would have another go at rallying. The last event he had entered was the Malarallyt in 1975 when he was loaned a Honda Civic by his friend, Lasse Jonsson. On this event he was fifth in his class. Previously he had driven Opel Rally Kadett and Asconas but never with any success at all. He was given number 82, a long way behind the seeded drivers who were reserved numbers in the top-twenty places.

It was a rally of strange events. Practically all the top drivers retired. Both Blomqvist and Eklund, the favourites, blew up their 99EMSs (Blomqvist had been walking away with the event, whilst Eklund had gone off for three minutes and was having to fight back), Leif Asterhag broke his differential with his Celica (at the same time the factory Toyota Celicas were breaking their differentials in the Acropolis!) Lasse Jansson had engine trouble, Jan-Erik Lungren was badly delayed by punctures, John Haugland was stuck using the wrong tyres. Accidents were happening all over the place, on one corner on the fourth stage two Kadett GT/Es rolled at the same place.

At halfway Erkki Temmes found he

was in the lead with his Saab 96. There was no re-grouping, so there was no way he could know what the full extent of his opposition. In fact, Nilsson was only five seconds behind! In the second half of the event Temmes continued in oblivion of Nilsson's challenge. In fact, Nilsson took over the lead on the first stage of the second half, and after two stages was over 20 seconds ahead. Timing became, according to Peter Rushforth, the only British competitor, just a little haphazard. Not only were the watches inaccurate, but wrong times were appearing. In fact by the end of the rally, Nilsson had acquired no fewer than three wrong times! Two of them were spotted, and these appeared to have counteracted themselves. According to the results posted at the finish, Nilsson had taken a most amazing victory from Temmes by some 51 seconds.

The protest time came and went and the results were final. Nobody had noted the times given to Nilsson on special stages 26. Nilsson was given a total elapsed time of 259 seconds, the next best was Temmes at 297. There were several people ten or so seconds slower.

The Swedish championship is being led by Bror Danielsson in his Group 2 "Standard A" Opel Kadett GT/E, ahead of Anders Kullang with his similar car, and then Bjorn Blomqvist (who entered the Scottish) who has another Opel Kadett GT/E.

## PRIVATEERING POLES



Marek Muszynski  
and Jerzy Lansberg.

Last Autumn we ran the curious story about Jerzy Lansberg who was not allowed to win the Warsaw Rally, sponsored by Polski-Fiat, with his Renault 5TS and how that victory went in default to Tomasz Ciecierzynski with a Polski-Fiat 125p. At the time Landsberg's co-driver Marek Muszynski told me not to weep too many tears on his behalf, for things far more important were developing. Judging by recent happenings and by the extent of some future plans, it would seem that the matter of the Warsaw Rally is already long dead.

Landsberg has formed an international rally team with a fellow Pole, Blazej Krupa, with the help of Stomil and with sponsorship from various

sources, notably Marlboro in the case of Landsberg. Landsberg has a variety of cars, not the least being a full Group 4 Opel Kadett GT/E, the same car which Rohrl used when he came fourth (the best non-Stratos) on the 1976 Monte Carlo Rally. He has a Group 1 Opel Kadett GT/E training car, which he also uses in local Polish events. He recently acquired an old Renault 17 Gordini (bought from his friend Krupa), he is acquiring a Group 2 Renault 5 Alpine and he is currently looking for a Porsche. Krupa is less diverse with his cars, but he has a Renault 5 Alpine which we saw on the Zlatni Piassatzi. This brought him, in standard form, fifth place only four minutes behind the Group 2 winning Skoda 130RS of Vlastimil Havel.

The programme of the team is essentially based on European championship events, not just the Eastern events at that. The Monte was entered because the Monte has a very special magic in Poland and is good for local prestige. Landsberg and Krupa then went to Spain and gained fifth and ninth places respectively on the Firestone (Krupa using an old Renault 12 Gordini; Landsberg the Group 4 Kadett). They competed in Bulgaria (second and fifth) whilst their programme now encompasses Antibes, Polish, Danube, San Martino di Castrozza, Tour de France and finally the Warsaw again. Krupa has been promised a 140bhp motor from Renault France which should, in his estimation, make the

car competitive with the Skodas, whilst Landsberg has no particular qualms about returning again to Warsaw. He explained he had already

had his revenge on the Olstyn Rally earlier this year. It was raining hard and he beat the Polski-Fiat team on scratch, fairly and squarely.

## EASTERN CHAMPIONS?

Skoda have achieved incredible results in west Europe with their ultra-competitive Group 2 Coupe: group wins on the RAC and Monte Carlo Rally being remarkable, despite their small engine size of 1300cc. Now it seems they are aiming even higher; at the Peace and Friendship Cup, which is the official Eastern European championship. This is run as an overall championship, open only to drivers who live in the East and this year also only to cars made in the east. For the past two years Krupa has taken the title, driving Renault Gordini! This last qualification has given Skoda an incredible

edge to their opportunities.

There are seven rounds in the series this year, one each in Hungary (Volan), Bulgaria (Zlatni Piassatzi), Poland (Polish), Romania (Danube), Czechoslovakia (Tatra), East Germany (Wartburg) and the Soviet Union (Russian Winter). It is a series heavily dependent on finishing (points go down to the 44th finishing qualifier) and maybe this could be Skoda's weak point. At Zlatni Piassatzi both Blahna and Sedivy retired, leaving only Havel to finish. These cars are identical to the car of John Haugland that we have seen several times in Britain this year.

## NEW ZEALAND

I suspect that rallying in New Zealand will never be quite the same again after their World Championship round earlier this year. Everything that Fiat did was the source of amazement and an eternal suspicion that they were rule-breaking. They only had to change a gearbox during the event to bring out the deepest scrutiny of the rule-books. Strangely enough the antics of the Fiats have not produced the only talking point just lately. There is another nigger in their sport — and a New Zealander at that.

This is Mike Marshall, who doubtless was a nice honest boy until he went to Europe a few years back and learned all the nasty little tricks. Like waiting at the start of a stage until the dust from the previous man has cleared. Few people out there doubted that he would win the recent national Pall Mall One Rally easily with his RS1800, but the way he waited was hailed as the worst anti-sporting behaviour the country had ever seen (barring the Fiat team, of course!).

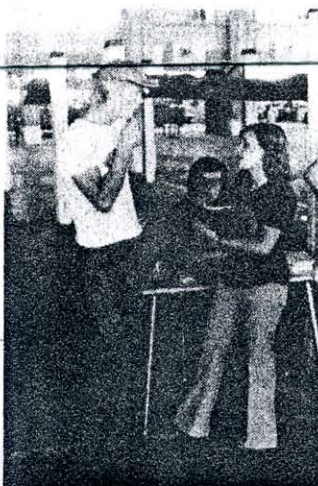
Meanwhile Jim Scott, Vatanen's co-driver who has become some-

thing of a hero since the event, has been telling his story in the local rallying newspaper. He explained that he needed 20 books of pace-notes for the event, that he never became scared as he was busy reading out instructions, that because he was so busy in this way it was difficult when the intercom failed. He stated that Vatanen uses 14 graduations of corners whereas Cowan (with whom Scott had won the Heatway, the South Pacific's predecessor, the year before) only used three. On one stage Ari had decided that the stage was so tight that they would not use notes, and in driving "blind" Ari spun twice, yet equalled Bacchelli's fastest time.

Scott has also been given a different account to that of Ari of the devastating 18 minute "off" on the first night. Scott says that Ari misjudged the surface of the road whereas Ari had told other New Zealanders, reticently, that there had been some trouble with the notes. Jim stated that Ari had been given orders to finish at all costs, and only as a secondary consideration to think of trying to win. As for that famous stage when Ari caught and passed all three Fiats, Jim stated that the sight of the first set of tail lights seemed to set Ari alight, to an even higher level of expertise than he had showed hitherto. When he had caught and passed the third Fiat, Ari simply said: "Now I die happy."

Of Ari himself, Jim stated he felt Ari was a very lonely young man, absolutely devoted to the job of driving rally cars as fast as possible, to the exclusion of everything else. Furthermore Jim reckons he showed little interest in the girls who were attracted to him! He was also very intrigued that Ari felt that others should comply with his own moral standards, that he was upset when mechanics swore when working on his car, and how, when they had just gone skating down the road on the side of the car and the dust and the sparks had settled, all Ari said was: "Oh, what a silly car!" Next month, the Boreham Bugle publishes mechanic Robin Vokins views on Finnish rally drivers who try to murder beautiful rally cars.

MARTIN HOLMES



"Ari Vatanen is not interested in girls."