



2010 International Rally of Whangarei Post-event press conference

Date: 4 July 2010

Present:

Hayden Paddon and John Kennard, Team Green
Alister McRae and Bill Hayes, Proton R3 Malaysia
Brendan Reeves and Rhianon Smyth, Reeves Racing

Welcome to the post-event press conference for the International Rally of Whangarei and we'd like to congratulate Hayden, John, Brendan, Rhianon, Alister and Bill on their success here this weekend.

Kate Gordon

Hayden: three wins in Whangarei, how does this one rate against the others?

Hayden Paddon

This is probably the best of them. I guess the first one, a few guys had problems and they went out and again last year Richard (Mason) had problems and we got the lead. This year we did it on our own from stage one and focused on our own game – so this one is definitely one of our better rally victories we've ever had.

Kate Gordon

You went out with the goal to go hard from the outset - do you feel like you've achieved that?

Hayden Paddon

Definitely; we almost went too hard on the first stage and almost came unstuck half-way through. Other than that it's all gone really well. There were the two stages early today where it was probably the hardest I've ever pushed in the car and it all felt comfortable and easy. So it was a really good confidence builder going in to Finland (Hayden's next event), because that is exactly what this weekend was all about – it's going to be a different ball-park over there and we've just got to carry on this confidence.

Kate Gordon

How many stage records did you get?

Hayden Paddon

Five for the weekend. We were going for the World Rally Car record on Millbrook – but the weather prevented that.

Kate Gordon

Alister; the weather obviously played a pretty key role this weekend; how was your final day, it looked as if you and Brendan Reeves had a good battle?

Alister McRae

It was a good day. The main thing for us was to get the APRC result for Proton, which we have managed to do at last. We've had a few possible good results that have gone wrong towards the end. So the main thing was to get to the end. The weather? The good thing about New Zealand is even when it's wet the level of grip is still good. You get the odd place where there is clay in the corners and it's slippery but generally you can still push very very hard. We had a small problem with the screen misting up, other than that it's been very very good.

Kate Gordon

Excellent for Proton being on the podium here – I guess the plans for Queensland are keep at it?

Alister McRae

We've got three weeks to go back and take stock. It's been very busy for us over the past three months – they've not had the time to work and develop the engine. We've had a few problems but we've got to the end here – that gives them a level base to go from. Hopefully we can be more competitive and push a bit harder at Queensland.

Lance Hastie

Bill; what were you out to try and achieve today?

Bill Hayes

The important thing for us was to remain in the position we were in. Our primary focus is the Asia Pacific Rally Championship this year so we need to get a good result for that. So we needed to control it but also still push on. Obviously we don't want to get these young guys get all the glory so we're trying to keep them honest. But they all did a really good job; we had a really good weekend but the goal was to get through today.

Lance Hastie

Rhianon; controlling the pace in the car, what was your goal today?

Rhianon Smyth

Our main focus was to get on the podium after Brendon being third here last year we wanted to try do that again. We had a few issues, as every one does; I had a fun time holding the car in fifth-gear. But it was mainly just watching the times, build on what we had done and try get in to third.

Kate Gordon

It was backwards and forwards between you and Alister today.

Brendan Reeves

We were quite a bit off Hayden's pace so it was good to have someone to benchmark your times on and have a race to the finish. Had a few tyre issues yesterday and then today had some gearbox issues so it was great to get third.

Kate Gordon

You're top of the Pacific Cup points for the weekend, so what is your plan for the Queensland round?

Brendan Reeves

There will be a few Australian entries for the wildcard I will have to try beat. Then obviously just like here, have to get to the finish and be consistently quick the whole way. But it will be good being back in my car – left-hand-drive and getting some more time behind the wheel.

Lance Hastie

John: in terms of the pace in the car what was your goal today?

John Kennard

What we've found in recent events is that we could lose focus a little bit. Rally New Zealand was really really hard in that by half-way through day one we had no targets. So today we had set ourselves a target of stage records – just for something to keep you focused on the whole thing and keep pushing – but to do it cleanly and get it home.

Lance Hastie

Is it a strategy you will take to other events?

John Kennard

It would be nice to think we could be setting stage records in Finland – but maybe we will set our teammate as a target to start with and work on up from there.

Sarah Byles

Hayden can you confirm you won't be doing any more New Zealand Rally Championship rounds?

Hayden Paddon

No we won't be unfortunately, they all clash with what we're doing overseas.