

News Release

For Immediate Release

June 4, 2015

Team TCI Exhibited Strong Presence at Sol Rally Barbados

The contingent of fans wearing bright blue and white Turks and Caicos shirts were a popular and energetic part of the largest motoring event in the Caribbean – Sol Rally - last weekend in Barbados.

Between local team members and supporters in Barbados, and those who traveled from TCI and abroad, over 50 people were cheering, crewing and simply enjoying the high level racing action that started on the evening of Friday, May 29 and concluded on Sunday, May 31.

The 25th annual event reported record breaking attendance numbers of over 20,000 spectators. Competitors at the event included rally legends like Jeffrey Panton, Simon Jean-Joseph, Paul Bird, and Rodger Skeet. The Turks and Caicos Islands were proudly represented by Stan Hartling and Paul Horton.

Horton entered in the Modified 7 Division with his vintage Ford Mk1 Escort. Horton was running first place in his class until late Saturday when an electrical related issue made the car inoperable. Horton's resourcefulness was evident as he attempted to adapt an alternator from another vehicle but ultimately he was forced to miss the start of a rally stage. As an illustration of the massive support for the rally by the local Bajans, an electrical repair shop opened up at 11pm in order to rebuild the faulty alternator and had the car working for the first run Sunday morning. Horton ran well Sunday with impressive times, but further clutch damage rendered the car inoperable by midday and despite all attempts, the car could not be fixed to finish the final stages. "We gave it everything we could and we were driving a strong rally. We have to accept that this event is very tough on the cars and things will happen that we can't foresee. We gained a strong position against the other competitors and we plan on focusing on that, not the breakdown going forward" said Horton.

It is typical for over 50% of the near 100 teams to be eliminated at some point during the rally either because of a mechanical failure or crashes. Crews can only assist drivers when they are outside of the controlled stage zone, so drivers must always find a way to get the cars to a service zone in the event of difficulty to avoid disqualification.

Hartling ran his BMW M3 in the Super Modified 12 division. Friday and Saturday had Hartling holding third place in the division until excessive torque strain sheered two critical mounts under the BMW's drivetrain. Hartling was able to gingerly transit through two stages before a midday lunch / service break. This avoided a disqualification but being forced to drive at slower speeds meant taking time that moved him to 4th place. The team quickly got a mobile welding company to come and reinforce the suspension right in the pits and remarkably they had the car back at the next rally stage with less than one minute to spare before disqualification. Sunday had them starting in 4th place fighting hard to regain the third place podium position but a major brake system failure left the team driving only with an emergency brake. Attempts to run the final three stages of the rally with only a handbrake proved too dangerous at high speeds so the team was forced to pull out and fix the problem so the car could be run at the final side-by-side races at Bushy Park Sunday evening.

Thousands of people lined the stands at the newly refurbished Bushy Park facility that recently hosted the Global Rally Cross, an event that included racing greats such as Ken Block, Lewis Hamilton and the crew from the hit TV show "Top Gear" .

In the crowd cheering team TCI, was Hon. Galmo (Gilly) Williams and family. Hon. Willams expressed amazement at the sheer energy that the event creates for the residents and the participants and can now appreciate the benefit of seeing an organized presence of motorsports in TCI. His company, Bambarra Rum, was a key sponsor and they have pledged to remaining involved in the TCI racing program in future years. "Having Hon. Willams see first hand how impactful this sport is in Barbados has been a tremendous lift for the club that Paul and I would like to see become a reality someday in the Turks and Caicos Islands." stated Hartling. "A TCI racing program has the potential to benefit the country in so many ways, from skills development for local youth, to the economic impact that hosting racing events can have on the local economy, not to mention the sheer fun that participating or watching events like this can offer to local residents. Way to go Team TCI! Until Barbados 2016!"

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For more information contact Stan Hartling at stan.hartling@hartlinggroup.com or contact Joan Hagan on [649.232.0982](tel:649.232.0982) to arrange an interview.



Figure 1 - Sol Rally Team TCI



Figure 2- Sol Rally Team TCI



Figure 3- Sol Rally Team



Figure 4- Sol Rally Team TCI



Figure 5- Sol Rally Team



Figure 6- Sol Rally Team TCI