

# Enka-fill Alpine

Final round of the Australian Rally Championship  
Bright, Victoria, November 24 and 25, 1984



November 2, 1984

No. 7

## THREE WAY WAR WILL DECIDE CHAMPIONSHIP

Ninety of Australia's fastest rally drivers will face the starters flag in the 1984 Enka-fill Alpine, the final round of the 1984 Australian Rally Championship.

Centring on the township of Bright in the foothills of the Victorian Alps on the weekend of November 24 and 25, this years event will see the culmination of a whole years rallying for three of the major competitors in the event.

After following the Championship trail since late March, Melbournian David Officer, Sydneysider Ed Mulligan and Canberrian Greg Carr have to battle 700 kilometers of the Alpine to decide who will wear the crown of Australian Champion for 1984.

Never has there been a closer finish to a major Australian title.

Officer and his wife-cum-navigator, Kate have fought against all odds in every major state in the nation to amass enough points in the previous four rounds to be in contention for the title.

Manager of a Mini Wrecking yard, Officer has done his rallying the hard way. Starting off in a Morris 850 in 1975, David worker during the day in a parking station, and rapidly earned the name "Dinta", a name which has held true throughout his rally career until recently. Swapping the faithful but unreliable Mini for a more conventional Mitsubishi Galant in 1979, Officer soon became a name to be reckoned with in Victorian rally circles. Fast when he was going, David lived up to his nickname and saw many events pass him by whilst his car was sitting on its roof.

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Officer's driving talent matured rapidly and by 1983 the twenty-eight year old found himself in third place for last years title.

Always determined to do better, David and his then fiancée, Kate Hobson, really showed the world their mettle and came home first outright in the first round of the Championship this year.

A consistent string of second and third places, marred only by a retirement in the Bathurst round in April, has given him a score of 74 points and a win in the Enka-fill Alpine by this very talented young Victorian will see him achieve a life long goal.

Also needing to win the event to secure the Championship is Canberra's Greg Carr and his trusty navigator Fred Gocentas.

A former member of the Ford backed Rally Team in the late 70's, Carr has consistently proved to be the fastest driver in the country, with wins in the Castrol International Rally (6 times) and the Alpine Rally (5 times) Carr's record speaks for itself. Not only is he one of the best drivers in the country, his car is also one of the best.

After a soul searching 1981, Carr decided to go the whole hog and import an ex-factory Fiat 131 Abarth, an identical car to that which won the World Rally Championship in 1980.

With a little help from his sponsors, Carr has been campaigning the Fiat for the past three seasons with varying degrees of success. Although very fast the Fiat has proved extremely fragile, and has had many problems in the gear box and differential area.

In what will be the Fiat's last event, Greg is desperately hoping for a trouble free run to the victory dais. Australian Champion in 1978 at the wheel of a Ford Escort BDA, Carr has driven nearly all makes of rally cars in his 12 year career.

Starting in a Ford Cortina, then stepping into a Datsun 1600, Carr won many events surrounding his home in Canberra before breaking into the big time.

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In 1977 Colin Bond asked Greg Carr to drive the then new Escort RS2000 for Bond's newly formed Rally Team. After numerous victories in the new vehicle Bond built a works replica for Carr, a 230 brake horsepower RS1800 Escort BDA.

It was in this vehicle that Carr won the 1978 Rally Championship.

Carr exemplifies the modern day rally driver. He is totally professional in his outlook and looks only to one goal - winning.

But then again so does Sydneysider Ed Mulligan who currently leads the Championship. Some say Ed has done it the easy way, in a car that has to win its class, and not outright, to amass the championship points.

But if doing it the easy way means all the effort that Mulligan and his navigator Geoff Jones have put into this years series, then he can keep it!

Mulligan's crew has consistently been one of the best turned out in every event this year.

Driving the Mazda RX-7 that nearly won the Championship in 1983, Mulligan has overcome the odds to be in the position he holds today.

Starting his rally career in 1972 in another Mazda, this time an RX2, Ed's flamboyant attitude has won him a huge following with the spectators.

Progressing from the Mazda to a series of Datsun 1600's into the "ideal" rally car, an Escort RS1800, Mulligan has steadily driven faster and smoother to the stage where in 1982 he was awarded National Classification status by the controlling body, CAMS.

A win for Mulligan in the 1984 Championship depends a lot on what happens to Carr and Officer - a win by either of them will upset plans by Ed and Geoff to enjoy the sweet taste of success at Bright on Sunday, November 25.

No doubt the three way battle of the 1984 ARC will go down in the history books and will be remembered as a classic for many a year.

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