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Written by SWRC

Seed 9 Rally 2009
SWRC final event of series season

This year the reins of the organizer was given over to Pat McMahon as Scott Bottomley is retiring. He will stay on to help out but is glad to see the event go into good hands. Pat made some adjustments and made the event as a night rally as a different format with the help of Dave Belcher as co-organizer.

The competitors were thrilled to be able to use some night driving skills and for some to use their light pods again. There were two Colorado teams coming out to finalize their rally season for some additional points in the SW region and SWRC series. While local teams from California, Arizona and Nevada were working on finalizing their points for the CRS and SWRC series.

The event based out of Jean, Nevada at the host hotel – Gold Strike Casino Hotel. There was as well another event going on simultaneously on the other side of the interstate 15 which was the Best In The Desert Henderson off-road race. So there was a mixing of off-roaders and ralliest at the same hotel. This was a great combination of competitors meeting each other in the same location.

The entry list consisted of:

Doug Chernis/Craig MacNair

Jim Morris/Steve Palimeri

Bill Holmes/Sean Gallagher

Jon Burke/Brain Francis

Will Hudson/Brian Szkowny

Jeff Hendricks/Kris Hendricks

Victor Fagan/Darren Fagan

Chris Palmero/Richard Burden

Jack Szanto/Louie Minette

Jon Rea/Shawn McMahon

John Black/Katainna Pihakari

Chris Moore/Bo Randolph

Jim Robison/Michael Robinson

Jose Angeles/Romulo Castrence

A 14 car field but some really hard nose competition out of this field of competitors! Out if this field came a determine factor of who will win rookie driver and co-driver of the year for the Southwest RallyCup series!

The night started out okay for Bill Holmes but by the time he got back from the first leg of the event stages. He was up in the truck engine compartment and called someone on his phone and said:"It looks like I am done... the head gasket blew." As well as a newcomer Jose Angeles DNF'd after the first stage of the event. The car field now opened up between the battle between Doug Chernis (Racetecnik and sponsor for SWRC) in Open class Subaru and Camaro Jim Morris(sponsored by FoxSHOX / BF Goodrich)

in Group 5 and not far behind was Jon Burke in Open class Subaru (his first time at a SWRC event) and Jeff Hendricks in his Production Mazda REPU. Doug and Jim were winning one or the other stages from each other with sometimes both were hitting top speeds of over 100 mph at the end of the stages. Bill Hudson/Brain Szykowny the only ones in their PGT class, but they were doing so well to get third place overall in the event. Victor and Darren Fagan from Colorado and (a team to keep an eye on for 2010) took fourth place and 1st place in group 2 in their Toyota Celica.

Chris Palermo/Richard Burden(a movie/TV/commercial stunt coordinator) had a great time at the event and he took 2nd Group 2 and tying second with Jack Szanto/Louie Minette who was also in group 2 class. John Black/Kataianna Pinkari came out at the last moment to try and win in the Production class but took second while Jeff Hendricks took first place and a newcomer Jim Robison/Michael Robison took third in Production. They had a awesome time and look forward to next year. Chris Moore/Bo Randolph the other Colorado team that came out took third in Group 5.

Conclusion, Doug Chernis took first place in Open and overall with Jim Morris took first place in group 5 and second overall with Bill Hudson took third overall. The awards were given out at the over 100 year old Pioneer Saloon in Goodsprings, Nevada. Congratulations to all of the teams at the event. Everyone looks forward to seeing the event in 2010 which is moving up a month in November.

See everyone at the Southwest RallyCup Series banquet on January 16th, 2010 at the SpeedZone in the City of Industry, Ca.