

High Desert Trails Rally Poised to Kick Off 2015 California Rally Series Season

Written by Erik Christiansen
Monday, 27 April 2015 20:44

Los Angeles – A record thirty-three cars are ready to get the 2015 California Rally Series Season started off with a high speed contest that takes competitors from valley floor to mountain top and back again. Based in Ridgecrest, CA, the High Desert Trails Rally takes place on Saturday, May 2, 2015 on hard packed dirt roads just two and a half hours north of Los Angeles. Competitors will cover 127 stage miles in just one day, a true test of endurance for drivers, co-drivers and the vehicles. After debuting in 2014 to glowing reviews from competitors, the Sorrell Peak stage is back again, taking competitors on a windy, tree-lined roller coaster ride over Piute Mountain. Also returning for 2015 is the fifteen mile “Power Stage” which offers \$200 towards Pirelli Tires from Streetwise Motorsports to the fastest two-wheel drive and four-wheel drive teams.



After taking a break last season, 2013 CRS Open champion Tingwu Song is getting back behind the wheel of his Mitsubishi Evolution to battle for the overall win. He will face some very stiff competition, including 2014 CRS Open champions John Trucks and co-driver Christopher Fine who are consistently fast in their Subaru Impreza. Last year's High Desert Trails overall winner Todd McAllister will of course be pushing to demonstrate that his win was not a fluke. Bill Holmes and co-driver Sean Gallagher have also won this event outright in their Ford F-150 Raptor. Despite taking some time off from rally, look for them to be setting the pace from the very first stage. Also among the top five seeded competitors are Jason Copt and co-driver Cameron Meng in a Subaru Impreza. They can be blisteringly fast and no doubt will be pushing for the top podium position.

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In the popular CRS-2 class, home to small displacement two-wheel drive cars, last year's CRS-2 Season Champions Markus and Alicia Saarinen will be competing for the first time at High Desert Trails. The team is consistently quick in their well prepped Mini Cooper. The husband and wife team will face stiff competition from veteran competitors Brian Scott and co-driver Brent Ellzey in their Datsun 240Z. Scott and Saarinen traded stage wins at the last CRS event of 2014 (Prescott Rally), but mechanical gremlins cost Scott a chance at the win. The other team to watch in this class is Pete Pollard and co-drive Seri Traver in their Honda Civic. Pollard not only won the CRS-2 class at High Desert Trails in 2013, but he won the Power Stage outright, beating not just all the other two-wheel drive cars, but also all the turbocharged four-wheel drive Subaru!

Chrissie Beavis and co-driver Mathew Johnson are the current favorites to win the two-wheel drive, production based Performance Stock (P-Stock) class this year. A flat tire on the first stage cost them dearly at the last CRS event of 2014, but a clean run by this experienced team should see them battling for the overall two-wheel drive win in their Volkswagen Jetta.

CRS Open Lite class consists of normally-aspirated four-wheel drive cars, although it is not unusual to see fast drivers mixing it up with the Open cars. Daniel and Rainbow Wells are the top picks in this class with their Subaru Impreza.



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The High Desert Trails Rally was first run in 1973 on roads to the Southeast and West of Ridgecrest, CA. This year's event features over 127 stage miles in a one-day compact format. Located just two and a half hours north of Los Angeles, the competitor and spectator friendly format makes this a perfect season opener for the California Rally Series. For more information on the High Desert Trails Rally, visit <http://highdeserttrails.com> .

The California Rally Series is the premier performance rally championship in the southwestern United States. The Series incorporates events from various sanctioning bodies in order to create a meaningful regional championship for its members. The Series celebrates more than 40 continuous years of performance rally, making it the longest running rally series in the United States. To learn more about the California Rally Series visit www.californiarallyseries.com and follow @crspress on twitter.