

California Rally Series Heats up at Thrilling North Nevada Rally

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Los Angeles – The back-country roads of northern Nevada set the stage for the California Rally Series as fifteen teams contested the North Nevada Rally July 6 & 7, 2012 covering over one hundred miles of competitive stages. The first day featured a set of smooth gravel roads near Lovelock, NV as cars raced into the night. The next morning the rally moved northwest to the fast and tricky roads outside of Gerlach, NV. Twelve teams made it to the finish on the final day, ending just before sunset.

Locals Alex Rademacher and Jeana Yi took top honors on Friday night, winning the production-based four-wheel drive CRS-GT class and besting the entire field in their Subaru Impreza RS. Alex has run this event every year since its inception in 2008 and his knowledge of the roads paid dividends in the darkness Friday night. They fought a tight battle with Leelyn Pritchard and Logan Mineer, who were also competing in a Subaru Impreza. Pritchard/Mineer were only 13 seconds behind after the first five stages when they went off the road and rolled on stage six. The team was uninjured, but their car was too badly damaged to continue. Rademacher/Yi nearly suffered the same fate on Saturday when they planted their car about ten feet down off the road on the day's fourth stage. They were eventually able to get the car extracted, but not after losing well over an hour. Ray Piloto, also driving a Subaru Impreza, ended up taking the CRS-GT class win on Saturday in his debut event.

The always popular small-displacement two-wheel drive CRS-2 class saw plenty of action all weekend. In the dark on Friday CRS veterans Chuck Wilson and Brent Ellzey scored the maximum points in their Ford Escort. Brent Hercelinsky and Alex Orozco finished less than thirty seconds behind in their Suzuki Swift to claim second. Saturday only competitors Erik Christiansen and Amy Floyd managed to take the honors on Saturday in their VW GTI, with Wilson/Ellzey scoring second place points.

P-Stock, the production-based two-wheel drive class once again came down to a battle between the Acura Integra of Sarkis Mazmanian and the Ford Ranger of John Black, who have been in close competition all season. Each driver paired with a new co-driver for this event: Mazmanian with Michael Mazmanian and Black with Marra Estep. Friday saw Black/Estep take the class victory after the Mazmanians suffered a setback on the very first stage. The tables were turned on Saturday, however, and the Mazmanians took the victory by only 14 seconds after trading stage times all day long!