

## Rally Colorado Delivers Excitement as the California Rally Series Championship Heats Up

Written by Erik Christiansen

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**Los Angeles** - The late spring air in the mountains of Northwest Colorado was filled with the sound of rally cars last weekend as the town of Rangely hosted Rally Colorado for the fifth consecutive year on June 5 and 6. There could not have been a more welcoming venue for the return of competition in the California Rally Series this year. The event started with a parade through the downtown business district, and featured a spectator friendly super-special stage at the end of each day's competition. For many, it signified a return to normal after a forced hiatus as teams displayed their cars for fans at Parc Expose, and even small details like time cards were back in use. Consisting of almost 140 smooth, twisting, and undulating stage miles, the rally counted as a triple-points event (Coefficient 3) on Saturday and a coefficient 2 on Sunday for the California Rally Series Championship.



The large-displacement two-wheel drive CRS-5 class was perhaps the most exciting of the

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weekend. Peter Guagenti had trouble here on the first day last year, but he piloted his BMW flawlessly through the 2021 stages to get the class win on both Saturday and Sunday. The victory vaults him into the class lead ahead of 2019 champ Andrew Cowan. Cowan's VR6 powered VW Jetta took him to second place on both days. Meanwhile Bret Hunter came into the event leading the class, but mechanical trouble on the first day with his brand new Ford Fiesta caused him to slip back to third place in the points race. He has a narrow 19-point lead ahead of Rob Shibao, who returned to rally after a long break and teamed up with rookie co-driver Bandon Panek.



In the small displacement two-wheel drive CRS-2 class, Scott McCarty's Subaru BRZ was the only vehicle to complete all the stages over the weekend, collecting second place points on Saturday and the class win on Sunday, good enough for third place in the championship. The class win on Saturday went to Tim Wickberg and co-driver Matthew Trott, but unfortunately mechanical issues with their Subaru BRZ forced them to retire early on Sunday. Despite the DNF, they came out of the weekend at the top of the leaderboard, displacing Julien Sebot whose Ford Fiesta failed to complete the first stage. His wasn't the only vehicle in this class to succumb to Saturday's stages. Radoslaw Wlodarczyk, Erik Christiansen, and Alex Ramos all ended their day early on Saturday, with all but Ramos restarting on Sunday.

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