

## Totem TSD Rally #2

Reclined on the sofa, after a satisfying summer barbeque, I felt at ease. In retrospect, this should have been a sign. My son, Paul, opens the DVD player and inserts a disk. "What's this", says I. "Just watch", says he. The opening credits for "Dust to Glory" play and we are assaulted by 1000 miles of the roughest and dustiest travel imaginable. Yes, Ensenada to who knows where in Baja California in thirty hours or less. At the end, Paul pipes up, "What do you think?" I say; "About what? "Wouldn't you like to do that?" Paul says enthusiastically.

Paul knew that I had played around with off-road motorcycles years ago and figured that he might still find a nerve or two left that would still respond to that kind of excitement. I suggested that something closer to home may be more reasonable and left it at that.

Scene skip to early November. I find in my email inbox a message from Paul.

Hey just found this on the net thought it sounded kinda cool and i wanted to save the email address so i am sending it to you. so i can get it on our computer.  
[http://www.rallybc.com/archives/2005/2005\\_Totem.htm](http://www.rallybc.com/archives/2005/2005_Totem.htm)

think it would be pretty cool to do wanna navigate for it? PLus its in your old stomping ground of Cache Creek cheers paul

I opened the link. It connected me to the RallyBC website. In spite of the lack of punctuation and capitalization, Paul's message was pretty clear. He wanted to enter the Totem Rally, Cache Creek to Clearwater and back again, in all probability, the hard way. I wasn't sure whether he was just yanking the "old man's" chain or whether he was serious, so I played along. I replied in the affirmative with provisos.

I knew he wanted to run his Jeep YJ in the event. He has spent considerable time and effort, not to mention expense, in getting the



Jeep to good off-road capability. I just wasn't sure that this type of vehicle would be suitable for a "time speed distance" winter rally. I told Paul that we would have to inquire about this rally and its suitability as a starting point for beginners such as ourselves and whether the Jeep would even be suitable for this venture. We made inquiries to Brian Carriere and Gil Stuart of IRC, Paul Westwick of RallyBC and others in the BC rally community. To a person, they were enthusiastic about having absolute novices enter this event. While they suggested that the Jeep wasn't the ideal vehicle for this event, it should at least finish.

Given such encouragement, the die was cast. We were committed. An email confirmation from Paul stated we were entered and our names showed up on the web site as entrant number 25. Cache Creek, here we come!

I had spent about three years as a resident of Cache Creek. I knew the country around there very well as the work I was doing involved maintaining environmental monitoring sites located in the surrounding area. I was interested in seeing how the community had changed in twenty-five years. I also knew from personal experience, that this was a great area to improve ones winter driving experience. Paul could use that as he had learned to drive on Vancouver Island, and as such hadn't the opportunity to develop winter driving skills as I had on the prairies. I was looking for any excuse to justify this endeavor, if not to myself at least to my wife.

We arrived in Cache Creek at about 1:30 on Friday afternoon. The Rally was scheduled to start of Saturday morning with registration and a novice session slated for Friday evening. This provided an opportunity to show Paul around and to test his winter driving abilities. I knew a loop from Cache Creek north through the Hat Creek Valley and back to the Trans Canada highway south of Ashcroft. This track provided just about every driving condition that we would likely see during the Rally and Paul handled it well. I felt we were ready.

Registration and tech inspection went smoothly, with the exception  
*(Continued on page 6)*

