

Alcan 5000 Rally entries and support growing

- For immediate release -

Kirkland, WA: May 21, 2002. Alcan Rally organizers today announced new 2002 support from Red Bull Energy Drink and Volvo Cars North America. Red Bull will supply product for all participants in this rugged 4400-mile event. Volvo will host the Alcan awards dinner in Jasper, Alberta August 22 and provide a Cross Country wagon use by for Don Beck's Toolbox Productions of Los Angeles. Toolbox is creating a 2002 Alcan 5000 Rally program for *Speed Channel*. At least two other Volvos are entered, including a team of reporters from Forbes magazine.

So is Volvo a good fit for the demanding Alcan 5000? Absolutely, says chairman Jerry Hines. "My first thought when Volvo was mentioned was our 1993 Alcan Vintage Rally: Canadian Garry Sowerby took second place that year in the same Volvo 245 wagon he drove around the world for a Guinness Book record in 1980" (26,738 miles in 74 days). 2002 Alcan product sponsors to date also include AlpineStars apparel, StonGard headlight protectors, and MSR off-road apparel. Arctic Motorcycle Tours of Whitehorse (<http://www.arcticmoto.com/>) will assist with cycle support.

The 33 teams entered so far hail from as far as Maine, Yellowknife and Milan, with at least 2 cycle entrants from New York. Experience varies from couples looking for an adventure vacation to veterans of events like the Australian Safari, Baja, Dakar, La Carrera Panamericana, One Lap of America, Mille Miglia and TransAmazon. 2002 Alcan Rally classes include vintage vehicles (like a 54 Mercury Monterey and 67 Alpine-Renault), motorcycles (like the BMW 1150GS Adventure and KTM Adventure R), and "unlimited" (where a popular choice is the Subaru WRX).

Teams will have a full day off in Yellowknife to enjoy the sights. Locals have planned a "show and shine" the evening of August 20, including vehicle display, car washes, hamburgers, and an "Arctic Craze". "The definition of 'Arctic Craze' is still sketchy", says Alcan organizer Hines, "but we think it includes a disk jockey and/or 'bungee running'". Well, as Brock Yates is fond of saying, this is motorsports not rocket science...

The event will start at 8am Wednesday August 14, from Carillon Point on the Kirkland waterfront. The public is also invited to see vehicles on display during a pre-rally orientation session Tuesday afternoon August 13. This will be held from 1-3pm at Cafe Veloce (<http://www.cafeveloce.com/>), a local restaurant celebrating vintage Italian motorcycles.

For more information:

Rally Details, Entry List, History, Itinerary, etc: www.alcan5000.com

General Information: Jerry Hines (425) 823-6343 or jhines@eskimo.com

Film and TV: Don Beck (310) 477-1799 or don_beck@toolboxproductions.net

Alcan 5000 Rally motorcycle class gains momentum

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Kirkland, WA: April 2002. Over the last 18 years the ALCAN 5000 has established itself as an automotive endurance event like no other in North America – and while the starting gun is still four months away, interest in this year's inaugural motorcycle challenge is gathering speed.

Apparently, the world of adventure motorcycling has been crying out for a challenge like this. Entrants, sponsors, and some exciting media developments are stacking up.

And so on August 14, 2002, 20-plus half-crazed, adventure-starved, largely privateer dual-sport endurance riders will twist their wrists for the first of 4500 miles through the Great White North. Joining them will be the same number of "normal" Alcan Rally teams, in vehicles ranging from a 1954 Mercury Monterey to 2002 Subaru WRX.

Film and TV coverage is being handled by Toolbox Productions of Los Angeles, who are producing an hour television program for air on the Speed Channel. Toolbox is also running four bikes, including BMW's new endurance beast – the R 1150 GS Adventure. "We want to show what it takes to ride 4500 rugged miles in nine days – from bike preparations before the event to back road rally stages to 500 mile helmet hair," laughs Don Beck, CEO of Toolbox.

Other sponsors so far include MSR off-road apparel, Alpinestars apparel, Arctic Motorcycle Tours, and StonGard headlight protectors.

"This isn't a full-on speed race but a contest of endurance, consistency, judgment and skill, so nearly anyone with adequate touring experience can participate. Unlike DAKAR, or even the BAJA, the ALCAN 5000 is an event within reach of the determined adventure rider," explains rally chairman Jerry Hines.

In fact, riders are being encouraged to be self-reliant for the most part. Certainly help will be administered if a support vehicle comes upon a marooned motorcyclist fending off a polar bear, but individual service crews are NOT allowed per the event's "level playing field" philosophy. "That's part of the adventure," muses entrant Jorge Carbo, "preparing yourself for those no-one-could-have-conceived-it-happening-while-in-the-lower-48 kind of episodes."

Indeed merely getting up to Yellowknife in Canada's Northwest Territories and back on a motorcycle is shaping up to be a feat in itself. Which, of course, is why the motorcycle class now becomes part of Alcan's 18-year-old tradition: "New challenges!" says Hines.

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Alcan 5000 Rally to visit Yellowknife in 2002

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Kirkland, WA: October 2001. With summer still in full swing in the “lower 48”, 40-plus vehicles will depart Kirkland on Wednesday August 14, 2002 for autumn in the far North. The occasion is the 15th Alcan 5000 Rally, an event five times as long as the well-known Baja 1000 and covering terrain most of the world will never see.

Teams will drive 4,400 miles from Kirkland Washington to Jasper Alberta, by way of Hyder, Skagway and Whitehorse with one day “off” in Yellowknife NWT. Though 600-mile days are enough of an accomplishment in a car, this event will also offer it’s first ever motorcycle class. Why? “For the same reason we created the Alcan Winter Rally in 1988 after 4 years of summer events - new challenges”, says Alcan chairman Jerry Hines. “We were approached by veteran cyclists who thought North America was ready for this sort of event, and were lucky enough to recruit help from some Alcan veterans with substantial motorcycle experience.” Hines will be assisted by southern California residents John Alkema and Dyrck McClellan, whose motorcycle credits includes Mexico to Canada rides, Costa Rica, many years of Mexico events, Egypt’s Rally of the Pharaohs, and the Incas, a 6,000 mile South America event.

The Alcan Rally has always reflected the changing face of the US auto market. Alcan was dominated by Audis, Mazdas, and Subarus in the 80’s, but by the mid 90’s over 80% of teams had moved to sport utility vehicles, with numerous manufacturer entries. A fast-growing segment of today’s cycle market is “dual-sport” bikes, and the 2002 Alcan is targeted at these. Such bikes are at home both on main highways and forest roads, and should be well suited to the variety of terrain and conditions expected. John, Dyrck and Jerry completed course survey in late August of 2001, and were encouraged to find that a Harley Davidson group attempting to reach Yellowknife one week before had to stop well short, with 90% of the group arriving on a bus. “Sort of throws down the gauntlet, doesn’t it?” one of the trio observed.

The event will start Wednesday August 14 from Carillon Point near downtown Kirkland, and finish 9 days later at the Royal Canadian Lodge in Jasper Alberta. The \$2500 entry fee (\$2250 for cycles) includes banquets and accommodations, and a 2-day Inside Passage ferry cruise can be added at extra cost. Rental Kawasaki KLR 650’s are also available for those who don’t care to transport their own motorcycle to and from Seattle. For the latest details and entry list see the event web site at www.alcan5000.com, or call Jerry Hines at (425)823-6343.