

## BAMBINA 2023

### Bambina day 1 (delayed)

My laptop threw a wobbly and I gave up so here goes again.

OTG (out the gate time ) of 7.45 a.m.met, and away went to SS2 , our first stage of the day.

The night before (Friday) David's gps (female) had taken us directly there from the pub 11mins - great!

But this morning she decided to take an hour long route. David powered up his laptop and retrieved the situation.

So we timed SS2 and then SS4 (without moving).Fleetlink continued to work a dream - well sort of- I could initiate calls but no-one could actually ring me. But Peter Martins 'magic hands' sorted that out quick smart.

An aside, we did have an occasion of a genuine 'pocket dial', when I had to retrieve the handset from right under someone's bum.

As usual our time to our next set of stages SS6 and SS8 was somewhat tight but we made it almost on time.

No problems today we found FF and FC painted on roadway everywhere we needed them.

We all went back to Kentish Hotel in Waiuku again.

A brief report at this stage, a more detailed summary will be in the Epilogue which I shalt write one I get home.

## Day 2 - Sunday,

We had 3 stages today SS9 and SS11 in the morning and SS13 in the afternoon.

This necessitated an OTG time of 6.30 am (and an out of bed time of 5.45 AM - I really am getting too old for this lark!

After refueling the vehicles using my gps this time (good old Rodney) not only was it dark, but then the fog descended!! And how. Worse than that Rodney decided to bring us in to the mid point of the stage so we were having to drive over half the stage. Yuk.

At least we did not need to move again which sort of made up.

But wait - there's more. Our time to get to our afternoon stage was 'shall we say' EXTREMELY tight and once again Rodney, bless his soul, took us into the mid point of the stage with road closure already in effect. BUT WE MADE it. Setting up FF and FC both in record time.

But here again Wait there's more!

We once again had a rogue vehicle driving wrong direction through the stage and it was decreed that 'we cannot guarantee the safety of competitors' so the stage was cancelled - after all our good efforts/

So we are back in Waiuku - I take David to the airport tomorrow and will slowly make my way home.

When I do my Epilogue later in the week I'll give more detail including our accommodation

## EPILOGUE

Well we did it AGAIN.

This will be a rather more fulsome record than previously provided.

All home again safe and sound.

### PREAMBLE AN OVERVIEW.

We were to provide a start timing crew with Poko as Post Chief, and a finish crew with myself as Post Chief.

My team (David, Denise, Brandon and myself) all worked very well together but Poko did have some problems not just getting the numbers but difficulty (insubordination?) too – apparently.

Poko had to travel 'the long way around SH35 to get to their base at Huntly, I had to fight my way out from here via Whangamata, Waihi, Paeroa and thence Auckland nearly 4 hrs.

As it happened we never actually got to see each other in person so this, of necessity, is from my own point of view.

### TIMELINE

Although my crew had been 'set in concrete' for well over a month not so for Poko.

At 10.30 PM on Thursday she rang with news of more people pulling out so I gave her a couple of names, ph numbers etc and said that if necessary we could go through my 'list of willing helpers' on Friday if really necessary.

At that stage we planned to meet at 'gear pickup' in Pukekohe Friday afternoon.

Not knowing just how long it would take me I left early (early for me is 8.30 am -I am retired) and got to Auckland Airport in plenty of time to collect David (Chief) after his flight from Christchurch.  
Thanks for making the effort Chief.

We then headed for gear pickup. said hello to all and sundry, had coffee and cake. I had agreed with Poko that if she ended up too late to collect her gear then I would come back and take it to our accommodation.

So we then headed for and settled in to Kentish Hotel where we were to stay for the next 3 nights.  
We then visited the site of our first stage the next day - the intention being to avoid any problems next morning - yeah right. Denise and Brandon visited us that night again to ensure we were all on the same page.

Out the gate (OTG) Sat at 7.45 am, did our jobs, a quick trip over lunchtime for the afternoon ones.  
Back to the pub that night (all of us this time) with an out of bed time of 5.45 and an OTG of 6.30, so in the dark, with fog - driving was not easy - yep we were late but only marginally so. Another quick trip over lunchtime and once again Rodney (our Navman GPS) took us the shortest route which was from the stage midpoint - not my preferred option.

Regretfully a rogue vehicle put paid to the running of that stage so we headed for the finish at Pukekohe Park Raceway. After waiting around for about an hour and a half with nothing happening we went back to the pub again.

Monday morning OTG 9 am dropped Chief at Airport.

Now some specifics.

## ACCOMODATION.

David and I stayed at Kentish Hotel in Waiuku, the 'oldest pub in NZ'

its current license was originally issued way back in 1851 or thereabouts it has been upgraded over the years, but remains a typical country pub bars downstairs, rooms upstairs (quite wide corridors actually.

Toilets at one end of the corridor, showers at the other.

We were there 3 nights the others just the Sat night.

## BUT

Whilst the staff were great as were the meals (see later) the rooms were more than adequate and our beds were king singles there is a major downside.

Their main source of income is certainly from the bar trade and what these days passes for music.

It is supposed to finish at 1 am (yeah right again) but is

SO loud that the walls of the bedrooms vibrate and the beds shake.

So many of these aspiring musicians these days seem to think that if it is loud enough it doesn't matter just how bad it is, Was it LOUD ?- YES was it BAD ? - YES YES. I think I might have heard semblance of a tune buried in the cacophony a couple of times barely perhaps.

Friday and Sat nights were the worst but Sunday was not much better.

## MEALS

We were treated to coffee and cake at gear pickup and then we ate at Kentish Friday night - Chief had Fish and chips, I had an enormous steak, and veges, and a glass of Mt Difficulty wine!

Up and go for breakfast, no time for lunch on Sat, but back to the pub for dinner, once again Chief had his Fish and chips, I had a platter of Porribs which I actually managed to eat without using my fingers.

A glass of Rose this time.

Up and go for breakfast again and lunch - what's lunch??

But back to Waiuku Sunday night - by this time Chief was getting just a little tired of fish and chips so we sought out a nice little Thai restaurant just up the road.

This meal too was exceptional, I had a hot curry and a special Thai beer, very nice too - doesn't compare with Ngahere Gold - but then nothing does.

Up and go for breakfast again, then after dropping Chief I had a roast lamb - no I didn't actually go to Happy Days.

#### INTERESTING SNIPPETS

I mentioned in my daily update a classic 'pocket dial' when we could not find the Fleetlink microphone and had to retrieve it from under a very pretty bum

To his utter embarrassment Chief discovered a large hole in an embarrassing place in his shorts, this embarrassment paled into insignificance when our female colleague admitted she had noticed it the day before but was scared to mention it!!!!

Each night during any rally there are lots of devices to be charged. In this case, My laptop, Chief's laptop, Rallysafe tablet, two handheld 5w radios, my cellphone, Chief's cell phone for example. Chief set everything up and said they were all charging but 'bloody slowly'.

But when he was away having a shower I decided to 'have a

' for myself.Â It helps to turn the switch on at the wall on - makes one hell of a difference.

On our last morning I awoke with a start to find Chief had just come back from his shower and enquired as to the time

9.30 - oh dear can't be now it was just 7.30 a.m.

He complimented me on having such a good sleep despite the noise from downstairs - he reckons I certainly slept soundly

I have no idea what gave him that impression!!

David drove to the airport that morning OTG 9 a.m. and yes Denise he does drive faster than I do, well until we hit Auckland traffic just before 10 a.m. when we were back down to 10kmph or less.

I am well aware that the current crop of traffic engineers know that very few fatal crashes occur at 10kmph so are delighted with congestion.

Would never have done in my day!

#### A WORD ABOUT TRAVEL

With all the roading woes around the country both crews had to plan for long trips, I have mentioned Poko from Ruatoria and my almost 4 hr trek from here.

I decided not to venture home on Monday but stayed another night in Auckland and came home Tuesday after a detour into Thames to do a big shop.

The trip from there which Rodney says is 34 mins turned out to be 2 1/2 hours 4 stop/go sites I had to stop at 3 of them.

#### CONCLUSION.

As I said at the beginning - we fulfilled our obligations, again. There is no Hawkes Bay this year, no Far North Rally. and I cannot see Goldrush going ahead either.

