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# In Weekend Excitement Rally Racers Cruise Up, Down, Around

By STEVE GOBLE

I knew we were lost when the directions told us to drive straight into a warehouse.

"We're lost," I said to Ellen. There was no way we could catch up in the rally after cruising around Brenham for 30 minutes, so all eight of us (four teams) drove into a nearby Dairy Queen to figure out where we had gone wrong.

"What kind of ice cream do you have here," I asked the waitress. Then we raced out into the countryside to try to get back on course.

Even in this day of gasoline shortage, the popularity of driving around on forgotten back roads and getting totally lost is increasing.

There's even a bumper sticker that says: "Discover America: Get Lost on a Rally."

If you see a bunch of tiny cars bouncing down a back road some afternoon, they're probably on a rally. Don't ask them if they are, though—part of the instructions are to not let people know you're

part of a rally.

No one would have suspected us, anyway, as we were disguised as a couple in a 1962 Buick Skylark.

The Texas A&M Sports Car Club sponsors a rally about once a month. Someone armed with a bunch of county maps and a sadistic sense of humor plots a wandering course of about 100 miles. Each rally team gets a vague list of instructions which will supposedly guide them through the course.

To make things more complicated, teams are expected to average certain speeds over certain parts of the course. It counts off if you're too early or too late to a checkpoint.

While the navigator is trying to keep the team on course and on time, he's also supposed to be watching for landmarks listed on a sheet of questions. I still don't know how many yellow cylindrical things there are at the Brazos Power Station, either.

Despite all this, Bill Williams, president of TAMSCC, claims rally

attendance has picked up since the rallies began two years ago—up from 12 teams to 20 teams (40 people) enter the average rally.

The rally started off (about 1 p.m. on a Saturday) with a bad omen—we missed the first question.

"Circle around," I said to Ellen Williams, my driver. "We'll catch up later."

So we drove past the Sabre Inn twice more without seeing whose package store was there. Driving out of town (now horribly late) Ellen noticed a sign which said it was Jay's.

I crossed my fingers and did a quick calculation. "If you go 120 miles per hour for the next four minutes, we'll be right on time."

"Right." About 20 miles into the rally course we were supposed to find P. Zaragoze's mailbox. This would allow us to correct any errors in our odometer.

Just to be sure we saw it, we started looking about 18 miles into the course. Unfortunately, we had blown right past it about

two miles earlier. The rally-master set the course up in a car with an odometer that was 20 per cent off.

After 20 minutes more of furious driving, I announced we had picked up some time. Instead of being four minutes late, we were only 3 minutes late.

"Drive 103 for a while," I suggested.

As it turned out, we were three minutes early to the first checkpoint, at Washington-on-the-Brazos, and picked up 600 points in penalties.

We left the park and promptly got lost.

We doubled back and got lost again. We doubled back and found a landmark, congratulated ourselves and rolled off down a narrow dirt path.

Finally getting to a real road again, we tried to make up lost time, zoomed past our turn and ended up in Brenham.

All this getting lost was quite embarrassing since, as navigator, I was supposed to keep that sort

of thing from happening.

Rally-master Cindy Wilke gleefully explained later I had ignored the main road rule, which reads: "In the absence of an instruction, follow the road you are on." That would be simple enough, except that sometimes, to follow the road you are on, you have to turn off the road you are on.

To the unpracticed eye, the road will appear to run straight on, with another road butting into it at 90 degrees. To a veteran rallyist (which I am not), the road takes a right-angle turn. You have to follow road numbers, not common sense.

Incidentally, the rules also say: "Common sense will help you stay on course." (Ha)

We found our missed turn and drove on. By this time we had given up all hope of calculating time or distance. We just wanted to complete the rally.

After studying the remaining directions and a map, I concluded the rally would end back in Brenham.

As we drove on, I saw that we would finish in Somerville instead.

We finally stopped at a filling station and asked directions, finding out that we needed to be in Hempstead, 30 miles in the other direction. Lost again.

In Hempstead, we asked an old black woman, "Do you know where Addie Gee Road is?"

"Addie Gee? She died a year ago."

"Oh. Thanks."

We eventually found a landmark, Groce's Ferry, and Addie Gee Road. We were elated until we discovered we were going down the course backwards.

We never did finish the course (which ended near Sealy). As we neared the final checkpoint, we met Cindy, the rally-master, leaving.

Only three teams finished the rally (the main road rule shot lots of people down) and we won fourth as the only team that almost finished.

The winners had about 1,000 points. We managed 3,600.

We also got to see a lot of Washington-on-the-Brazos.

I'm looking forward to the Halloween Rally—it's going to be at night. Shudder.

## Intramurals

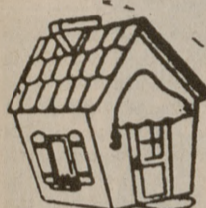
**TENNIS**  
Class B: Sq10 racked Sq15; F2 racked K2; E2 racked L1; Sq4 racked Sq5; B1 racked Sq1; Class C: Law racked White; Crocker racked Milner; Puryear racked Utay; Dunn racked Moore.

**HANDBALL**  
Class A: Sq3 gloved N1; Sq8 gloved 1q2; E2 gloved 12&Sq14.  
Scores from Oct. 2

**FOOTBALL**  
Class B: W-Band beat Sq8 on pen.; N1 beat Sq1, 8-6; A1 beat C2, 19-12; C1 beat Sq12; Sq10 beat I1; Class C: Schumacher beat Walton, 6-2; Leggett beat Puryear, on pen.; Class X: Saints beat White A.C.; Vet-3 beat Phi Sigma Beta, 8-0.

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