

The Metalman Possum Bourne Memorial Rally starts on 22 August, just under a week away. This is my fifth rally for the season, but is not part of the Vantage Aluminium New Zealand Rally Championship. This one-day rally consists of 200 km of special stages with some of New Zealand's most well known stages, which have been used for Rally New Zealand for the past few years, such as Whaanga Coast and the Waitomo stage.

I can't wait to get back in the Ford Fiesta and compete on some of the same stages that the WRC drivers have used in recent years. Add in the fact that this is a memorial rally for the great Possum Bourne, and it's a huge honour to be competing in this event.

For our team, the biggest change at this event from the rest of the rallies this year is that my co-driver Jeff Cress is off to Australia to watch New Zealand kick the Wallabies in the Tri Nations test match which happens to be the same day, so the Crusader-supporting Rocky Hudson will be taking the seat beside me. Rocky has co-driven for lots of fast drivers including Andrew Hawkeswood and was a driver in his own right earlier in his career so should be great to have in the car. Rocky will help build my experience on notes as Jeff is the only person who has called notes for me. Jeff will be back for Rally Nelson in September.

Since Rally Wairarapa, the car's owner and engineer Kayne Barrie has been checking over the Fiesta for any damage. Seeing as I haven't heard about anything, all must be well! Gavin has also been doing a lot of work organising the new bumper and getting it painted, which is all awesome.

I think one of the biggest things I've been thinking about recently – and discussing with a few people – is what to do next year. I've got LOTS of ideas about what I would like to do but coming up with the dollars to make it happen is going to be the difficult part!

There isn't any TV coverage for the Metalman Possum Bourne Memorial Rally, but I'll keep you all in the loop with our results. In this event I'd like to keep up the speed we were achieving at Rally Wairarapa. I also have a few things I want to work on, so this is a good chance to do that before my home rally.

I'd like to add my warm congratulations to Paul Mallard from Rally New Zealand who got engaged last weekend.

Again, my sincere thanks to everyone who has helped me out so far this year; you've all been such a huge help and I have enjoyed every minute of it. Rally New Zealand and all their associated partners, thanks for the wonderful opportunity. Kayne, thanks for preparing the car, and Gavin, Paul and Dad for servicing. Without you guys, we wouldn't be racing.

To my personal sponsors - Nelson Fork Trucks Ltd, Allan Kirby at MS Nelson Ford, Body Talk Nelson, Colin at Alpine Stars, P C Systems and Highfield Romneys - thanks a million.

I will be putting out a post-event blog after the Possum Bourne Memorial Rally so until then take it easy.

With kind regards

Ben Hunt  
Hunt Motor Sport

