

COOKIE SPRINGS INTO ACTION

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NO BAIL OUT AS COOKIE BOUNCES BACK

Louise Cook from Maidstone in Kent contested in her first closed road tarmac rally this weekend, the Jim Clark Rally, located in the Scottish borders. It was certainly a spring bank holiday weekend, with new sponsors Lee Spring joining the campaign and Performance Springs Inc winning the Promotion 50 Top Prize. Spring was definitely here for Louise.

The 23 year old was eager to compete on the asphalt, a surface we are all probably more at home with. However, the first stage through the high street of Duns was harsh on the youngster. All the excitement was short lived and Cook's gearbox was stuck in fourth after only half a mile of competing. With only one gear operating and fears of damaging the box any further, Louise retired at the end of the first stage. "I couldn't believe it, we had the gearbox checked before the rally, so I never expected it. I had been excited about

the rally for months, I was gutted," said Louise.

The crew transported the failed fiesta back to service with an urgency to find out what caused such a short rally. They started inspecting the Ford straight away and found the damage wasn't as bad as first thought. The gearbox selector had completely sheared off and the team had a spare with them.

The M-Sport crew were also at hand with the modified linkage part which got Louise back on the road. With the gearbox unharmed and a new selector fitted, cookie was raring and ready to go the following morning, thanks to the service team working into the early hours of the morning. "I was over the moon that I would have a chance to drive the stages, even though I couldn't get a high overall position as I had heaps of time penalties, at least I was able to get out there and gain the experience that I need and set some stage times."

With the gearbox problem on the first day

and one of the stages cancelled on the second day, Louise competed on only 3 stages out of a possible 7, but Cookie made the most of it. Louise literally drove the door handles off the Ford, coming back into service with no wing mirrors. "I didn't seem to get on very well with chicanes, I had a few fights with the hay bales throughout the event, but I think I was winning. Who needs mirrors anyway, they are just extra weight!" said the Kent youngster.

By the third stage, Louise was pulling within 2.8 seconds a mile behind the fastest Fiesta in the rally and catching her first car on the famous fast Swinton stage.

"I was just getting into it and then it was all over. I want to do it all over again, I learnt so much, but I'll have to get the support for the Isle of Man rally, only 5 weeks to go! I need some more people to enter Promotion 50!"

Performance Springs Incorporated were the lucky Top prize winner of this round. They joined the Promotion 50 at the Autosport Show and were delighted to be the winner!



COOKIES CORNER

"I enjoyed every single second of the Jim Clark, the stages are so fast, they were awesome! I learnt loads on this rally, I have never done 110mph down a country lane before or braked hard from that speed! With a few spins taken into account on hairpins, my times were respectful for a first proper tarmac event. I would like to thank Lee Spring and everyone else for making this rally happen."



To keep up to date with the teams progress, developments and indeed have your input to the new venture please visit www.cutecookie.co.uk. We look forward to seeing you at the forth British Rally Championship round the Isle of Man International Rally.