

TARGA 30

Celebrating 30 years of Targa
in New Zealand

October 14 – 19 2025

Warwick Sykes
&
Lexus Forrester
Stage Finish Timing #1

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PREVIEW

Hi - it's me again.

Just a week and we'll be on our way.

The officials briefing went well - it was good that the vast majority of SBT people were there, and It was good to acknowledge the effort our South island contingent, Missy, Nat David, Mike and Jesy are going to.

Officials are encouraged to attend the 'informal' prizegiving on the Sunday night. It looks like we re all staying that night so should be able to attend.

The bad news is that 3 major stages have had to be canceled through no fault of the organisers which encouraged Lex and I to changed our booking for the Thursday night - done!!

Remember how important it is to keep in close touch with your Post Chief.

He/she is entirely responsible for logistics and for that matter everything else to see the crew works as a 'well oiled machine'.

I am, of course, here to help IF NECESSARY.

Our SBT regroup and final gear pickup is at 55 Ward St Pukekohe on Tuesday 14th October 2025.

Dale has arranged a training session for all START crews at 11 am.

After which we can collect the rest of our gear including the 25W Fleetlink radio, if not yet fitted and tested.

I plan to have my Toyota GBH388 as a mother ship there - actually a flagship complete with flags so we can be easily located and identified.

As always I have had SBT Nametags printed

for all our staff, and Lex has handed most of them out at briefing - he has the rest for Tuesday.

Please do wear them every day of the event.

At present Lex and I (finish #1) will do a board at each stage - still much appreciated by most competitors.

A 'final' recap

Jesy - Stage Commander #1

Dale -Start #1 -with,Poko,Mark, Dior
Wazza-Finish#1 with Lex

David -Start #2 with MIKE,Missy,Nat

Denise -Finish#2 with Brandon

Josh -Start #3 with Steve,Andrew,Vijay

All accommodation booked and in some cases even paid - yep my Visa is taking a pounding.

See you all next week
Warwick Sykes - Wazza

PROLOGUE

Hi its Wazza again

Following on our practice started some 20 years ago (thanks Mr Morrisey) we will do a prologue saying what we intend to do, then a write up each night saying what we have done and finally an epilogue a week or so after the event.

This year SBT is supplying 5 timing crews

Start #1 under Dale

Finish #1 under Wazza (actually Lex

Start #2 under Dave

Finish #2 under Denise

Start #3 under Josh

We also lay claim to Jesy - Stage Commander #1.

Despite a MAJOR problem caused by two vital people pulling out a couple of days ago, although somewhat stretched we should cope.

Of course this played havoc with my blood pressure and my phone use !!!!

So much so that Spark are threatening to charge me casual call rates.

We all have our first SBT regroup tomorrow morning at the HQ in Pukekohe, collect our gear fit radios etc.

This year the cars leave Pukekohe the morning of Wed 15th, and spend that night at Rotorua.

Leaving there Thurs morning and staying that night at New Plymouth

On Friday 17 th they head for Palmerston North where they stay that night.

Sat 18th they traverse (Gentle Annie, the Taihape to Napier road which descends from one of the highest roads in the North Island to Napier at sea level enough said !!

Sunday down towards Dannevirke and finishing in Hastings.

HOWEVER

We don't overnight where the cars are.
We have to find the start or finish of each
stage we are involved with.

So, in our case in particular, we will be
staying at Huntly, then Putaruru, then
Tauramanui,
then Taihape then Napier and Hastings.

We will head home on Monday 20th arriving

I

I hope 'tired but happy'

TRACKING

Yep we still have a tracker fitted to our car
(Izzy) to see where we are, where we have
been etc follow the following steps 1 at a time

www.19gps.net (If it doesn't work I
do have a backup address)
english

IMEA 027042856542

Password 123456

You are welcome to have a look as often as
you wish.

Till tomorrow night then.

Warwick Sykes - Wazza

14TH OCT

1.

This is Lexus (again) I have been "asked" to do the write ups (again) for another rally! this time we are doing the 30th anniversary Targa rally.

We met our out the gate time of 8:30, we then collected Andrew from Thames and took him with us to get our gear and hand him over to his post chief.

We then met up with David, Mike, Missy, Nat, Jesy, and also Dale's crew: Poko and Dior.

We also spoke to Denise and Brandon.

It was good to see Jim Scott (92) is still heavily involved - Well done Jim.

Nat did sterling service as a radio technician.

Once cleared, we headed for our first night accommodation at Essex arms in Huntly.

Warwick had a couple of gins and then we went out for dinner (Spicy hot Indian food).

We have an OTG of 7:15 in the morning so tonight will not be a late one.

15TH OCT

Warwicks alarm went off at 6:30 and we were out the gate by our planned OTG of 7:15.

We arrived on site (on time ofcourse), and found our appropriate spots.

It rained off and on so Warwick had to take off and put back on his coat multiple times.

He also planned to do a board (That I was forced into drawing up the night before), unfortunately the old mans eyes stopped him from reading the stage times on the rallysafe tablet from outside the car. so despite our intentions to do one for each and every stage, this falls into the realm "Nice idea but didn't work".

we were cleared before lunch and after

something to eat at Morrinsville, arrived at SS5 with about 10 mins to spare, here it wasn't actually raining but was cold and windy

(so guess what Jesy) Warwick had to don his famous mustard coloured jersey (again).

About the time we were due to leave we learned of the havoc caused by the weather bomb, so much so we lost four stages (they had to be canceled) how bugger.

more importantly for us though, it meant we had no hope of getting to our accommodation at Taumaranui.

as you can imagine this caused more problems for the old fella, anyway here we are at the putaruru hotel, Pizza for dinner and more plans set in concrete for the rest of the week.

Warwick has asked me to record the fact that on this event we have at least three officials

involved in rallying for at least fifty years.
however we also have at least three
seventeen/eighteen year olds, no doubt they
will take over in the future.

16TH OCT

So we woke up at 7:00 with our arrival time on stage being 8:50, In my still half asleep state I thought we had to be on stage by 7:50.

So we left an hour earlier than we needed to (I'm really glad we did based on what happened next).

We got to stage and struggled to find our Finish control and flying finish, but Jesy (One of the best stage commander's I think we've ever had) saved us and helped us find our stop (Thank you Jesy).

So in short terms we were late...but Jesy fixed the situation!

After our stage we headed for Taihape, we we're about to pass through Turangi when I thought I might aswell stop in and say hi to my mum.

after chatting for a bit, I hopped back in the car and we headed for Taihape (But not before having Burger King for lunch).

We arrived at the Gretna hotel in Taihape, Warwick had a steak for dinner while i had fish and chips.

Jesy, Mike, Nat, Missy, Josh and Andrew also joined us.

Tomorrow we head to Mt Curl for our only stage of the day, then back here tomorrow night, More news then.

Saturday we tackle Gentle Annie again.

17 OCT

We woke up at a comfortable time, believing our "timing team arrives" time to be 2:00.

So an OTG of 10:00 it was! we were late to yesterdays stage so we tried our hardest to be early for todays stage.

We headed for Mt Curl (It was a lot less mountain-ey than i thought it would be.

We arrived on site, found our spots and waited...we then checked the OVS and to our surprise we were early...about 4 hours early. I thought the OVS said that our arrival time was 14:00 (or 2:00) but it was actually 16:00 (4:00) so we may have overcompensated for yesterday.

So since we were 4 hours early we decided to get lunch in Marton (pity Sophia wasn't in Marton so we couldn't say hi).

Then after that we got back on site with an hour to spare.

Once cleared we headed back to Taihape. Where we are now, Warwick had Pork ribs and of course I had a burger.

We are off to Napier tomorrow via Gentle Annie

More soon.

18TH OCT

At long last Rodney's power cord finally gave up (With some help from Jesy).

We only had one stage today, but i had to drive right through the whole length of three stages to get there.

and we arrived ten minutes early.

Once cleared we headed for Napier.

Being unable to locate a "Rodney Cable" we joined Jesy and a few friends for a meal -
Thanks Jesy.

Then Guess what? Warwick adopted another grandson (So that Nat could get a drink with his meal cause he did not have his ID with him).

Back to the Motel for tonight, we have an OTG of 6:30 so we'll be up at 6.

19TH OCT

Hi all,
this is Wazza, I don't have Lex now so I am,
of course late.

Alarms at 6 am, OTG 6.30

Ist proplem - we left the road book and OVS
we had been working on the night nefore
back at the motel - oh bother

2nd problem No more Rodney but Lex's
phone coped'sort of'. At least we had house
numbers to find.

Our Stage commander arranged for
replacement road book and OVS which meant
we should be good to go. We were on site 15
mins early - great

We had a very long way to go to get to our
last stage of the day (and last of the event for

us) and here our 3rd problem of the day arose. Not having Rodney, and only a vague description of where we had to be 'by fence adjacent to paddock' we were in some trouble.

We were however some 30 mins early so we thought all should be sweet-yeah right.

After considerable perigrinations (wandering aimlessly in circles) we finally came across people taping who explained where the finish was.= yeah right again !!!

We headed there post haste (miles away) to find this was the NEXT stage finish !!!!!!! All the way back, and then joy oh joy another stage commander put us right and we got on site and set up in less than 10 mins, but from being 30 mins early now about 45 mins late.

The joys of stage timing teams/

This site was another really windy one. Not quite as bad as MacKenzie pass, but it did blow all our signs over and I had to hold on to

the car door handle to at least stay on this planet.

Once cleared we headed to the event finish - Lex returned all our gear so event was now over.

Personally the night then took a turn for the worse - details (perhaps) in our epilogue - in a few days !

Warwick Sykes - Wazza

EPILOGUE

Hi all,

This is Wazza, unfortunately this will just be my effort - pity though

I'll try not to repeat all the news Lex gave you day by day (yep I can hear your cheers from here).

As we actually supplied 5 crews we had hoped to get different perspectives from other crews, and although several did their bit, it did really end up in the 'too hard basket' so this will be 'just us'.

We left Tairua about 10 on the morning of Tues 14 Oct 2025 proceeded to Thames and managed to find a printer who was able to sell us some cardboard so we could do a board for each and every stage.

In the eventuality my eyes aren't good enough

any more to allow this to happen. Bugger

We then collected Andrew in Thames and proceeded to our SBT regroup at Pukekohe.

Once we had got all our gear (our 25w Radio is permanently installed for the moment) Huntly for the night. Indian food for dinner our first night !

2 stages Wednesday then Putaruru Wednesday night. Pizza for dinner.

Another stage Thursday - Then it all fell apart. The weather where we were heading was so bad that several stages had to be canceled.

Oh bugger again.

This required urgent and drastic accommodation rebookings.

So we ended up staying at Taihape Thursday night, and on to our Mt Curl stage Friday.

As Lex explained 'somewhat early'. Other crews had also to make significant

changes to their plans.

Back to Taihape Friday night ready for Gentle Annie stages on Saturday. This was the day Rodney finally gave up on us (well actually his power cable) but we got to our appointed place 10 mins before we had to (well done Lex) then we had to be shifted to a new spot - oh bugger again.

With Restaurant Indonesia now CLOSED (another bugger) we we pleased to join Jesy and the other SI contingent for cocktails and another meal. That night.

Sunday started off badly and got progressively worse!!!!!!!

We managed to leave our Road book and OVS behind after our OTG of 6.30, Rodney wasn't working but thanks largely to the efforts of our Stage Commander, and Vicky and the other Targa officials we coped. - Sort of.

Not so for our second stage of the day - I won't repeat the saga here (do I hear more cheering?)

Once finally cleared we headed for Hastings Golf Club where the event finished. Lex handed all our gear back (our radio is still installed though)

Back to Napier Beach Holiday Park (eventually) OTG MONDAY 8.30 am, Napier Taupo, fuel at Putaruru pies at Tirau and home late afternoon.

I really cannot finish without a word about
our
fabulous crew members

As is so often the case with pretty much all sports, it is the actual competitors that get all the glory, the hardworking VOLUNTEERS who 'make it happen' get barely a mention.

For exaple - our crews this year (allvolunteers, annual leave taken etc) were

JESY from Ashburton
DALE from Whitianga
POKO from Auckland
MARK from Palmerston North
DIOR from Auckland
WAZZA from Tairua
LEX from Pauanui
DAVID from Christchurch
MIKE from Murchison
MISSY from Ashburton
NAT from Ashburton
DENISE from Auckland
BRANDON from Auckland
JOSH from Auckland
ANDREW from Thames

No thanks to those who pulled out
making life just that much more difficult

Without the dedication of 'people like us'
running events would be extremely difficult
(to say the least)

I really do trust that you have found our
adventures and writeups of interest.

FINAL WORDS

A little bit of history to start with. In 1950s.1960s I together with a lot of friends were actively involed with 'car trials'. This required following a sometimes complex set of instructions, regular changes of average speeds and required a lot of skill. All well within legal requiredments, no closed roads or 'excessive speed'.The navigators and timekeepers became VERY competant, the diver just did as he/she was told. Events could be for an hour to a weekend long. In fact in 1968 my wife and I spent our honeymoon plotting the 'Lakrland' which went from Christchurch to Queenstown.

Then the sport went speed crazy. In 1970 Errol Inwood and I (along with others) organised the first South Island Rally of the modern style (although Murray Thompson had done one for Wgtn Car Club in 1969) and we had almost 10,000 pople in the square to met the returning crs over the next few years, family and other interests took over and it wasn't until 2005 that everything changed. The call went out to see if anyonr who had been involved the earlier Silver Fern Rallies , competitors, officials or whatever, would be interested in resurecting the concept of marathon rallying again. I had two boys aged 11 and 10 at the time and we immediately (well sort of) put our hands up.We did one (Picton to Queenstown) in 2006 and have either block marshaled or stge timed for every one since. At one stage we were averaging one rally a month (either island) and have been associated with Targa ever since 2016 almost always as stage timing.

So, get to the point Wazza.

Now that I am 85 with really failing eyesight I do think it is finally time for me to retire and 'pull my head in' I have neen relying more and more over the last 4 years on my teenage 'grandson' Lex and it really isn't fair on him to have to continue looking after this grumpy old man, who gets easily upset. He has shown proficiency beyond his years but is probably not yet ready for full Post Chief role.

So, IF, and it is a big IF any future active involvement will only be

possible if he agrees to carry on. 2026 Silver Fern based in Rotorua is a possibility. At present I still have all my faculties but who knows how long that will last.