

Day Nineteen - Milford Sound to Invercargill - 390 Km

Murphy's Law

/ˈmɜːfɪz/

noun

unpunctuated: **Murphys Law**; noun: **Murphy's Law**

1. a supposed law of nature, expressed in various humorous popular sayings, to the effect that anything that can go wrong will go wrong...

...and it will. The road to Milford Sound has been hanging over this trip like an Albatross since before any of us even boarded an aircraft to New Zealand. The road takes people deep into Fjordland and is, spectacular. It should have been a trip highlight to drive it, but any hope of that was scuppered when heavy rains destroyed parts of the road some weeks back. The pot of gold at the end of this tarmac rainbow was an overnight cruise, viewing the best of New Zealand's Fjords, an opportunity not to be missed and with this in mind the organisation had bent over backwards to make it a reality.

Tourist busses were still allowed to venture up the tattered road in convoy, safely negotiating the washed-out sections, safety in numbers. A bus was sourced for our travelling party, Cinderella would go to the ball. All safely on board the vessel for departure, our teams and the organisation thought they had cracked it, but then someone shot the Albatross and merry hell broke loose.

The bus transporting our crews back at first light this very morning began its journey, and then began to smoke. The smoke became significant, billowing from the rear of the vehicle as the driver struggled to find somewhere to set the stricken bus down without blocking the road, the cause of the smoke was unclear, the source was obvious and the result was evident to all; The only means of transport two hours up the road to the waiting rally cars was sunk, the curse of Milford had struck again.

It was a case of hurry up and wait as a recovery vehicle was despatched and a replacement piece of transport. Some talked of hiring an aircraft from the nearby airfield, some thought about going back to the boat and some wondered just who had done what in a previous life to bring this sort of misery on the New Zealand Classic. Those that had remained behind went into overdrive, working on various re-route scenarios, but it wasn't looking good for the days rallying and the trip down to Invercargill.

Finally, at 3:30pm the marooned of Milford arrived back in Te Anau to be reunited with their own cars, and be hastily handed route instructions for the remainder of the day. There were to be no regularities, unsurprisingly. Instead we would proceed en-masse and at haste to the final tests of the event, at the historic Teretonga Park race circuit. In the lowering sun the cars charged round, no doubt unleashing the pent-up energy acquired whilst stranded. It was the best the organisers could manage in the circumstances and all seemed fairly pragmatic about the situation that had arisen.

When I found out who took out that Albatross though...

Syd Stelvio.