

# The Olympic Frogeye



All wrapped up and somewhere to go

It all started back in January when I received an email from one of my friends who is in the Ford Corsair owners club he had been forwarded an email asking for iconic British cars he also thought of me and suggested I put my Frog forward, it was however the deadline day and they required a photo of me and the car so I hurriedly got the wife to take a picture of me kneeling next to the car in the garage in the dark and emailed it off. After a few days I received an email saying they would love to include me and my car in the closing ceremony and that I would go through accreditation in the coming months.

In February after filling out the relevant security & confidentiality forms, I had to go to accreditation for an ID check and as they wrote in the email "Costume fitting". That was it my heart started beating and visions of multi-coloured leotards and tutus kept popping up. The day arrived so off I went to three mills studios at Bromley by Bow, whilst in the queue I got speaking to the guy in front of me who told me he answered an advert for drum beaters but on getting there he ended up dancing, role playing and that this was his third interview. Off I went again leotards & tutus all that on top of two left feet and no rhythm. In I went, ID checked and measured up top-to-toe head, hands, feet, the lot but still no idea of the costume.

My next outing was in April again back to three mills this time for a vehicle fitting this is where it all started to become clearer, I shared the warehouse with a Triumph Herald and a Rolls Royce it took them about six hours to make the Roller's cover and only three hours to make mine held together with tape, staples and magnets. They even asked if the car had much filler on it because of the magnets to which I replied cheeky b\*\*\*\*\*. After that it all went a bit quiet until the first rehearsals started in late June the first of nine, in all about 100 hours it seemed that every time I left Kent and arrived at the old Ford works in Dagenham, it rained, not only rain but thunderstorms as you will agree one of our worst summers for a very long time, on two or three occasions returning home I had to take out my seats, carpets and interior trim panels and soak the water up out of the bottom of the B posts and floorpan. Although I had a wet car I still felt sorry for all the other performers that didn't have cars to sit in and that once we had got into our end positions they still had to rehearse these sections and this would sometimes take up to two hours to get ready. At the rehearsals I finally got put out of my misery about costumes I was thinking spandex and lycra but instead I had to supply my own shoes and trousers and they supplied the t-shirts, one green for my

section and the other newspaper print as in the picture I was rather quite relieved.

Soon enough the big day came and we had to be at the Olympic park for 9am to clear security and park in the John Lewis car park the security checks were carried out by the army who were very efficient and interested in the cars at the same time. A few remarks that Noddy had arrived rung out which was only helped when I got out, at 6.2" how did I fit in it? Security done we got marshalled into the car park where we had our wraps put back on, my phone had decided to pack up at this stage so very few pictures were taken – of all the days to pack up. The wrapping took us into the afternoon and time for a quick rehearsal we drove along to the stadium getting photographed and waved at by people on the footbridges. Once inside we waited in one of the vomms (Voms comes from the roman word vomitory. I'll let you look it up) It was manic performers were everywhere and they were still setting up. We drove out into the stadium and the sheer scale of the whole thing sunk in, as I drove past the Olympic cauldron you could feel the heat from it – seeing it on telly just didn't do it justice.

We set up and had a short dress-rehearsal along with Emily Sande, Madness and One Direction, we then drove out and parked up ready for when we would be called back to reset, we could hear on our earpiece that they were having a few problems with later parts of the show and that meant the time



*On the move inside the stadium (a shaky image taken from a screen grab of the ceremony)*

ran on a bit. They finally called us back at 8.15 for a 9pm start we drove down the vom and out onto the track the atmosphere was electric the stadium was almost full. 80,000 people cheered, clapped cameras flashed, I was star struck and the show hadn't even started. I parked on my ramp got out and had a full 360 degree look around the stadium AMAZING!! I got one of the other drivers to take a picture of me and the car preset on the ramp. We then had to clear the stage and wait in one of the vomms along with Timothy Spall and about 300 other performers the cue came over the earpiece 'drivers to positions' we walked out the, crowd went mad we got into our cars and awaited the start of the show, just sitting there for those few minutes looking around made all the waiting around and soaking wet car worthwhile.

Stomp started and we waited for our cue. We were off down the ramp and driving around the Olympic stadium in front of 80,000 people, including royalty with another 23.5 million people watching around the world we performed our part without a hitch, no breakdowns or accidents all that rehearsing paid off and the bonus was getting the car on TV.

In all I had a great time and met some great people along the way this is something me and my family will not forget for a very long time to come.

**Dave Pratt**

*Editor's note. I think that we can safely say that Dave's Frogeye has been seen by more people than any other Frogeye that has ever existed*



*Dave and the Frogeye at home*