

Championship newsletter: 9/2014 – 3 June 2014

Welcome

Welcome to championship newsletter number 9 for the 2014 **West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship**.

Round four of the championship, the **Severn Valley Stages** (31 May), was another excellent day of rallying with 70 registered contenders lining up in the sunshine in Builth Wells. A full report follows in this newsletter along with details of the championship award winners. I'd like to thank the organisers and marshals involved in running the Severn Valley for all their hard work in delivering this very popular event.

Please see further on in this newsletter for a reminder about **management vehicles**.

Entries are open for round five, the **DMACK Carlisle Stages** (21 June), and please don't forget that we are running a test stage on the Friday before (20 June), with up to six runs of a 3-mile stage on offer for just £90. We hope you will support this new initiative from the championship. Entries are coming in well for the **DMACK Carlisle Stages** and don't forget that the rally is less than three weeks away, so please get your entries in as soon as possible.

Regs for round six, the **Neath Valley Stages** (9 August), have just been mailed out to all registered contenders.

Finally, I would just like to record our sympathy for all those involved in the tragic accident during the Jim Clark Rally last weekend. It is a terrible reminder of the inherent danger in motor sport and we hope that those still in hospital will make good recoveries.

Best regards

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Tuesday 3 June 2014
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End of season awards' night

We are delighted to confirm that the date for the end of season awards celebration has been set as Saturday 25 October at the Casa Hotel in Chesterfield. The event was such a success last year that it was a very easy decision to return to the same venue.

We have block booked a number of rooms for R.A.C. contenders and when booking please use code: RACR251014. These rooms are available on a first-come, first-served basis. There is a Premier Inn is across the road for those on a smaller budget. For details of the hotel and contact information, please visit www.casahotels.co.uk

Round five: DMACK Carlisle Stages

Regulations for the 2014 DMACK Carlisle Stages (Saturday 21 June) are available, with 45 stage miles in the Kershope and Newcastleton complexes for £480.

The rally will feature two elements: the DMACK Carlisle Stages Rally will form round five of the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship, while the DMACK Modern Carlisle Stages Rally will be open to all other competitors, including those in four-wheel drive cars.

The rally will again be based at the premises of the R J Murray & Sons Haulage Company in Longtown, Carlisle and will cover 45 stage miles and just 60 road miles. The first car will start at 9.30am and be back at the finish at 2pm on this very compact event.

The action starts with a challenging ten-mile stage in Kershope followed by a seven-mile stage in Newcastleton and then a four-mile test in Ash Park. After service back at Longtown, the three stages will be repeated.

The day before the rally (Friday 20 June) will start with a three-mile shakedown forest stage, which will be open to all competitors on the rally as a chance to give sponsors, service crews, family, guests and media a taste of forest rallying.

The shakedown will have two sessions, the first running from 10am until 12.30pm and the second from 1pm until 3.30pm. The cost will be just £90 per car for a maximum of six runs.

Scrutineering and documentation will run from 2pm until 7pm and will be followed by a barbecue for all crew members, including families and service crews.

The DMACK Carlisle Stages will be organised by the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club. More details at www.racrallychamp.org





Round six: Zutec Neath Valley Stages

Clerk of the course Den Golding has unveiled more details of the Neath Valley Stages on Saturday 9 August. Once again, this will be the only event to use the superb stages in Rheola, Bryn and Margam as previously used on Wales Rally GB and the stages are again in prime condition having not been used since last year's rally.

The event offers 45 stage miles in six stages for an entry fee of £475 and the format will be very similar to last year's hugely successful rally. The action will start just two miles from rally HQ with a nine-mile stage in Rheola. After a 20-minute service will be eight miles in Bryn and five miles in Margam. After a 40-minute service, the route is repeated. The first historic car will start at 9am and be back at the finish by 3.30pm.

Regs are now available shortly and more details can be found at www.neathvalleystages.co.uk

Round seven: the Trackrod Rally Yorkshire

Trackrod Rally Yorkshire 2014 again includes the popular Trackrod Historic Cup. The event welcomes competitors from The West Wales Rally Spares RAC Rally Championship.

The whole event this year will be based at the Pickering Showground on the weekend of 26/27 September, accommodating Rally HQ, Friday scrutineering and documentation, in addition to the central service area. Servicing of vehicles will take place after a maximum 20 competitive forest miles and therefore management vehicles will not be allowed. Road mileage will also be kept to a minimum.

Scrutineering for all competitors will take place on the Friday afternoon, before one or two night stages in the North Yorkshire Forests. Total competitive mileage of approximately 55 miles is planned for the complete event.

After Friday night stages, (there will be no parc fermé on Friday night), competitors will then restart on Saturday from Pickering Showground from approximately 08.01hrs, with the first car due back at the finish at The Showground at approximately 13.30hrs. There will a dedicated Awards Ceremony taking place as soon after the last car has finished the event as possible. Further details will be announced throughout the year.

See www.rallyyorkshire.co.uk, follow us on Facebook or twitter @rallyyorkshire

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Management vehicles

We want to remind everyone that management vehicles are not permitted in the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship. This is the relevant section of the championship regulations:

13. The use of management cars or chase cars is prohibited on every round of the Championship. Servicing will only be permitted from properly identified service vehicles in Official Service Areas.

It has been brought to our attention from some of the contenders that one crew did not follow the no-management car rule on the Severn Valley Stages. Can I please ask all crews to follow the rules as if the situation continues, or escalates, then action will have to be taken by the championship.

In-car footage for the TV coverage

In-car footage is always required for the TV coverage of the championship, so if you run a good quality in-car system and would like to make your footage available, please contact Olly Dickinson via: ojd9224@gmail.com He can take your film on an SD card at the event or files by Dropbox or similar after the rally.

Elliott on top on Severn Valley Historic Stages

Nick Elliott and Dave Price took their second championship win of the season on the Severn Valley Historic Stages (Saturday 31 May), the fourth round of the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship.

From a field packed with quality, Elliott and Price (Ford Escort Mk2) revelled in stages in Crychan, Cefn and Halfway but had to keep pushing hard to see off a concerted challenge from the similar car of Richard Hill/Steffan Evans. However, one of the drives of the rally came from young Ben Llewelin and co-driver Paul Williams on their first full historic outing. They took third overall in their Ford Escort Mk2, just nine seconds adrift of Hill.

Ray Cunningham and Andrew Bushe were mighty in their Mini Cooper S to win Category 1, but only by 14 seconds from the Lotus Cortina of Simon Wallis and Graham Wride. Cunningham also took maximum points in the Aldon Automotive Mini and Imp Cup.





Championship newcomers and father and son crew Ernie and Will Graham (Ford Escort Mk1) took a fine victory in Category 2. Meanwhile, other category winners included Jason Pritchard/Phil Clarke (Ford Escort Mk2) in Category K and brothers Simon Crook and Alister Crook (Opel Manta) in Category O.

With 70 registered contenders starting the rally, the Bwlch Wells-based event maintained the high level of entries for the 2014 WWRS R.A.C. Rally Championship and also marked the third round of the Geoff Jones Motorsport Welsh Challenge.

Fresh from his trip to Morocco to service for his brother Frank, Ray Cunningham had a new co-driver in Andrew Bushe alongside and, after Bob Gibbons put his Ford Cortina Mk2 off on stage three, Cunningham led the Walker Diecastings Category 1 for the rest of the day. "It was okay until the last three stages when we lost second gear. So we just held on and kept it safe," said Cunningham. Peter Stimson and Mark Butler had been flying in their Ford Anglia. "We spun on stage two, but have more speed and confidence," said Stimson. They remained Cunningham's closest challenger, but Simon Wallis and Graham Wride (Lotus Cortina) were gaining on them too. Stimson and Wallis started stage four one second apart but by the end Wallis was ahead by ten and into a secure second place.

Stimson's push continued but now Ian Beveridge and Paul Price (Volvo PV544) were closing in. The Anglia was still six seconds up as they started the penultimate stage through Crychan, where sadly Stimson rolled into retirement. Geoff Taylor/Steve Greenhill (Sunbeam Imp Sport) lost three minutes in Halfway when they had to stop. "We had a rock jammed between the carburettor and manifold and it left the throttle stuck wide open. So we had to stop and chip it out," Taylor explained. They still won class B1 but with only 14 seconds in hand over the Saab 96 of Stephen Higgins/Don Bramfoot.

Stimson's Anglia dominated B3 after Gibbons had put his Cortina off the road on stage three. But the late demise of the Anglia handed the class win back to the recovering Gibbons while Callum Barney and Ron Channon picked up four minutes road penalty in their return with a re-shelled Ford Cortina GT. Wallis led class B4 all day, with Beveridge consolidating second despite overheating worries after Graham Waite/Gill Cotton (Volvo Amazon) retired at service. "The gearbox mount broke, so it was leaning on the engine and before that we had a rear brake problem and had to use the handbrake," said Waite.

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Ernie and Will Graham collected the Capital Construction Category 2 spoils with a tremendous performance in their Escort Mk1 but had trailed David Stokes/Guy Weaver similar until stage five. "It was a normal day at the office until then," said Stokes. Victory for Graham was a great start to their R.A.C. Championship campaign.

Warren Philliskirk/Nigel Hutchinson had led the chase to the Stokes versus Graham duel, but found Chris Browne/Ali Cornwell-Browne closing. Going into the penultimate stage they were tied, but Philliskirk hit a rock and rolled, handing the place to Browne. "I just had to get a finish this time, so I'm really pleased with the result," said Browne.

Stuart and Linda Cariss (Ford Escort Mk1) topped class C2 and did a great job without any service crew, with rivals Robin Shuttleworth/Mark Midgley out after the opening stage with clutch failure. Championship newcomers Nick Danks and Martin Corbett (Escort Mk1) showed impressive pace and headed Peter Smith/Paul Spooner (Opel Ascona) in C3. Hamsterley winners Dave Kirby/Chris Rixon also went out with an off on stage four when lying second, bringing Kirby's impressive R.A.C. finishing record to a temporary halt.

There were dramas from the start in the Rob Smith Rallying Category 3 when Tour of Hamsterley winner Matt Edwards, with Sam Collis back alongside, went OTL after water was found in his Escort Mk2's fuel. A contaminated supply at a filling station was the likely cause.

Elliott and Price went straight into a three-second lead over Hill on the opening stage. "I didn't want to push too hard but just keep a balance," said Elliott. But Hill found the Halfway stage a different challenge. "I just couldn't get into it," he said, which was reflected in the times as he lost second place to Llewelin. But it was Llewelin's turn to make a mistake in stage four. "I was too fast into a right hander and stalled," he admitted. Not only did Hill go back ahead, but Meirion Evans/Iwan Jones did too and it became a tie for second place. Hill was just managing to keep Evans at bay, while Elliott survived a couple of minor excursions on the last stage to take a second win of the year. With Evans off in the penultimate stage, Llewelin took a most impressive third in Category 3 and overall.

Terry Brown and Den Golding brought their Escort Mk2 home in a strong fourth despite damaging the steering rack during the morning stages while Tomas Davies/Eurig Davies were a creditable fifth in D5 after changing cars on the morning of the event after hitting engines dramas on Friday in their own car.

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The Hillman Avengers of Graham Thatcher/Robert James and Keith Davison/Henry Richardson battled it out for class D2 honours. "We had water leaking onto the clutch pedal from the heater matrix, which was fun at hairpins," said Thatcher after taking the win. "We had a new engine and we have got power now," said Davison.

There was a close finish in D3 among the Pinto-powered Escort Mk2s with Adrian Young/Gwynfor Jones taking the win by only three seconds from Ben Friend/Sean Kennedy after an enthralling day-long duel. Owen Murphy/James O'Brien (Talbot Sunbeam Lotus) comfortably led home the similar car of James Stait/Mike Harris in class D4.

Pritchard and Clarke were never headed in the Holton Homes Category K, but had their share of early problems. "We almost ran out of fuel on stage three, even though we had filled it to the brim," said Pritchard. Tom Coughtrie/Calvin Cooledge were next up after Darren Moon/Tim Sayer stopped in the opening stage and retired after three stages with coil failure.

In the Open Category Simon and Alister Crook had a cracking day in their Opel Manta and led all the way to finish almost a minute up on the Toyota Starlet of Layton Waters and Kevin Bowcott. Barry Stevenson-Wheeler/John Pickavance (Escort Mk2) closed on Waters towards the end as Neal Dwyer/Simon Dwyer (Escort Mk2) and Alan Carfrae/Liam Carfrae (Escort Mk1) were next up.

WWRS R.A.C. Rally Championship award winners announced

The special award winners for the fourth round of the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship have been announced following the Severn Valley Stages (31 May).

Paul Mankin and Desmond Bell were unfortunate enough to post the first retirement of the rally when head gasket failure sidelined their Lotus Cortina even before the opening stage. The last retirement was the Ford Escort Mk1 of Warren Philliskirk/Nigel Hutchinson, which went off on the penultimate stage of the rally. Both crews will receive a £100 voucher from West Wales Rally Spares, as will Toyota Starlet crew Layton Waters/Kevin Bowcott after their number came out of the hat in the draw for a third voucher.

Meanwhile, Ford Escort Mk2 crew Adrian Young and Gwynfor Jones will receive a cheque for £237.50 from Holton Homes after their number came out in the draw for a refund of 50% of the event entry fee.

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The run-away success of the Kumho Clubmans Challenge continued, with 26 crews electing to contest the Challenge for cars using no more than six tyres during the event. Gwilym Roberts and Don James (Lotus Cortina) won a pair of Kumho tyres in the draw for contenders in the Challenge.

Category winners in the Kumho Clubmans Challenge were Simon Wallis/Graham Wride (Lotus Cortina) in Category 1, Phil Jobson/Arwel Jenkins (Ford Escort Mk1) from Category 2, James Potter/Bob Duck (Ford Escort Mk2) in Category 3, Tom Coughtrie/Calvin Cooledge (Ford Escort Mk2) in Category K and Layton Waters/Kevin Bowcott (Toyota Starlet) from Category O.

The 'Spirit of the Rally' product award from Fuchs Lubricants goes to Ford Cortina GT crew Callum Barney and Ron Channon on their return to the championship after re-shelling their car following a roll on the first round of the season.

Nick Danks and Martin Corbett won the Best Improvement on Seeding, which is a set of axle brake pads from Mintex, after a very good run in their Ford Escort Mk1 to win class C3. Finally, Ben Llewelin won the 'Hard Charger' award of a 20-litre jerry can from Green Valley Industrial Supplies. His pace in his Ford Escort Mk2 was outstanding as he finished third in a very strong field despite very limited experience.



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