

Championship newsletter: 3/2015 – 13 March 2015

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## Welcome

Welcome to championship newsletter number 3 for the 2015 **West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship**.

**PLEASE SEE PAGE 2 FOR IMPORTANT NEWS ABOUT EVENT RUNNING ORDERS.**

Once again crews faced tough conditions on round two, the **Mid Wales Stages**, and I'm pleased to report that the event ran smoothly without any major incidents despite some wet and slippery stages.

Conditions in Sweet Lamb were also tough for the service crews and they all deserve credit for carrying on in wind, rain, sleet, snow, thunder and lightning! Finally, I'd also like to thank the organisers and marshals for keeping the even running so well despite the weather.

I am pleased to confirm that **Mintex** and **Fuchs Lubricants** have extended their support to the R.A.C. Championship. Details of awards from the Mid Wales Stages are further on in this newsletter.

Now we have a little breather before round 3, the **Pirelli Carlisle Rally** on Saturday 25 April. Full details of this event are below and we're really pleased with the format of the rally and the very compact route. Regs will be out within the next week for this event and round 4, the **Severn Valley Stages** on Saturday 30 May.

Updated championship points should be available on the website by the time this newsletter arrives.

Best regards

Colin Heppenstall  
Friday 13 March 2015

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## RUNNING ORDER ON EVENTS

You may have seen some information on the internet in recent days relating to changes to the running order of rallies as a result of the recent moves to improve spectator safety and control.

The MSA has announced that, with immediate effect, multi-venue stage rallies will comprise one group of cars (with no gaps) and that the cars should be seeded in performance order.

We fully support all MSA initiatives to improve spectator safety but also acknowledge that running order of cars is of great importance to competitors in historic cars.

Please be assured that we are in dialogue with the MSA over this matter and will update competitors when we have more news.

## The 2015 events in detail

### RAC round 3: Pirelli Rally (Saturday 25 April)

Scrutineering and documentation will be on Friday 24 April, starting at 3pm at the H&H auction mart just off J43 of the M6 at Carlisle.

There will be a ceremonial start in Carlisle city centre on Saturday morning from 10am with the top 30 cars in place from 9am.

The route will take crews up to Kielder for three stages (24 miles), then service in the Kielder area, followed by the same stages again.

All the stage mileage will be on the south side of the Kielder dam using the best Category A haul roads. The Rally HQ and finish will be at Kielder Castle, with the first car to the finish at around 3.30pm, with the prize-giving on the ramp. The total route takes in 48 stage miles and just 75 road miles.

Regs will be available very soon from [www.pirellicarlislerally.co.uk](http://www.pirellicarlislerally.co.uk)

### RAC round 4: Severn Valley Stages (Saturday 30 May)

The 42nd Severn Valley Stages will be based at the Royal Welsh Showground at Builth Wells and take place on 30th May.

Scrutineering will be on Friday afternoon 29 May. The route takes in eight special stages in Cefn, Crychan, Halfway and Gwibedog with just 3 road miles and an entry fee of £495.

Regs are due next week from [www.severnvalleystages.co.uk](http://www.severnvalleystages.co.uk)

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### RAC round 5: Carlisle Stages (Saturday 13 June)

The Carlisle Stages will again be based close to Carlisle and will use the superb stages in the Newcastleton and Kershope complexes. Scrutineering will be on Friday afternoon, with Saturday offering a 43-stage mile route with only eight miles double usage. The event is a round of the BTRDA Rally Series as well as the R.A.C. Championship, so a bumper entry is expected. More details are elsewhere in this newsletter.

[www.racrallychamp.org](http://www.racrallychamp.org)

### RAC round 6: Harry Flatters (Sunday 26 July)

This one-day rally over the famous Epynt ranges is traditionally based in Brecon where scrutineering and documentation is held on Saturday afternoon. The route recce will take place on Saturday morning.

[www.breconmotorclub.co.uk](http://www.breconmotorclub.co.uk)

### RAC round 7: Neath Valley Stages (Saturday 15 August)

Scrutineering and documentation will take place from 2pm on Friday 14 August at Rally HQ in Rheola (the same venue as 2014). There is free overnight camping on Friday and Saturday nights. The 45 competitive miles will feature three stages run twice: Rheola, Bryn and a brand new stage that has NEVER been used.

The format will be: first car starts at 8.30am for a nine-mile stage followed by service. The second loop takes in stages two (six miles) and three (seven and a half miles). After a main service halt, the route is repeated, with the first car due at the finish at around 3.45pm.

[www.neathvalleystages.co.uk](http://www.neathvalleystages.co.uk)

### RAC round 8: Trackrod Rally Yorkshire (Friday/Saturday 25/26 September)

The organisers of the Trackrod Rally Yorkshire intend to run a very similar format to 2014 with Friday afternoon scrutineering followed by a 7pm start and stages in the dark, finishing at around 10pm. The event will then restart on the Saturday at approximately 8.30am with classic Yorkshire stages before finishing early afternoon.

The event will be again based at Pickering.

[www.trackrodmotorclub.co.uk](http://www.trackrodmotorclub.co.uk)

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## Mid Wales Stages – post-event scrutineering

There were six cars selected for post event scrutineering; five attended and one retired during the rally. One car had an issue which was resolved and four passed post event checks.

Please remember to notify your service crew as soon as you are given the post event attend sheet and have the historic ID papers in the car.

If, for whatever reason, the papers are at the MSA for updating or changes I must have a confirmation call or email from the Technical Department at Motor Sports House to confirm this.

I have been asked by many competitors about sealed surface tyres for the rounds we have on asphalt later in the season. Please rest assured that the championship is working hard behind the scenes to resolve this issue and we hope to give more details shortly.

## John Cooper

## Crook and Standen star in WWRS R.A.C. Rally Championship

Simon and Alister Crook and Grahame Standen/Jane Edgington were the major victors on the second round of the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship, the Viking Motorsport/Links Electrical Mid Wales Stages (Sunday 1 March).

The Crook brothers were highest R.A.C. finishers in their Open Category Opel Manta, while Standen turned in a superb performance to finishing leading historic runner in his 1600cc Ford Escort Mk2.

The Mid Wales Stages was the second round of the R.A.C. Championship season and attracted a number of crews making their 2015 debut.

On a day when slippery stages and the occasional blizzard delivered a real challenge for the crews, the Crooks moved ahead in the Open Category when the Escort Mk2 of Phil Burton/Mal Capstick slid off in Hafren and got beached. Burton had set a mighty pace among the Open cars to take a big lead after two stages despite this being his first experience of these stages. However, in the 16-mile Hafren stage, he slid off the road and the car was beached so any chance of a good result was gone. Burton eventually got going again with the help of some other crews and made it to the finish.

While the Crooks moved ahead in the category, there was misfortune for Barry Stevenson-Wheeler and John Pickavance (Ford Escort Mk2). They lost over four minutes off the road in the Hafren stage and then had to finish the final stage with a puncture.

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Standen, meanwhile, was one of the stars of the rally with his pace in the 1600cc car and he finished ahead of the more powerful Category 3 Escort Mk2s of James Potter/Bob Duck and Leigh Armstrong/Chris Armstrong. Once again, Standen's self-prepared car ran faultlessly. Potter, meanwhile, was pleased to get his rebuilt car to the finish on its first run after a major accident on the Trackrod Rally last September.

In Category 4 Will Midgley and Jonathan Driver (Toyota Corolla) were on top after a very good run but had a scare when the alternator failed on the run to the first service halt.

Other RAC category winners were Gwilym Roberts/Don James (Lotus Cortina) in Category 1 and Bob Bean/Malcolm Smithson (Ford Escort Mk1) in Category 2. Bean made a late change of car after his Lotus Cortina was sidelined by gearbox failure on the previous weekend's Riponian Rally. Roberts, meanwhile, had a big early drama when the wheel nuts sheared and his Cortina lost a wheel. Fortunately, while a spectator retrieved the wheel from a river, the driver found some spare wheel nuts.

## Awards confirmed for WWRs R.A.C. Championship round two

The special award winners for the second round of the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship have been announced following the Viking Motorsport/Links Electrical Mid Wales Stages (Sunday 1 March).

The championship, organised by the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club, runs in parallel to the Mintex MSA British Historic Rally Championship and is aimed at clubmen historic crews as well as those running in the Open Category. With containing costs for clubmen as a prime aim, the championship runs to a six-tyre rule on all events.

The 'Spirit of the Rally' award, which is a set of axle brake pads from Mintex, went to Bob Bean and Malcolm Smithson, who made a late change of entry to switch to Bob's Ford Escort Mk1 after their regular Lotus Cortina suffered gearbox failure a week earlier on the Riponian Rally. Bob, who will celebrate his 77th birthday on Saturday (7 March), hadn't driven the Escort for nearly two years but still claimed class C3 victory among the R.A.C. contenders.

Leading R.A.C. historic finishers Grahame Standen and Jane Edgington collected the Fuchs Lubricants product award for the 'Best Improvement on Seeding'. They took their Ford Escort Mk2 up to 27th place overall in the historic section of the rally.

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## 2015 DMACK Carlisle Stages is announced

Outline details of the 2015 DMACK Carlisle Stages (Saturday 13 June) have been announced, with the event offering 43 stage miles in the Kershope and Newcastleton complexes for a competitive entry fee of £470. The entry fee reduces to £420 for Rally First contenders.

The rally will feature three major championships: the REIS/Ravenol BTRDA Rally Series, the MSA English Rally Championship and the West Wales Rally Spares R.A.C. Rally Championship. The event will also be a round of the S G Petch Association of North East and Cumbria Car Clubs Stage Rally Championship and the Association of Northern Car Clubs Forest Challenge.

Building on the success and excellent competitor response to the first two Carlisle Stages, the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club will run a compact event based close to Carlisle and running over superb stages. It will be the first time that a round of the BTRDA Rally Series has visited the Kielder since the 1992 Hadrian Centurion Rally.

The rally will again be based at the premises of the R J Murray & Sons Haulage Company in Longtown, Carlisle and will cover 43 stage miles and just 99 road miles. Only eight miles of stage will be double-used, thus ensuring the best possible road conditions. The first car will start at 8.30am and be back at the finish at around 3pm on this compact event.

Clerk of the Course Nicola Heppenstall said: "We're very pleased to have been invited to host round five of the BTRDA Rally Series and I think the BTRDA crews will really enjoy the format of the event and the quality of the stages. It will be a new challenge for many of the regular BTRDA contenders, while some of the R.A.C. Rally Championship crews will be back for the third time. We are very grateful to DMACK for its continued support."

The route will cover six forest special stages, with visits to the main service area after stages three and five. Management service will be available after all stages bar stage one. The rally will finish with a spectacular 14-mile stage in Kershope. "The stages are in beautiful condition," said Heppenstall after a recent route survey. None of the stages will be used in 2015 ahead of the Carlisle Stages.

Scrutineering and documentation will run from 2pm until 7pm on Friday afternoon.

The DMACK Carlisle Stages will be organised by the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club.

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