



RACRMC Newsletter May 2024

Welcome to the Early May news letter

A busy start to the month has seen round 4 of the championship on the Isle of Man giving 22 crews two scoring opportunities towards the championship.

Championship News

Championship Points after the Manx Rally Round 4 can be found on the Web Site www.racrmc.org and are attached to the newsletter.

Round 5 – Argyll Rally – 21 / 22 June Entries are still available.

Round 6 – Tour of Epynt to confirm that this event is running Saturday 20th and Sunday 21st July.

Programme:

Saturday 20th

- the event will start in Llandovery at 15.30,
- SS 1/3 will be a 2 miles stage
- SS 2/4 will be a 12 mile stage
- No service until after SS4 with the first car finishing at 18.30 hrs

Sunday 21st

- 9am restart
- 4 stages each around 13.5 miles 2 going one way and 2 back
- Service after every stage
- Finish at Llandovery around 16.00 hrs

Regulations will be available from 15 May via www.porttalbotmotorclub.co.uk and Entries open on Sunday 19 May.





Rally Anglo Caledonian

It is expected that the event regulations will be published on Saturday 1st June 2024, hopefully more information about the event later in the month.

Higgins, McDaid, and Perez share Manx Rally BHRC spoils



The iconic Isle of Man lanes provided a thrilling battle for the Fuchs Lubricants British Historic Rally Championship last weekend, as the Manx Rally [10/11 May] saw three different crew celebrations for series contenders, after a brutal two days of competition.

The BHRC would make its first trip to the island in seven years and with over 127 miles of top-class closed road action in store, the weekend would be split into two points-scoring opportunities, the Friday leg providing the first and Saturday the second.

That meant the championship standings could well be shaken up with a potential 60 points on offer from the weekend. But the daunting Manx roads are famed for their challenging and high-speed





nature and add in the prospect of night-time stages on Friday; respect would be the order of the day.

A four-test blast opened proceedings and it was Severn Valley Stages victor Seb Perez who was out of the blocks with fastest time over the double run of Pool Vaaish to take an early lead over the series returnee Gareth James. That stage win would increase to three and, Perez would grab an 11-second lead before his Porsche 911 suffered a fan belt issue on the final stage of the leg.

Step forward five-time Manx International Rally winner and Manxman, Mark Higgins in his Triumph TR7 V8. Despite a slow start, Higgins responded on the fourth test, going 12 seconds quicker than anyone else, to head into the rest halt with a 3.3-second buffer over James in his Escort MKII. All this, despite an erratic gearbox in the TR7 which was changed in service.

The evening re-start saw Higgins pick up where he left off earlier, punching in the fastest times on every stage during the evening, but it would be the final Ellerslie test that he and co-driver Carl Williamson sealed the deal in the darkness, going a staggering 46.6 seconds faster than anyone else to take maximum BHRC points for the opening day.

Gareth James and Steffan Evans ended the day second whilst Perez and co-driver Gary McElhinney secured third spot. Richard Hill/Patrick Cooper took fourth with an inspired drive in their Escort MKII, whilst Rudi Lancaster/Guy Weaver also returned an impressive run to round out the top five in their example.

Saturday's stages would mean a reset of the clocks in terms of the second set of championship points for the weekend, and it was James who took the initiative from Perez but would sadly retire on stage twelve. Michael McDaid and Declan Casey stopped the clocks just 5.9s off James and threw their hat into the ring for day two.

Higgins was nowhere to be seen after the car cut out over a jump, however, the crew managed to locate and fix the wiring issue, taking a stage maximum and recovering to take a well-earned rally finish.

Meanwhile, the battle for points raged on and after the first loop, it was Hill who had the march on McDaid, but just three seconds separated the Escort drivers. An epic battle unfolded over the afternoon's stages, and it would be a `winner takes all` final stage blast over the 16-mile `The Baldwins`.

McDaid went faster than Hill by just four seconds; but that was just enough to take the honours, Hill losing out by a staggering 0.4s after a full day of action. It was an impressive first win for the Irishman, but Hill had some consolation as he now leads the championship standings with three points in hand over Perez.





And the Porsche driver also had plenty to celebrate, winning Category Two [cars registered between 1968 and 1975] on both days of competition, third-placed points on day two and, taking the overall Manx Rally historic win.

Outside of the podiums, Rudi Lancaster and Guy Weaver found their calling on the tough Manx lanes, ending the rally and day two in fourth spot overall, a result which sees them work their way into the title fight.

Coming into the weekend Adrian Hetherington enjoyed the top spot in the standings but fell to third after a tricky weekend in his MKII. He and co-driver Ronan O'Neil finished behind Melvyn Evans and Sion Williams in the overall results, the all-Welsh pairing setting some impressive times on their first BHRC outing of the year.

Richard Jordon was another former BHRC contender to make an appearance on the island, this time with Sam Collis on the notes. They finished seventh on both days in their Ford Escort MKII.

In the remaining battles for Category Two, it was Ben and Steven Smith who took second spot on both days in their Ford Escort MK1, with Philip Harris/Derek Davies third, both crews in a Ford Escort MK1.

A late registration for Danny Cowell/Sarah Jane Coole proved fruitful, as they took their stunning Talbot Samba Rallye to an FIA Category 4a [Cars registered between 1982 and 1985] victory, putting more powerful cars to shame along the way.

The Fuchs Lubricants British Historic Rally Championship stays on asphalt for the next round of the season in Scotland, the Dunoon Presents Argyll Rally in June.



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