



RACRMC Newsletter September 2023

Welcome to the September Newsletter

After the summer break the Championship got back on track with the Woodpecker Rally which saw 26 contenders in Ludlow, next is the Trackrod Rally this weekend.

Championship

Attached to this Newsletter are the current Championship Points after the Woodpecker Rally, a copy of these can also be found on the event web site.

We look forward to seeing our contender this weekend on the Trackrod Rally in Filey.

Carlisle Stages Rally

Regulations have been now published for this years event on Friday 20th and Saturday 21st October 2023.

The event is going back to H&H Auctions in Carlisle for Scrutineering and overnight halt on Friday 20th.

The event is due to start on the Friday evening at 18.31 hrs and going into the Florida and Kershope forests for some night stages for 10 miles.

Saturday will see the Scottish Rally Championship join the event leaving Carlisle at 09.01 hrs with stages in Kershope, Riccarton, Buck Fell and Hyndlee and another 45 miles before the finish at Kielder Castle at 16.00 hrs.

To date the entry level has reached 75 so we are hopeful for a good event.





Roger Albert Clark Rally

Each of the forestry areas have now approved the stages that we are intending to use for the event and an updated route schedule will be published shortly to crews to enable them to plan their logistics for the event, this will also be updated on the web site.

Spectator information is currently being written and we are hopeful to be announcing spectator packages towards the end of September.

Entries are still looking strong for the event with a current level of 174 crews with 4 more waiting to pay.

Anglo Caledonian Rally

We have had a lot of interest in this new event for next year which is running over the weekend of 23rd and 24th November 2024.

The event will be between 120 and 140 miles and will be eligible for all cars.

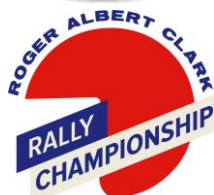
The Club are in discussion with a number of Championships so the event is appealing to co-ordinators and hopefully to competitors and marshals also.

As the event develops we will keep publishing more information.

Club Dinner Dance

As announced in last months newsletter the end of season and awards night will be held at CASA Hotel in Chesterfield on Saturday 3rd February 2024.

If you wish to book some discounted accommodation direct with the hotel then please use code: RACR030224





Press Releases during the last month:

Chilman charges to Woodpecker Rally win

Roger Chilman and Patrick Walsh made it a hat-trick of Fuchs Lubricants British Historic Rally Championship top scores in 2023, after a brutal day in the forests of the Phil Price Memorial Woodpecker Rally on Saturday [9 September].

Whilst it was BHRC newcomers George Lepley and Dale Bowen who were the first finishers home in their Mitsubishi Galant VR4, the Category 4B [cars registered 1986-1990] machine is not eligible for overall points and in what was a rally of high-drama, Chilman capitalised the most.

He would be languishing down in fourth place in the early stages of the Ludlow-based event, but the Ford Escort MKII driver kept his cool in the blistering late-summer heat to deliver a consistent run and throw his hat firmly into the BHRC title ring.

Heading into the fifth round of the season in Ludlow it was Nick Elliott and Dave Price who led the championship standings in their FIAT 131 Abarth despite not taking a win so far this season, and they would be the bridesmaids again with second spot and the first FIA Category K crew home. Gareth James and Steffan Evans stamped their mark on the series by taking their first BHRC podium of 2023 in third in their Ford Escort MKII.

But the tricky Woodpecker stages on both sides of the England and Wales border would throw up plenty of surprises along the way and it was far from a clear-cut opening loop. Elliott took the early advantage in the opening stage but a sensational run from Richard Jordan and James Gratton-Smith in their Ford Escort MKII saw them lead the BHRC contingent for the first time in their careers.

Pushing as much as they dare, the pairing would head out into the afternoon loop with just two seconds in hand over the chasing Chilman, who was also tied for second with Tom Walster and Glyn Thomas.

But the fifth test saw Jordan exit the event with a sizeable roll, leaving Chilman and Walster to fight it out, only for the stub axle to fail on Walster's Escort on the very next stage. That promoted Chilman to the lead and with a controlled drive over the afternoon, he was able to spray the champagne for the third time this season.





"If we have done enough [to win], it's a strange way to do it" said Chilman after the final stage.

"We were a bit steady to start with and then we had some good stages and started to get back to the pace that we needed to be, effectively getting back in front of the guys that were a bit quicker than us this morning. But look, I'm pleased with that win, it's been good".

Whilst it was Chilman who took maximum points, it would be George Lepley and Dale Bowen who would effectively take the win in their Mitsubishi Galant, the first four-wheel-drive machine to contest the series. A blistering run of form throughout the day saw Lepley adapt to his new steed and progress as the stages counted down, with the young driver having a large grin on his face throughout the day, taking the Category 4B victory to boot.

Elliot did his title chances no harm at all with second and top FIA Category K to continue to lead both heading into the final two rounds whilst James kept his nose clean all day long to secure a BHRC podium, his first since 2013.

Adran Hetherington and Ronan O'Neil endured a tough event and were surprised to be so far off the pace during the morning's stages, but the Escort MKII pairing took advantage of the carnage ahead of them to take fourth with Will Onions and Dave Williams rounding out the top five in their similar machine.

Spending his honeymoon in Ludlow, Josh Carr also added to the enjoyable weekend by taking the Category Two [cars registered between 1968-1975] victory. Guided by Osian Owen, Carr was the star of the category with Andrew Stokes and Jonny Tad Evans making a few early mistakes and hampered any chance of catching the Yorkshireman, both crews piloting a Ford Escort MKI.

Terry Cree and Richard Shores blasted their Mini Cooper S through the stages to win Category One [cars registered before 31.12.67] whilst Steve Magson and Steve Bielby took the top spot in the Rally2 [non-Historic] category, piloting the unique Mercedes 190E.

The next round of the series takes place in just two weeks, with the Trackrod Historic Cup taking crews to Yorkshire for some classic English forest tests.





NEWS FROM THE CARLISLE STAGES

Wednesday 6 September 2023

Extended route planned for Carlisle Stages

This year's Carlisle Stages will feature 55 competitive miles with an opening leg in the darkness of Friday evening (October 20) and a full day with a further 45 stage miles on Saturday, October 21.

The event, run by Nicola Heppenstall and the team at the Roger Albert Clark Rally Motor Club, will be the final round of both the Fuchs Lubricants British Historic Rally Championship and the KNC Groundworks Scottish Rally Championship. The rally will be based at H and H Auctions, just off junction 43 of the M6 at Carlisle.

With 10 stage miles on Friday evening after a 6:30pm start and a further 45 miles on Saturday, the event offers excellent value for money for an entry fee of £795. It offers an ideal opportunity for competitors to tackle some Kielder stages in the darkness ahead of the Roger Albert Clark rally in November.

As well as being the deciding round of two major national championships, the Carlisle Stages will also be a round of the SG Petch Association of North East and Cumbria Car Clubs Stage Rally Championship.

Heppenstall said: "The stages are all in excellent condition and 10 miles of route will only be used once. Riccarton and Hyndlee have both been regraded since the Border Counties Rally in May and some of the Kershope stage has not been used for at least six years."

On Friday evening, competitors will tackle two stages in Florida and Kershope before returning to H and H Auctions for the overnight halt. Saturday will feature six stages in Kershope, Riccarton, Buck Fell and Hyndlee, with service at Kielder Greenside. The finish will then be at Kielder Castle on Saturday afternoon.

Regulations are now available via the RACRMC website (www.racrmc.org) and entries open on Sunday, September 10.

A tense Trackrod Rally awaits the British Historic Rally Championship





Just two weeks after the Phil Price Memorial Woodpecker Rally saw Roger Chilman and Patrick Walsh claim their third Fuchs Lubricants British Historic Rally Championship event win of 2023, the Trackrod Historic Cup will host the penultimate and potentially crucial round of the season this weekend [22-23 September].

The super-fast stages in the Northeast corner of the country will see the BHRC contenders bid for a top score to aid their title chances, as the two-day forest event could well hold a vital link in the race for this year's championship.

The popular rally takes crews into the legendary stages of Dalby, Cropton and Langdale but with an added twist of a 12-mile blast under the cover of darkness on Friday night to set the tone for Saturday's action-packed leg.

A good time over the opener will be crucial and currently in the pound-seat is Herefordshire's Roger Chilman. With three wins to his name so far this season, Chilman and co-driver Patrick Walsh are well-placed to head into the final round in October with a healthy lead once the two dropped scores are taken into account.

But the Ford Escort MKII pairing haven't had it all their own way this season and a final-stage crash on the Plains Rally means they can't afford to relax in Yorkshire. Heading the standings are Nick Elliott and Dave Price who have been super-consistent all season in their FIAT 131 Abarth.

Whilst a win has eluded them so far, they have regularly secured a sizeable points haul and head to Filey with five points in hand. But a win will be the goal if they are to stand a chance of keeping Chilman at bay. They do however head the FIA Category K standings, although the overall championship is most certainly their focus this season.

The leading BHRC crew on the road will be Tour of Epynt victors Jason Pritchard and Phil Clarke who bring their Ford Escort MKII back to gravel specification after a non-championship run on Rali Ceredigion.

Pritchard hasn't committed to a full season due to concentrating on the Roger Albert Clark Rally at the end of the year but his return to historic rallying has been sublime, building his pace as the season progresses and he adapts back to life in the Ford Escort MKII.

Adrian Hetherington will be aiming to find the pace that eluded him on the Woodpecker in his Ford Escort MK11 and hopefully, the return to some more familiar





stages for the Northern Irishman will aid that. Wexford's Gary Nolan steps into the co-driver's seat for this event.

Robert Gough and Paul Morris also had a Woodpecker Rally to forget after retiring their Escort MKII on the opening stage of the event but will undoubtedly be looking for redemption this time around.

Richard Jordan's entry is currently pending after a sizeable accident a few weeks ago in his Ford Escort MKII. A sensational run saw Jordan and co-driver James Gratton-Smith lead the Woodpecker, their first time topping the BHRC timesheets but sadly ended their event with a roll. Gratton-Smith's recovery has been speedy, but a final decision on their run will come later this week.

A great performance in Ludlow saw George Lepley and Dale Bowen haul their Mitsubishi Galant VR4 to the first BHRC crew home and the Category 4B win in what was the first time a four-wheel-drive historic had entered the class. The shift to the fast English stages will suit the Galant, so expect more of the same from the young driver.

Seb Perez brings the noise with his Porsche 911 RS with Gary McElhinney on the notes, whilst the Woodpecker's third-placed Gareth James is hoping for another podium in his Escort MKII, this time, with reigning BHRC champion co-driver Dan Petrie in the co-driver's seat.

The Category Two [cars registered between 1968-1975] battle is likely to be just as fierce with current leader Josh Carr having a healthy list of challengers all eager to usurp his dominance of late.

Carr and Osian Owen took victory last time out in their Escort MKI but face a challenge from the experienced local Warren Philliskirk and Garry Green in a similar machine. The return of Jeremy Easson and Mike Reynolds as well as Phil Jobson and Peter Johnson could also see Carr's lead in the series eaten into.

Terry Cree and Richard Shores bring their Mini Cooper S back to Yorkshire in the hope of securing Category One [cars registered before 31.12.67] honours whilst Paul Thompson and Josh Davison head the Rally2 [non-Historic] charge.

After a ceremonial start on Filey seafront crews head out to Dalby for the tricky nighttime test on Friday. Saturday hosts the bulk of the miles, with Cropton, Gale Rigg and Langdale forest stages before returning to Filey to spray the champagne.

