

CHAMPIONSHIP NEWSLETTER No. 6 - 2018

ATL CARLISLE STAGES

BIRD TABLES FIRST OUTRIGHT WIN OF THE SEASON!...

Although they've led the Jordan Road Surfacing BTRDA Gold Star® Rally Championship from the off, Paul Bird & Jack Morton's dominance has been achieved through a string of good results but, prior to the Carlisle Stages, an outright win had eluded them. So, heading the final time sheets on Round 5 of the series not only sees them maintaining their position at the top, but also by an increased margin.

JORDAN ROAD SURFACING BTRDA GOLD STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

Down in 6th place after the opening stage, Bird was able to stretch his Focus WRC's legs over 14 miles in Newcastleton to move up to 3rd and then assume the overall lead after another lengthy stage in Kershope. The final run through Ash Park was completed without drama and Bird/Morton arrived back at the H&H Auctions finish 21s ahead of their nearest rivals, who were.....



Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod 2nd Overall

all know what thought did!.... It returned in Kershope where, in addition to a rainstorm of biblical proportions that caused havoc to a number of crews, the North Walian's problems saw him stop the clocks nearly half-a-minute slower than Bird. So, although he couldn't claim his third victory on the bounce, after all the trials and tribulations, Edwards should be well pleased with runner-up spot - and another healthy points haul.



Paul Bird/Jack Morton 1st Overall



Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence 3rd Overall

Matt Edwards/Darren Garrod had taken the last couple of BTRDA Series events by storm and made the journey up to the top of the M6 with an eye to making it a hat-trick of wins. The day started in predictable fashion with FTD on the opening stage but then, in Newcastleton, their Fiesta developed power steering problems, i.e. there wasn't any! Edwards struggled manfully on, such that he was still leading - just! - as he crossed the stop line. However, this slender advantage disappeared during the first run through Ash Park and, by the end of that one, Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson were ahead of them.

Service, back in Carlisle, followed and Edwards thought the power steering problem had been cured - but we

For their part, Petch/Wilkinson went off in Kershope, only to have Charlie Payne's by-now greasy-side-up Fiesta coming to rest perilously close to them. Petch eventually got going again but there was something amiss underneath the Fiesta, causing him to call it a

day. It would have been a quiet dinner table for the S.G. Petch team that evening as Steve (Snr) was also contesting the event and departed the fray after going off on the same stage!...

Sacha Kakad/James Aldridge are acclimatising themselves well with their Fiesta - Top Ten times on all five stages saw them take 5th place, a mere 5s off a podium spot. The other Fiesta debutants this season, Luke Francis/John H Roberts, were in 3rd place after the opening stage but then went off in Edwards' dust on SS2. What was particularly galling for the pair was that the car was undamaged and, once recovered, was driven back to the finish under its own steam!

Following their indiscretion on the Plains, Ian Joel/Graeme Wood returned to take maximum Class B13 points. Any threat posed by Richard Hill/Steffan Evans evaporated on the penultimate stage when their Impreza left the road, while Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear stayed out of trouble to bring their Lancer EVO9 home just outside the Top Ten and move up to 2nd in class behind Joel/Wood.

BTRDA PRODUCTION CUP®

NAYLOR HAMMERS HOME HIS ADVANTAGE!....

Having had to give best to defending BTRDA Production Cup® Champions, Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy on the last three events, Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence finally emerged from the Kielder shadows to take their first maximum points score of the season in their Lancer EVO9. Not even a puncture towards the end of the day could prevent the Midlanders from coming out on top and actually finishing 4th overall, just over a minute ahead of Thompson.



Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence 1st Production Cup

Ron Hall's attempt to join the EVOs in the points came to nought after his Impreza packed the fiddle after the run through Newcastleton.

The Carlisle Stages brought some new names to the fore in the MRF Fiesta ST Trophy as 17-years old Ewan Tindall, aided and abetted by Paul Hudson, took his first 'win' in the category. Mathew & Tim Tordoff also gained their best result of the season so far with 2nd, while Zak Hughes/Tom Wood put two consecutive DNFs behind them to take the final podium spot.

JORDAN ROAD SURFACING BTRDA SILVER STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

IT'S LEPLEY, BY GEORGE!....



George Lepley/Tom Woodburn 1st Silverstar & R2 Cup

Once again, the Jordan Road Surfacing BTRDA Silver Star® Rally Championship saw an interesting Top Three by the end of the day on the Carlisle Stages. No 1400s this time but George Lepley/Tom Woodburn's domination of the BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup spilled over into Silver Star as the pair came away with maximum points in both categories!

Second place on the day went to another R2 car, in this case Bob Vardy/Keaton Williams' Fiesta while Ernie Graham/Robin Kellard's Historic-spec. Escort was 3rd, narrowly squeezing out the Sunbeam VXR of Andy Davison/Tom Murphy.

Rob Dennis maintains his Championship lead but he and Andy Boswell had 'one of those days your mother warned you about' in Carlisle and, were it not for the assistance of others in dealing with detached oil pipes, clutch maladies and punctures, their Escort would have joined the list of retirements....



Bob Vardy/Keaton Williams 2nd SilverStar & R2 Cup



Tommi Meadows/Emma Morrison 1st 1400

Had they failed to finish, they would have joined quite an impressive array of other Escorts that were denied sight of the arch for one reason or another. Owen McMackin/Lee Taylor (bent rear suspension - SS5), Allan McDowall/Gavin Heseltine (stopped - SS6), Nick Dobson/Steve Pugh (stopped - SS7) and Steve Hopewell/Clive Jones (rolled - SS7). Barry Jordan/Paul Wakely's Avenger was also a casualty of the day but, in this instance, it waited until the final stage before throwing in the towel!....

Having contested last month's Plains Rally in an R2 Fiesta, Tommi Meadows, ably assisted by Emma Morrison, was reunited with his Ka for the Carlisle Stages and a solid run to 35th overall gave the pair a class win and their first maximum score in the BTRDA 1400 Championship. Steve Black's Suzuki Swift was in close attendance to take 2nd, with Pete Gorst/Phil King next in their Nova.

Chris Powell/Jim Lewis were the fastest 1400 crew on the opening stage but then their Sunbeam developed an electrical problem which, among other things, affected the operation of its fuel pump. They were forced to stop to try and trace the fault (which was eventually isolated to alternator connections), taking a maximum in the process and ending up as the last classified finishers. Dave & Toby Brick lost more than two minutes to Powell/Lewis on the opening stage, but their Nova still leads the points table - by one from Powell's Sunbeam! Kieran Darrington's rehabilitation into the 1400 Championship continues with a third consecutive finish in his Corsa.

Let's just hope that, in time to come, Kieran is joined by further returnees - and newcomers! - to what still is, even with a reduced field, a fantastically competitive series.

BTRDA RALLY FIRST® CHAMPIONSHIP

NIL POINTS FROM THE CARLISLE JURY!....

Leading the field, or not, the prospect of a run through Kielder Forest obviously didn't find favour with contestants in the BTRDA Rally First Championship. The Fiesta ST of Wesley Gilford was the only taker on the



Ewan Tindall/Paul Hudson 1st ST Trophy

BTRDA 1400 CHAMPIONSHIP®

TOMMI TIPS THE SCALES!...

Following the relaxation of the MSA's ruling on running orders, the Carlisle Stages was the first BTRDA Rally Series event to see the 1400s starting at the front of the field. Obviously, there was no significant difference in the numbers present but, at least, it's a start...

day but an off-road excursion on the penultimate stage of the day prevented the Whitchurch driver from capitalising on his solitary status and adding to the points he scored on the Rallynuts Stages.

To reprise the words of the Labour Party's 1997 election victory song, 'things can only get better'! It's just a case of when....



Tom Coughtrie/Ian Fraser 1st H4

MAXXIS MSA ENGLISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

LET'S GET THE SHOW ON THE ROAD!....

Following the unfortunate cancellation of the Malcolm Wilson Rally due to the effects of the 'Beast from the East', MAXXIS MSA English Rally Championship contenders have had to wait until the Carlisle Stages Rally for the rescheduled contest to begin. As previously mentioned, Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson's day in Kielder didn't go according to plan and, hence, the start of the defence of their 2017 title has had to be put on hold until Round 2 next month.

Having been completely revamped for the start of last season, the MAXXIS-backed Championship welcomes all-comers in cars that conform to the current MSA Technical Regulations, i.e. any vehicle that has passed scrutineering. With a class-based series producing various 'winners' on each qualifying event, it's logical that, following the first one, there are a number of competitors - all of whom have been successful on the

day - tying for the lead and it's only as the season moves forward that those with continued success appear at the top of the points tables.

So, winning the event outright is a sure-fire way of ensuring that you're in the mix when it comes to points - step forward, Paul Bird & Jack Morton.... It also appears that running a car with a 'Ford' badge is currently beneficial!

Following the Carlisle Stages, the joint leaders are : Ernie Graham (Escort MkII), George Lepley (Fiesta R2), Paul Bird (Focus WRC), Tommi Meadows (Ka) and Ian Joel (Escort Cosworth). Meanwhile, a mere two points adrift at this stage, in joint 6th places, we find : Matthew Hirst (Lancer EVO9), Matt Edwards (Fiesta), Steve Black (Suzuki Swift), Andy Davison (Talbot Sunbeam VXR), Tim Phelps (Escort MkII) and Bob Vardy (Fiesta R2).



Ernie Graham/Robin Kellard 1st BTRDA Historic Cup

The second round of the Championship gives competitors something of an 'away-day' by taking them to Builth Wells for the Nicky Grist Stages Rally. The Quinton Motor Club-organised event uses several of the classic mid-Wales forests to provide a suitable challenge for competitors who relish the possibility of becoming the holder of one of the MSA's 'home-country' Rally Championship titles!

All photos courtesy of Kevin Money and Malcom Almond, Jordan Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series official photographers

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: Competitors to check!

A full list of all the **JORDAN Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series** points after the Carlisle Stages can be found in the Competitor section of www.btrdarally.com These points will become final on **Monday 25th June**.

NB: Following the unfortunate cancellation of the Malcolm Wilson Rally in March due to the exceptional weather conditions, the 2018 JORDAN Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series will now consist of SEVEN rounds with the best FIVE scores to count and the 2018 MAXXIS MSA English Rally Championship will now consist of FIVE events with the best FOUR scores to count.

MINTEX / QUESTMEAD BONUS SCHEME

The winners of the Mintex Awards on the Carlisle Stages, each of whom receive a FREE set of competition brake pads from Questmead Ltd, are: -

Improvement on Start No: 1400's/Rally First: **Steve Black** - Suzuki Swift (1400S)

Improvement on Start No: Gold Star/Silver Star: **Tony Simpson** - Ford Fiesta R2 (B10/R2)

Steve or Alan Brown from Questmead can be found in the Service Area at most events but to **claim your reward, please contact them in advance on 01706 363939**.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

NICKY GRIST STAGES – 14th JULY

Entries are now open for the Nicky Grist Stages with the official event Regulations and Entry forms published on-line at nickygriststages.co.uk. This year's Quinton MC organised event will be the only rally to use Halfway and Route 60 this year – while the famous Crychan stage will be in prime condition, as will **a brand new smooth, fast and flowing stage, which will be used for rallying for the very first time**.

The event will be based at the Royal Welsh Showground in Llanelwedd, and this year's event will offer competitors a full 45 miles of outstanding forest stages in a compact, all-action and no-nonsense route.

The 2018 Nicky Grist Stages will also be the first event in Wales to run under the new seeding guidelines, which sees a relaxation of the current ruling on seeding in the order of anticipated performance. The new ruling, which comes into force on July 1, will allow lower-powered cars like the BTRDA 1400 class and the Rally First Championship competitors to once again run at the front of the field – giving them improved road conditions and quite literally a level playing field on which to compete on. The classes running at the front of the field will be 1400S, 1400C, RF1.4, RF1.6, RF2.0 and H1/2. This seeding system has in previous years, attracted a large number of competitors, right across the classes.

Although still a long way off, the organisers of the **Trackrod Forest Rally** which will be the final event of the BTRDA Rally Series on Sat 29th September, have confirmed that they will be providing a full 45 stage miles of all single use Yorkshire Forest stages.

2018 AWARDS PRESENTATIONS - Date for your diary.

We can now confirm that the Awards Presentations for the 2018 JORDAN Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series and the MAXXIS MSA English Rally Championship will be held on Saturday 12th January 2019 in the function suite at the Drayton Manor Hotel near Tamworth. More details in due course.

ON EVENT FUEL:

Vital Equipment are the recommended fuel supplier for the BTRDA Rally Series and will be providing a re-fuel service at all the BTRDA Rally Series events. They supply both a MSA compliant Super Unleaded fuel and a FIA spec Carless turbo fuel. We strongly emphasise the convenience, safety and organisational benefits that using the Vital Equipment facility brings to competitors.

To order your fuel please use the on-line order facility listed in the Competitors section of the BTRDA Rally Series website. www.vitalequipment.co.uk/btrda-fuel-order-form-30-w.asp

DECALS:

Competitors are reminded that they **must** display the BTRDA Rally Series decals on every qualifying event to be eligible to score points in the JORDAN Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series and the MAXXIS MSA English Rally Championship. These include a sponsor panel on each side of the car and a championship screen strip which must be displayed on the windscreen, not on the roof. Decals are available from the BTRDA desk at event signing on. NB: Not carrying a screen strip will also exclude the competitor from any film coverage. (Co-drivers with non-registered drivers must carry 2 x BTRDA club decals on the car)

LIVE RESULTS:

All events in the BTRDA Rally Series use the excellent Tynemouth Computer Services (TCS) to provide live event results. This is the most comprehensive and detailed results system currently operating and enables competitors, supporters and spectators to follow events via the live online web results service.

SPECIAL STAGE filming: The popular coverage of the JORDAN Road Surfacing BTRDA Rally Series by ‘Special Stage’ from all rounds of the championship will be shared on various platforms including Frontrunner TV and our BTRDA Rally Facebook page and BTRDA Rally Series website.

The coverage will try to include all categories / classes where it is practical to do so, in order to tell the story of the event and some of the online coverage will be split into shorter packages and released separately.

In order to help Special Stage produce more informed programmes we encourage competitors to send information about their exploits to Special Stage ASAP after each event. This should be done online via the driver info page at www.specialstage.co.uk/driver-info

ON-EVENT TEAM:

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