



## CHAMPIONSHIP NEWSLETTER No. 2 – 2020

### VISIT CONWY CAMBRIAN RALLY

### MRF TYRES BTRDA GOLD STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

### STEPHEN'S FEAST IN LLANDUDNO!...

Twelve months on from their ignominious exit from the 2019 Visit Conwy Cambrian Rally when their Fiesta WRC succumbed to differential failure on only the second stage, Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson returned to what was the opening round of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series in an attempt to put matters right. Winning the event outright by a margin of a minute-and-a-half after 44 miles of stages in the North Wales forests puts a tick in the box and, at this early stage, sets them up nicely for a tilt at regaining the BTRDA Gold Star® Championship crown they last won in 2017.



Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson 1<sup>st</sup> overall & Gold Star

The eventual victors set FTD on the opening stage from George Lepley/Tom Woodburn, who are also back for more in their Lancer EVOX, by the narrowest of margins (0.01s!), with Dylan Davies/Llion Williams (Skoda Fabia R5) stopping the clocks a further 0.2s back. Then, on the first run through Gwydyr, Petch was again fastest, with Davies his nearest rival, ahead of the Fiestas of Sacha Kakad/James Aldridge and Charlie Payne/ Patrick Walsh.



Ian Bainbridge/Dale Bowen 2<sup>nd</sup> Gold Star

The longest stage of the day, Penmachno, upset the rhythm somewhat as Russ Thompson/Andy Murphy, whose uprated Lancer EVO9 now has a new home in Class B13 rather than its previous NR4, were quickest from Ian Joel/Graeme Wood, moving the latter's Escort Cosworth into the lead of the event at this point. Petch/Wilkinson were demoted to 3<sup>rd</sup>, but Davies/Williams lost around nine minutes, eventually arriving back in Llandudno in the mid-thirties - a disappointing end to the day after such a promising start.



Martyn & Dawn England 3<sup>rd</sup> Gold Star 1<sup>st</sup> R5 Cup

Having had a puncture, which required changing in-stage, Lepley could only manage 42<sup>nd</sup> fastest through Penmachno but, immediately putting the experience behind him, set quickest time round the Great Orme. Notwithstanding, the eventual winners were back in top spot after the tarmac blast, consolidating their advantage over the flying Lancer on the second runs through both Crafnant and Gwydyr. With a final flourish, Lepley was quickest on the final stage, Elsi,





by 0.4s, in spite of another puncture but, to be fair, by that time Petch didn't need to push too hard and risk jeopardising the win.



George Lepley/Tom Woodburn 1<sup>st</sup> B13

Russ Thompson slipped from 2<sup>nd</sup> after SS6 to 7<sup>th</sup> at the finish, with Ian Bainbridge/Dale Bowen (Fabia) inheriting runners-up spot. Third in the Gold Star points were Martyn & Dawn England whose Fiesta also claimed top billing in the newly-instigated BTRDA Rallye R5 Cup. Karl Simmons/Mark Glennerster's Skoda was behind them, with Kakad/Aldridge and Davies/Williams also opening their accounts.

As for B13, Lepley/Woodburn, Thompson/Murphy and Joel/Wood, whose previously pristine Cossie bore the scars of a coming-together with the wall on the Great Orme, finished line astern in 6<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> & 8<sup>th</sup> places respectively.

Among those not to feature in the 'Final Results' were Payne/Walsh whose Fiesta broke a wheel in Penmachno and Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear (Lancer EVO9) who took maximums both there and on the Great Orme before calling it a day.

As an aside, while there are a lot of things that rally organisers can, and do, control, there are also certain aspects that are beyond them - near the top of this list, especially in February, is the weather! The team from North Wales Car Club will know about this only too well, having fallen victim to the snow and ice which caused the curtailment of their 2017 event. This time Storm Ciara was bearing down on the UK and although, thankfully, pure speculation, it's quite possible that, had the Cambrian Rally been scheduled

to take place twenty-four hours later, there would have been a huge question mark over it. Phew!....

### BTRDA PRODUCTION CUP

#### NAYLOR HAMMERS HOME HIS ADVANTAGE!



Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence 1<sup>st</sup> Production Cup

Pat Naylor's Lancer EVO9 has been treated to a complete rebuild over the winter - it's first in a good while! - in preparation for a full assault on this year's BTRDA Production Cup®. With Ian Lawrence ensconced in the co-driver's seat once more, the pair recorded 5<sup>th</sup> overall and, of course, maximum points in anything remotely relevant to their cause!



Alex Hawkins/Abi Haycock 2<sup>nd</sup> Production Cup 1<sup>st</sup> ST Trophy

However, defending Prod. Cup Champion, Scott Faulkner, now with Steve Link providing direction in another Lancer EVO9, was faster than Naylor on every stage except one. Yes, you guessed it - Penmachno! Marginally in excess of four minutes were lost and, needless to say, that was that. 17<sup>th</sup> overall was the best they could hope for but they should take heart from the fact that the overall time





difference between themselves and the category winners was in the region of two-and-a-half minutes. Hopefully, normal service will be resumed on the Malcolm Wilson Rally next month....

The only other Production Cup points scorers on the day were Alex Hawkins/Abi Haycock after fellow Fiesta ST campaigners Callum Hughes and Jonny Sproat both went out.

### **MRF TYRES BTRDA SILVER STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP**

CONTINUING WHERE THEY LEFT OFF!....



Andy Davison/Tom Murphy 1<sup>st</sup> Silver Star

Andy Davison/Tom Murphy took their Talbot Sunbeam VXR to maximum points scores in the BTRDA Silver Star® Championship on each of the last three rounds of the 2019 Series, as they closed in on runner-up and champion positions respectively. Just to show that they'd lost none of their aptitude for winning over the winter, the new season has begun just as the previous one ended - 14<sup>th</sup> overall, a class win and first BTRDA two-wheel drive car back into Llandudno!...



Perry Gardner/Andy Sankey 2<sup>nd</sup> Silver Star 1<sup>st</sup> R2 Cup

Similarly, the 2019 BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup Champion, Perry Gardener, is defending his title and, with the help of Andrew Sankey, also tops that particular table at this early stage. The new partnership was 2<sup>nd</sup> in Silver Star, while Mr Sankey will, doubtless, be dining out on the strength of his position as leading 'Senior Co-driver'!....

Adding to the variety on the day, David Gathercole's Historic Spec. Mk1 Escort occupied the final Silver Star podium spot and, unsurprisingly, leads the BTRDA Historic Cup from Tom Coughtrie/Ian Fraser (Mitsubishi Galant VR4) and Steve Ward/Mike Crawford (Escort MkII). Ben Friend/Cliff Simmons' attempts to join them were scuppered when their Escort's gearbox failed, while the BMW E30 of Ernie & Patricia Lee damaged its radiator on the opening stage.

In Silver Star terms, Rob Wilson/Martin Haggett were next up - their Fiesta was 4<sup>th</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> R2 Cup car home, with Jonathan Jones/Lewis Griffiths' similar car right behind it.



David Gathercole 3<sup>rd</sup> Silver Star 1<sup>st</sup> Historic

Irishmen Shane McGirr/Denver Rafferty won Class B12 in their Toyota Starlet from the BMW E30 of Mike Wolff/Mark Twiname. Damian Pratts/Jonny Evans' Escort lost a minute to the leaders on SS2 and, following maximums on the next two stages, they threw in the towel.

All the R2 Cup finishers were Fiestas as any hopes Zak Hughes/Will Atkins might have had of upsetting the apple-cart in their Renault Twingo went west when they rolled in Penmachno....



motorsport uk  
2020 English Rally  
Championship



SUNBEAM LIGHTS UP THE STAGES!...



Chris Powell/Jim Lewis 1<sup>st</sup> Bronze Star

For the third year running Chris Powell/Jim Lewis showed the Fuchs Lubricants BTRDA 1400 Championship field the way home on the Cambrian Rally, bringing their Talbot Sunbeam to the finish just shy of two minutes ahead of runner-up Hefin Lloyd Davies in his Vauxhall Corsa. Aaron Rix/Rob Cook were a distant 3<sup>rd</sup> in 1400S in their Escort but, nevertheless, finished the day with more points than several of their rivals....



Hefin Lloyd Davies 2<sup>nd</sup> Bronze Star

Retirements among the front-running 1400 Championship crews are like buses - nothing happens for ages, then four come along all at once! Steve Black/Paul Morris (Suzuki Swift), Dave Brick/Rob Woodhouse & Dale Glover/Sean Ward (both Vauxhall Novas) and Richard Jordan/James Gratton-Smith (MG ZR) all went out on the same stage, leaving parts of Penmachno looking somewhat akin to the 'before'

area of a vehicle body repairers! Brothers Freddie & Toby Brick survived those particular hazards and hung on until SS5 before their Corsa joined the list.

The battle to succeed Mat & Dan Evans' Peugeot 205 to the Class 1400C crown was the preserve of Nissan Micras in North Wales. The Top Three were separated by less than 17s at the finish - not that that bothered Dominic Hodge/Stefan Arndt because they won! However, to put it mildly, both Gethin Rhun Price/Matthew Baddeley and returnees Richard Garnett/Rob Gilham were keeping them honest!



Dominic Hodge/Stefan Arndt 3<sup>rd</sup> Bronze Star 1<sup>st</sup> 1400C

As the first group of cars on the Cambrian Rally were running in reverse-seeded order, former BTRDA Rally First Championship contenders Sam & Liam Johnson were among the early arrivals at the party in SS3 when their Seat Arosa hit a rock which ruptured its tank.



Andrew & Oliver Wheatley 1<sup>st</sup> Rally First

To the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally First® Championship itself and it was left to Andrew & Oliver Wheatley to





clean up in their 1.4 Ford Puma. They actually finished one place in front of Dylan Davies/Llion Williams' vastly more powerful Skoda Fabia R5 after its day of dramas - so if, for some reason, you wanted different perspectives on the event, you could do worse than talk to these two crews!...

As for the rest, Jonathan Jones' Fiesta R1 finished but Simon Double/Jessica Mitchell's MG ZR160 didn't after its front suspension gave up the ghost on the final stage.



ONE SIZE DOESN'T FIT ALL!...

In conjunction with MRF Tyres, the BTRDA is promoting a new eight-round Mixed Surface Rally Challenge - four rounds on gravel, of which the Cambrian Rally was the first, and four on asphalt, **CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: Competitors to check!**

A full list of all the **MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series** points after the Visit Conwy Cambrian Rally can be found in the Competitor section of [www.btrdarally.com](http://www.btrdarally.com) Likewise a list of **MRF Mixed Surface Challenge** points after the Cambrian Rally can be found in the MRF Challenge section of [www.btrdarally.com](http://www.btrdarally.com) These points will become final on Monday 24<sup>th</sup> February.



**BTRDA Historic Cup**

On each round of the BTRDA Rally Series there will be a prize fund of £500 with the highest placed BTRDA Historic Cup driver receiving £250, the 2nd placed driver £150 and the 3rd £100. At the end of the year the overall BTRDA Historic Champion will be presented with the prestigious AC de Monaco Trophy at the BTRDA awards ceremony. The prize winners on the Cambrian Rally were: -

- **David Gathercole**      **£250**
- **Tom Coughtrie**        **£150**
- **Steve Ward**            **£100**



**QUESTMEAD BONUS SCHEME**

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

Improvement on Start No: 1400's/Rally First: **Gethin Price** – Nissan Micra (Class 1400C)

Improvement on Start No: Gold Star/Silver Star: **Maxx Bradshaw** – Mitsubishi Evo (Class B13)

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.**

culminating with a cracking double-header on the Isle of Man with the Pokerstars Rally in October. The Challenge is open to any vehicle conforming to current Motorsport UK technical regulations with the only further stipulation being that they must run on MRF tyres. There are 7 competition classes and the scoring system reflects achievement against other registered competitors in the same class and the level of competition in that class.

So, with one down and seven to go, Pat Naylor/Ian Lawrence (Mitsubishi Lancer EVO9) and Ewan Tindall/Andrew Roughead (Ford Fiesta R2) are basking in the glory of being the first joint leaders. Waiting for the Malcolm Wilson Rally for the next chance to knock them off their pedestals are those in joint second place, Chris Powell (Sunbeam), Andrew Wheatley (Puma), Alex Hawkins (Fiesta) and Ian Joel's Escort Cosworth which will, by then, have been restored to its hitherto pristine condition..





## install automation **JUNIOR DRIVERS**

The Install Automation Ltd Junior Drivers award has been donated by Adam Kent, the 1998 BTRDA Gold Star Rally Champion. It provides a £2,500 prize fund for a leading BTRDA Junior Driver to be used for entries to events in the 2021 BTRDA Rally Series. The winner will be chosen by the BTRDA Rallies Committee from a short-list of the three drivers with the highest total points score in the 2020 BTRDA Junior Championship. Last year's prize winner was Zac Hughes.

The 3 leading drivers after Round 1 of the 2020 season are: -

- George Lepley 20 points
- Gethin Price 18 points
- Robert Wilson 17 points

### **FORTHCOMING EVENTS:**

#### **MALCOLM WILSON Rally – 14<sup>th</sup> MARCH**

The Malcolm Wilson Rally is Round 2 of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series and the MRF Mixed Surface Challenge as well as the opening round of the Motorsport UK 2020 English Rally Championship supported by Seacon UK. For more information about the 2020 English Rally Championship please see the item below....

The Malcolm Wilson Rally includes such iconic stages as Comb, Hobcarton, Grizedale and Greystoke. The event is based around the friendly town of Cockermouth with scrutineering at Paul Benn's Garage and documentation and the Start at the nearby M-Sport complex. The finish will be close to Jct 40 of the M6 to help speed your journey home on Saturday evening. So, if you have not already done so, please submit your entries a.s.a.p. for this great event. Regulations and online entries can be found at [www.malcolmwilson.co.uk](http://www.malcolmwilson.co.uk)

#### **RALLYNUTS STAGES RALLY – 18<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

Round 3 of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series is the Rallynuts Stages which this year will provide the opportunity to compete on the excellent stages in Myherin and Hafren made famous by Wales Rally GB. [www.rallynutsrally.co.uk](http://www.rallynutsrally.co.uk)

#### **KIELDER FOREST RALLY – 25<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

Round 2 of the Motorsport UK 2020 English Rally Championship supported by SEACON UK is the new Kielder Forest Rally which is being organised by the same experienced team as the former Pirelli Rally. This new compact event will be entirely based within the Kielder area and provide 44 stage miles of classic Kielder forest roads. More information can be found at <https://kielderforestrally.co.uk>

#### **CORBEAU SEATS TENDRING & CLACTON RALLY – 25<sup>th</sup> / 26<sup>th</sup> APRIL**

The closed road asphalt stage rally which was such a success last year, is Round 3 of the MRF Mixed Surface Challenge. For 2020 there is a short stage on the sea front in Clacton on Saturday evening before 5 stages each used 3 times on the Sunday. <http://corbeauseatsrally.co.uk>





### Motorsport UK 2020 ENGLISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP supported by SEACON UK

The calendar includes six of the best 'English' based forest stage rallies with the best 5 scores to count. The Championship is open to all cars that comply with Motorsport UK Safety and Technical Regulations.

Event	Date	Location
Malcolm Wilson Rally	14 <sup>th</sup> March	Lake District
Kielder Rally	25 <sup>th</sup> April	Kielder Forest
Nicky Grist Stages	11 <sup>th</sup> July	Mid Wales
Woodpecker Stages	5 <sup>th</sup> September	Shropshire
Trackrod Forest Rally	26 <sup>th</sup> September	North Yorkshire
Wydean Stages Rally	17 <sup>th</sup> October	Forest of Dean

The Championship will be split into 7 championship classes with the scoring system reflecting achievement against other competitors in the same class.

- Class E7 - All WRC with a sequential gearbox, RRC, R5 and S2000 cars & all derivatives
- Class E6 - Over 2000cc 4WD cars not eligible for class E7
- Class E5 - Over 2000cc 2WD cars including all FIA R3T cars
- Class E4 - Over 1600cc up to 2000cc plus Historic category 3 cars with multi cam engines over 1600cc, category 4a cars over 1600cc and 4b cars up to 1600cc
- Class E3 - Cars over 1400cc up to 1600cc plus current & former FIA Group N3 cars and all FIA R2 cars.
- Class E2 - Cars up to 1400cc not eligible for Class E1, plus Historic category 1 & 2, category 3 with single cam engines and category 4a up to 1600cc
- Class E1 - All BTRDA Rally First cars.

All forced induction engines (except Diesel engines) are subject to an additional capacity coefficient of 1.7:1 (except when FIA Appendix J, Art 260 applies).

NB: The 2020 English Rally Championship registration is part of the 2020 BTRDA Rally Series and BTRDA membership package. More information about the English Rally Championship can be found at [www.englishrally.co.uk](http://www.englishrally.co.uk)

### MRF TYRES MIXED SURFACE CHALLENGE

New for 2020 is the **MRF Mixed Surface Rally Challenge**. It is open to all competitors holding a minimum of a Motorsport UK Interclub competition licence.

The MRF Challenge is open to all vehicles that comply with the 2020 Motorsport UK Safety and Technical Regulations for Special Stage Rallies, and FIA Technical Regulations where appropriate.

All MRF Mixed Surface Challenge cars must use MRF branded tyres on every event, but the tread pattern and profile are free. See MRF Motorsport Tyres in UK at [www.serviceandsport.com](http://www.serviceandsport.com) Contact: Jerry@Serviceandsport.com Tel +44 (0) 7789 392080.

The MRF Mixed Surface Challenge includes a selection of the best UK forest and asphalt stage rallies. The final points tables will be based on a competitor's best 6 scores. If through 'force majeure' any of the qualifying rounds cannot take place the organisers reserve the right to either include another event on the same date and / or to alter the number of scores to count.





1	CAMBRIAN RALLY (G)	8 <sup>th</sup> February	North Wales
2	MALCOLM WILSON RALLY (G)	14 <sup>th</sup> March	Lake District
3	TENDRING & CLACTON RALLY (A)	25 <sup>th</sup> /26 <sup>th</sup> April	East Anglia
4	75 <sup>th</sup> SCOTTISH RALLY (G)	6 <sup>th</sup> June	Lockerbie/Scottish Borders
5	NICKY GRIST STAGES (G)	11 <sup>th</sup> July	Mid Wales
6	MEWLA RALLY (A)	30 <sup>th</sup> August	Epynt, Mid Wales
7	POKERSTARS RALLY LEG 1 (A)	2 <sup>nd</sup> October	Isle of Man
8	POKERSTARS RALLY LEG 2 (A)	3 <sup>rd</sup> October	Isle of Man

The class structure is the same as the Motorsport UK English Rally Championship, the ST Trophy will follow the MRF Tyres Mixed Surface Challenge in 2020

### MOTORSPORT UK GENERAL REGULATIONS

Competitors are reminded that they should have up-to-date knowledge of the current General Regulations and any amendments that are issued. The current Yearbook already has some amendments and further details can be found at [www.motorsportuk.org](http://www.motorsportuk.org)

Competitors are also reminded to respect warning triangles placed out on the stages, this warns of a hazard ahead and there have been a number of near misses recently where crews haven't backed off.

**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 MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series, MRF Mixed Surface Challenge and the Motorsport UK 2020 English Rally Challenge supported by SEACON UK. 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. Checks will be carried out to ensure compliance with this! Decals are available from the BTRDA desk at event signing on. NB: Not carrying a screen strip may also exclude the car from any film coverage.

Co-drivers with non-registered drivers must carry 2 x BTRDA club decals on the car.

**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 events. They supply both a Motorsport UK 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/pages/btrda-rally-series-fuell-order-form](http://www.vitalequipment.co.uk/pages/btrda-rally-series-fuell-order-form)

### SPECIAL STAGE filming:

The popular coverage of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series by 'Special Stage' from all rounds of the championship will be shared on various platforms including our BTRDA Rally Facebook page and BTRDA Rally Series website. It will try to include coverage of all the 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 to produce more informed programmes we encourage competitors to send information about their exploits to Special Stage A.S.A.P after each event. This should be done online via the driver info page at [www.specialstage.co.uk/driver-info](http://www.specialstage.co.uk/driver-info)

