



CHAMPIONSHIP NEWSLETTER No. 4 – 2023

BRICK & STEEL BORDER COUNTIES RALLY

MRF TYRES BTRDA GOLD STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

PAYNE EASES...BACK TO THE TOP!...

New to the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series last year, the 2022 Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally was won by Elliot Payne who arrived back at the finish in Jedburgh 14s ahead of runner-up David Henderson. Twelve months on, the same order was maintained but the victory margin had been shaved to 8s!



1st Gold Star Elliot Payne/Tom Woodburn

In MRF Tyres BTRDA Gold Star® Championship terms, having set fastest/joint-fastest times on five of the seven stages in the Borders, Payne and Tom Woodburn (Fiesta Rally2) have now claimed top spot for themselves once again. Joint leaders prior to the start of the event, Arron Newby/Jamie Edwards (Fabia R5) struggled with tyre choice over the early stages but a solid 4th overall on the event sees them now handily placed as runners-up, just four points adrift. With five events still to go and 30 points up for grabs on each occasion, literally anything can happen between now and the end of October – and probably will!

For their part, having held 3rd for much of the day, David Henderson/Chris Lees (Fiesta Rally2) snatched runners-up spot from Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear (Fiesta R5) with a spirited run through the final stage, Wyndburgh - the eventual margin between 2nd & 3rd places being just 4s!

Russ Thompson/Steve Link (Lancer EVO9) continued their fantastic start to the year with 5th overall and another maximum Class B13 points score. However, on this occasion, Rob Wilson/Richard Crozier's EVO7 was only one place and 20s behind them. A third consecutive finish puts the Escort Cosworth of Ian Joel/Graeme Wood in between the two Mitsubishis in the points at this stage but, doubtless, this saga will 'run and run' as the season progresses!



3rd Gold Star Matthew Hirst/Declan Dear

The Fiestas of Ian Bainbridge/Will Atkins, Eddie Lewis/Sion Cuniff and Charlie Payne, accompanied by 2022 Gold Star Co-driver Champion Patrick Walsh for the day, each recorded Top Ten finishes, with the Rally2 of Trevor Gamble/Phil Kenny also taking its best finish of the season to date.

Unfortunately, former Gold Star Champions Stephen Petch/Michael Wilkinson's debut on a BTRDA round in their Skoda Fabia Rally2 Evo (to give it its full title!) ended



2nd Gold Star David Henderson/Chris Lees

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in retirement, while Mark Donnelly/Stephen O'Hanlon (Fiesta) were also forced to throw the towel in during the day.

MRF TYRES BTRDA SILVER STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

GOUGH SWEEPS ALL BEFORE HIM!....

Although they were absent from the opening round of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Silver Star® Championship, Robert Gough/Paul Morris (Escort MkII) have certainly made their presence felt on the next two! They followed up their maximum scores in both Silver Star and the Jordan Road Surfacing BTRDA Historic Cup on the Rallynuts Stages with a Top Ten finish and a similar tally on the Border Counties. So, albeit with only two scores, Robert – son of five-times Woodpecker Stages winner Richard – and Paul, the Motorsport UK Asphalt Rally Championship Co-ordinator, are 5th in Silver Star and leaders of the Historic Cup. While the spectre of dropped scores is still some way off, when push comes to shove, a few maximums in your account won't do their chances of success any harm at all! However, we mustn't get ahead of ourselves!...



1st Silver Star & Historic Cup Robert Gough/Paul Morris

Boyd Kershaw/Keegan Rees (Escort) were only a handful of seconds behind Gough/Morris on their arrival back in Jedburgh and, now with three events successfully completed, lead the Silver Star table. Defending champions Rob Wright/Mark Fisher (Escort) took a class win ahead of Andy Davison/Tom Murphy (Sunbeam VXR) who, along with Neil Andrew/Dom Adams (Escort), have maintained a 100% finishing record and are just two and eight points respectively adrift of the leaders.

Liam Clark/Ben Wild are sandwiched between the Escorts of Andrew/Adams and Gough/ Morris but, with

one eye on Silver Star, they also lead the BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup in their Fiesta. Tony Simpson/Stefan Arndt (Fiesta) claimed the R2 spoils in the Borders from Clark/Wild and Alfie Hammond, while the Opel Adam of erstwhile leaders Robert Proudlock/Steven Brown was to succumb to electrical problems leading to its demise.



2nd Silver Star Boyd Kershaw/Keegan Rees

As mentioned above, Robert Gough/Paul Morris lead the BTRDA Historic Cup by a single point from Ben Friend/Cliff Simmons whose own Escort held that exalted position prior to the start of the Border Counties. However, according to the official results, the car finished 'on side' – which is probably easier to explain to the uninitiated than 'off side'! – on the penultimate stage of the day. Whatever, it was to go no further.... Ernie & Karen Graham's Escort RS1600 came away with maximum H1/H2 points, leaving them within touching distance of the overall leaders and ideally placed to benefit from any untoward occurrence that may beset them in the future!



3rd Silver Star Rob Wright/Mark Fisher

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Liam Clark earned top billing in the BTRDA Rallye R2 Junior Cup which he now leads from Alfie Hammond, with Robert Proudlock's Opel Adam demoted to 3rd. However, the Dumfries driver has scored maximums on each of the events he has finished and, so, it's safe to say that this isn't over yet either!...

FUCHS LUBRICANTS BTRDA BRONZE STAR CHAMPIONSHIP

KEEPING IT IN THE FAMILY!...

Husband-and-wife crew Nigel & Kaz Jenkins kept up the pressure in the Fuchs Lubricants BTRDA Bronze Star Championship by guiding their Nova to maximum points on the Border Counties. So, that's three events – two firsts & one second place – not quite a full-house, but next best thing!



1st Bronze Star Nigel & Kaz Jenkins

Runners-up on the day were Chris & James Greenall in another Nova and, making it a Vauxhall 1-2-3, Will Banks' 1400C car was 3rd. Paddy Homan's Puma was next, pipping the MG ZR of Luke Watts/Matt Rogers by just two seconds – a result that sees Luke move up to 2nd in the overall 1400 Championship, right behind his mum!....

Hold the front page! The big news of the day was that Lewis Hooper/Rhys Edwards' all-conquering Micra registered a very rare retirement and, while their pursuit of back-to-back MRF Tyres Rally First Cups is still on track, they've slipped back a bit in the battle for the overall Bronze Star title.



2nd Bronze Star Chris & James Greenall

We must also commiserate with Dale Glover who has taken his Alfasud Ti all the way from Kings Lynn to the start of each of the three rounds of the BTRDA Series that have, so far, taken place but hasn't crossed the finish line of any of them! On this particular occasion an electrical problem intervened on the opening stage. To be totally 'politically incorrect', we would have some sympathy if Dale adopted the John Cleese/Fawlty Towers attitude and gave his car a 'damn good thrashing' – then again, perhaps not!...



3rd Bronze Star Will Banks

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MRF TYRES MOTORSPORT TROPHY

JOEL IN THE CROWN!...



Trophy Leader Ian Joel

After the third round of the battle to win some free entries/sets of tyres towards a 2024 BTRDA Rally Series campaign, Ian Joel (Escort Cosworth) retains his position at the top of the table but has Colin Minton (Fiesta R5) and Alfie Hammond (Fiesta R2) snapping at his heels.

Lewis Hooper (Micra) and Tony Simpson (Fiesta R2) have each only scored twice – one non-finish and one non-start – and find themselves separated by a solitary point prior to the Kielder Forest Rally, the conclusion of which marks the halfway point in the season. Fifteen drivers have scored points and, as the rest of the MRF Tyres BTRDA Series unfolds, we can expect plenty of to-ing and fro-ing while the final order is sorted out!

MSUK ENGLISH RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP IN ASSOCIATION WITH SEACON UK

THE HOUSE OF ELLIOT...

Having found himself as joint leader – along with four others – of the MSUK English Rally Championship, in association with Seacon UK, after the opening

CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: Competitors to check!

A full list of all the **MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series** points after the Border Counties Rally can be found in the Competitor section of www.btrdarally.com Likewise a list of **Motorsport UK English Rally Championship** points can be found in the Competitor section of www.englishrally.co.uk

These points will become final on Thursday 18 May 2023.

encounter, Elliot Payne (Fiesta Rally2) has wasted no time in claiming the spot for himself on the second event, the Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally. OK – so he won it outright but even so, in a class-based series such as this, vehicles of all capacities have the wherewithal to establish supremacy. The fact that Nigel Jenkins' 1400cc Nova is Elliot's nearest rival would, in no small way, go to illustrate this!



1st R2 Cup Tony Simpson

In a scenario not dissimilar to 'Snakes & Ladders', both Robert Proudlock (Opel Adam) and Ben Friend (Escort MkII) scored top marks on the Malcolm Wilson Rally but failed to finish the Border Counties, while Robert Gough (Escort MkII) and Ernie Graham (Escort RS1600) weren't present in the Lake District but journeyed back home from Jedburgh with class wins to open their respective accounts.

The next outing for English Championship contenders will be the Hexham-based Kielder Forest Rally in mid-June. Elliot Payne won here in 2022 as well but will he be able to maintain his advantage? We'll know the answer to that one by teatime on 17th June...

Photos by Kevin Money & Malcolm Almond

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MRF MOTORSPORT TYRES TROPHY

The 2023 MRF MOTORSPORT TYRES TROPHY is open to all BTRDA Rally Series drivers and will be contested on all rounds of the 2023 MRF TYRES BTRDA Rally Series.

To be eligible to score points in the MRF TROPHY the rally car must be fitted with MRF branded tyres throughout the event, but the tread pattern and profile are free. Cars must carry the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series decals. Checks will be made to ensure compliance with the Tyre and Decal requirements. Failure to comply will automatically result in zero points being scored.

For more info about MRF Motorsport Tyres at www.serviceandsport.com

Contact: Jerry@Serviceandsport.com Tel 07789 392080.

Trophy standings after round 3

	DRIVER	Car	Class	R1	R2	R3	Total
1	Ian Joel	Escort Cosworth	6	20	22	20	62
2	Colin Minton	Fiesta R5	7	18	20	20	58
3	Alfie Hammond	Fiesta R2	3	21	18	18	57
4	Lewis Hooper	Nissan Micra	1	21	21	1	43
5	Tony Simpson	Fiesta R2	3	-	21	21	42
6	Edward James	Micra Kit Car	2	19	21	-	40
7	Will Banks	Vauxhall Nova	2	17	1	20	38
8	Andrew Wheatley	Ford Puma	2	22	-	-	22
9	Ian Bainbridge	Fiesta R5	7	21	-	-	21
10	Martin Beech	Peugeot 205 GTi	4	-	20	-	20
11	Daniel Shalev	Ford Fiesta ST	1	-	-	20	20
12	Giles Armitage	Peugeot 205 GTi	1	18	1	1	20
13	Daniel Sigursarson	Mitsubishi Evo9	6	-	19	-	19
14	Peter Bayliss	Mitsubishi Evo9	6	-	17	-	17
15	Michael Jenkins	Fiesta R2	3	1	-	-	1

Best 6 scores to count.

KIELDER POWER AWARDS

Thanks to generous support from KIELDER Works Team, they will be awarding one of their valuable "Impact Wrench Kit" as a prize on each round of the 2023 MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series.

Further details of the kit Kielder provide please visit <https://www.kielder.co>

On the Border Counties Rally the award goes to the **Highest Placed Driver in class 1400C: Will Banks**

On the Kielder Forest Rally the award will go to the highest placed driver in class B11.

BTRDA JUNIOR R2 1600 CUP

The top three Junior R2 Cup crews on the Border Counties Rally are

- 1st £150 Liam Clark
- 2nd £100 Alfie Hammond
- 3rd £50 no award

CARLESS RACING FUELS & VITAL EQUIPMENT PRIZE

Premier competition fuel suppliers Vital Equipment Ltd and Carless Racing Fuels continue their initiative to support Britain's most popular national rally series. On every round of the 2023 MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series two competitors each receive **25 litres of Carless Racing Fuel** to be redeemed on the next round of the championship.

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On the the Border Counties Rally the prizes were awarded to: -

- **The Highest Placed BTRDA Junior R2 Cup: Liam Clark**
- **The winning driver in the 1400S class: Nigel Jenkins**

The two awards on the Kielder Forest Rally will be for Highest placed Junior R2 Cup & Class B10

At the end of the 2023 season the highest placed Junior Driver who returns to the 2024 MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series will receive a fuel deal for each round they enter.

Elliott Payne is the recipient of the 2022 end of season prize for the 2023 championship

MINTEX / QUESTMEAD BONUS SCHEME

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

Improvement on Start No: Bronze Star 1400's/Rally First: **Chris Greenall**

Improvement on Start No: Gold Star/Silver Star: **Liam Clark**

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.**

ON EVENT BTRDA REPRESENTATION

On the Kielder Forest Rally it will be Ian Arden, Andrew Hail, Sarah Jones, Pete Cross, the BTRDA Eligibility Scrutineer will be Geoff Doe.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Kielder Forest Rally – 17th June

Based in Hexham midway between Newcastle and Carlisle, our HQ is at the Auction Mart with easy access of the A69 cross country route.

This year we have a more compact route with only 90 road miles and almost 45 stage miles. All of our stages are contained in the southern part of the Kielder Forest Complex and have made a few changes to the Service Area to improve access and the layout after a few lessons learnt from last year. Entries close on Wednesday 7 June, keep an eye in their website for further details kielderforestrally.co.uk

Nicky Grist Stages – 8th July

The event will return to the centre of Builth Wells with Service in the Town and using the classic stages up on the Military Ranges and Crychan Forest. Regulations will be released on 1^{9th} May and entries will open on 22nd May. Further details can be found at nickygriststages.co.uk

DECALS

Competitors are reminded that they **must** display the BTRDA Rally Series decals on each qualifying event to be eligible to score points in the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series and the Motorsport UK 2023 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.

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

Decals are available from the BTRDA Championship Co-ordinator Ian Arden Tel: 07917 355169 or the Championship representatives at each of the qualifying events in the MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally Series.

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TYRES

Please note that in the **MRF Tyres BTRDA Rally First Cup** it is a requirement that MRF tyres are used throughout the event and checks will be made to ensure compliance with this requirement. **MRF Tyres / Service and Sport** will be at all events to provide tyre support to competitors. See www.serviceandsport.com for more information about the extensive range of MRF competition tyres.

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

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 the Special Stage Facebook page, the 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. Some of the online coverage will be split into shorter packages and released separately.

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