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CHAMPIONSHIP NEWSLETTER No. 2 – 2026

RALLY NORTH WALES

FUCHS LUBRICANTS BTRDA GOLD STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

PAYNE'S RELIEF!...

Following the unavoidable delay due to the cancellation of the Malcolm Wilson Rally, the 2026 Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series finally took to the stages at the end of March with the running of Rally North Wales. With the Interclub entry list boasting more than a 50% BTRDA take-up and including both 2022-24 Fuchs Lubricants BTRDA Gold Star winners Elliot Payne/Patrick Walsh (Fiesta Rally2) and defending champion – and four-time Rally North Wales winner – Matthew Hirst (Fabia R5), now with Jack Bowen installed in the co-driver's seat, it was obvious that a battle royale was set to unfold – the main question being 'who would come out on top?'…

Elliot Payne/Patrick Walsh 1st Gold Star

A nine-miler through Aberhirnant was first on the agenda – Payne/Walsh set fastest BTRDA time while Hirst indulged in a spin which saw him stop the clock 9s slower. In between the two were Daniel Sigurðarson/Asta Sigurðadóttir (Fabia RS) and Alex Vassallo/Chris Lees (Fiesta Rally2) – and so it continued. Five more stages – Hirst fastest on three and Payne on the other two, making it three-all at the finish.

Matthew Hirst/Jack Bowen 2nd Gold Star

As the cars arrived back in Welshpool, the difference between Payne/Walsh and Hirst/Bowen had narrowed to 4.7s – one event down, six to go and it's 'game on'! Vassallo/Lees were next, just managing to get ahead of Sigurðarson/Sigurðadóttir on the final stage, but there was less than a minute between all four by the end!

Alex Vassallo/Chris Lees 3rd Gold Star

Liam Clark/Michael Gilbey (Fiesta Rally2) & James Wilson/Paul Mulholland (Fabia Rally2) began their respective campaigns in fine style, bagging good hauls of Gold Star points in the process. After a disastrous season in 2025, Russ Thompson/ Steve Link have 'parked' their Lancer and transferred its running gear into a Fiesta shell. Initial signs are encouraging as it came out on top of Class 2 on its BTRDA debut. However, Mitsubishis are still present in numbers, as exemplified by Geoff Smith/Joe Dunn, Pete Gorst/Mark Twiname and Pat Naylor/Tom Bishop who followed the former champions home at varying distances.

Alistair Ginley earned a Top Ten finish in his Skoda while Dan O'Brien/Niall Burns and Trevor Gamble/Chris Davies were relying on Fiesta Rally2s to successfully carry them home.

Rob Morris/Paul Spooner's Citroen C3 Rally2 spat its dummy out on the way to SS1 but, as we always say at this stage of the season, there's still plenty of time to 'pick yourself up, dust yourself down and start all over again!...'

The Kielder Forest Rally is next – it didn't run last year but Matthew Hirst won it in 2023 & 2024, while Elliot Payne claimed victory in 2022….

PROTYRE AUTOCARE BTRDA SILVER STAR® CHAMPIONSHIP

A GALANT EFFORT!...

Baz Jordan/Arwel Jenkins 1st Silver Star & Historic Cup

Long-time BTRDA supporters Baz Jordan/Arwel Jenkins are pinning their hopes of success on a Mitsubishi Galant VR4 this season and, thus far, the plan is being looked on favourably by the Gods as the pair are currently basking in the glory of leading both the Protyre Autocare BTRDA Silver Star Championship and the BTRDA Historic Cup!

Bryan Jardine (Escort) took runners-up spot while 3rd-placed Tony Simpson (Fiesta) also earned him maximum BTRDA Rallye R2 Cup points into the bargain. In a change from previous years when Ford products have ruled the roost, the next two R2 scorers were a pair of GM Adams in the capable hands of Oliver Phillips/Barry Young and Rian Walker/Paul Cribben.

Bryan Jardine 2nd Silver Star

2nd Historic Cup/4th Silver Star crew were Ben Jemison/Adam Burkill in their Chevette HSR, ahead of Phillips/Young, with the first Escort in the pack – in the hands of Rob Dennis and 2013/17 co-driver champion Andy Boswell – coming home in 6th place.

'Flying Kiwi' Boyd Kershaw and Keegan Rees, who came so close to clinching the 2023 BTRDA Silver Star Championship in their Escort MkII, have returned to see if they can go one better this time. All seemed to be going well until a non-appearance at the end of the final stage made any such thoughts academic – certainly for the moment!

Geoff Phelps, who finished 2nd in class in the 2025 Protyre Autocare BTRDA Series, was back with Lucy Wilding directing operations in his Escort MkII. However, the best laid plans etc… Unfortunately it all came to nought when the car stopped on the opening stage.

Tony Simpson 3rd Silver Star

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FUCHS LUBRICANTS BTRDA BRONZE STAR CHAMPIONSHIP

DEFENCE OF THE REALM!...

Current Fuchs Lubricants BTRDA Bronze Star Champions Dylan Fowler-Bishop/ Dan Evans (Micra) are back to have a crack at making it two-in-a-row and, on current form, they're going to take some stopping! Fastest BTRDA 1400 on every stage, they arrived at the finish a minute-and-a-half to the good of Luke Watts/Matt Rogers (MG ZR) who took a well-earned 2nd place. Geraint Williams/Ifan Rowlands (Nova) were 3rd on an event that wasn't kind to Bronze Star contenders in general.

Dylan Fowler-Bishop/Dan Evans 1st Bronze Star

2018 Champion Dave Brick, co-driven by son Freddy, had a day to forget. Having set, by their standards, a couple of slow times on SS1/2, the towel was thrown in. Chris Bush/Rob Bryn Jones (Corsa) did likewise a stage later while Dale Glover/ David Smalley (Alfasud TI) failed to complete SS4.

Luke Watts/Matt Rogers 2nd Bronze Star

Hoping to start their BTRDA Rally First campaign off in fine style, Giles Armitage/Josh Rhodes were to be disappointed when their Peugeot 205 stopped on the last stage.

Geraint Williams/Ifan Rowlands 3rd Bronze Star

Photos by Kevin Money & Malcolm Almond

https://webapp.sportity.com/channel/BTRDA2025

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CHAMPIONSHIP POINTS: Competitors to check!

A full list of all the **Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series** points after the Get Jerky Rally North Wales can be found in the Competitor section of **www.btrdarally.com**

These points will become final at 14:30 on Friday 10 April 2026

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 2026 Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series.

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

On the Get Jerky Rally North Wales the award goes to the Highest Placed Driver in Class 5: **Tony Simpson**

On the Kielder Forest Rally the award will go the highest placed driver in **Class 6**.

ETS RACING FUELS & VITAL EQUIPMENT PRIZE

Premier competition fuel suppliers Vital Equipment Ltd and ETS Racing Fuels continue their initiative to support Britain's most popular national rally series. On every round of the 2026 Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series two competitors each receive **25 litres of Carless Racing Fuel** to be redeemed on the next round of the championship.

On the Get Jerky Rally North Wales the prizes were awarded to: -

- The winning driver in class 5: **Tony Simpson**
- The winning driver in class 12: **No eligible finishers, prize awarded to highest placed in class 7 Oliver Phillips**

The two awards on the Kielder Forest Rally will be for **Class 3 & 9**

At the end of the 2026 season the highest placed Junior Driver who returns to the 2027 Protyre BTRDA Rally Series will receive a fuel deal for each round they enter.

MINTEX / QUESTMEAD BONUS SCHEME

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

Randomly selected starter in the Bronze Star: **Geraint Williams**

Randomly selected starter in the Gold Star/Silver Star: **Rob Dennis**

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 REPESENTATION

On the Kielder Forest Rally it will be Rod Parkin, Andrew Haill, Sarah Jones and Neil Cross, the BTRDA Eligibility Scrutineer will be Geoff Doe.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS:

Kielder Forest Rally – Saturday 18 April

Returning to the Protyre Autocare BTRDA and Kingfisher Insurance Motorsport UK English Rally Championship, organised by Cumberland Sporting Car Club the event will be based in Hexham Auction Mart and will offer a compact one-day event in the infamous Kielder Forest. Entries close on 6 April, further details can be found at www.kielderforestrally.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 Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series and the Kingfisher Insurance Motorsport UK 2026 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. Checks will be carried out to ensure compliance with this.

We allow some latitude on the first round but from round 2 this will be strictly enforced.

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Multi-Vehicle Insurance Through Our BTRDA Partnership

As we head into the 2026 season, we know many BTRDA ERC competitors are preparing their vehicles, schedules, and budgets. At Kingfisher Motorsport, we're here to make at least one part of that easier for you - your insurance.

Running Multiple Vehicles? This Will Sound Familiar

Preparing for a season often means managing more than just the race car. Tow vehicles, service vans, trailers, and support cars all need cover - and keeping them on separate policies can quickly become time-consuming, especially when renewal dates and admin demands don't align.

With expenses climbing and plans changing week to week, it's more important than ever to have cover that's flexible, efficient, and built around the realities of the motorsport industry.

Here's the Good News...

To keep up with the pace of competition, our Multi-Vehicle Insurance puts everything under one roof. One policy covering the whole fleet and built with motorsport competitors in mind. With the ability to swap vehicles in and out as your season evolves, and even add extras like tools, trailers, or kits.

It's simpler, often more cost-effective, and backed by a team that genuinely understands how motorsport works. So, should you ever need help, our dedicated motorsport team is on hand to keep you moving.

Why Competitors Choose Multi-Vehicle Insurance

You'll have one policy, covering every vehicle, giving you total peace of mind.

What you'll get with our multi-vehicle cover:

- ✓ Cover everything under one roof - competition cars, support vehicles, storage, transit and more
- ✓ Enjoy one simple renewal date for maximum convenience
- ✓ Save more with every vehicle you add through our multi-vehicle discount
- ✓ Work with a team that understands motorsport and tailors your policy around your passion

Ready to Get Started?

Get in touch with our dedicated motorsport team to discuss your needs, and we will look to tailor insurance to match them.

We look forward to supporting you and your fleet through the 2026 season!

Kingfisher Motorsport Team

Request a call back

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*Policy benefits, features, and discounts offered may vary and are subject to underwriting criteria.

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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 Neil Cross Tel: 07767773862 or the Championship representatives at each of the qualifying events in the Protyre Autocare BTRDA Rally Series.

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 ETS 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

Once again Special Stage will be **live streaming** from the Stages on every BTRDA Rally Series event this year, bringing all the action to our screens across several media platforms. For more details follow them on X or check out their Facebook page at https://www.facebook.com/specialstage

Scan the QR codes to access the Facebook Page and YouTube Channel

Facebook Page

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Championship Team

The 2026 **Championship Co-ordinators:**

Neil Cross	Email: trec1.nec@btinternet.com	Tel: 07767 773862
Bryan Hull	Email: hqmsport@gmail.com	

Neil will be at every event supported by other members of the BTRDA Rally Series

www.btrdarally.com