

29.10.17
News release

Delighted Slaughter conquers World Rally debut

Maidstone rally star James Slaughter finished his first ever round of the World Rally Championship in Wales this afternoon (Sunday).

Driving his Ford Fiesta R5, Slaughter overcame a penultimate-stage puncture to take the biggest result of his career. But missed his target by 4.2 seconds.

Ahead of Wales Rally GB, James had been aiming at a top-20 finish in the R5 category – the feeder series to the main World Rally Championship – but finished 21st. He wasn't about to let the result spoil what had been an unbelievable four days.

"When I talked about chasing a top-20 result before the start," he said, "I really didn't have much of an idea of just how tough this event was going to be. I'd done some British Rally Championship events and thought they were pretty hard going, but they were nothing compared with this.

"This was rallying's Everest. On Saturday night, when the fog came we were trying to drive as fast as we possibly could through the trees in the middle of a dark Welsh forest and we could barely see past the end of the bonnet. Unreal.

"Just to get the finish here is a huge result and one I have to thank my co-driver Niall [Burns] and the MSL team for helping me to achieve. I have loved every minute of the last week or so. OK, maybe trying to drive flat-out through the fog wasn't such fun, but now we're through, it was one hell of an experience.

"I've windsurfed against the best in the world in some hellish conditions and sailed some big, big seas in the BT Global Challenge, but what we've done here in the last four days is right up there with the biggest and most difficult challenges in my life.

"Mentally and physically it's been a huge effort, but we've done it. Apart from the puncture, today's been OK. Again, it was so, so slippery in places and I was conscious that I didn't want to throw the last three days' work away. The focus was on getting to the finish of my first ever World Rally Championship event. I'm absolutely delighted to have done that."

Today's stages were the furthest north in Wales, with the finish on the coast at Llandudno this afternoon.

Weather:

Today: overcast, temperatures between 12-15 degrees

Meet James...

Date of birth: 26.10.73

Lives: Maidstone

Co-driver: Niall Burns

First rally: Mid Wales Historic Stages, 2008

Rally starts: 27

About Dayinsure Wales Rally GB

October 26-29

Based: Deeside

Surface: gravel

Stages: 21

Competitive distance: 304.36km (189.12 miles)

Total distance: 1488.10km (924.70 miles)

Website: www.walesrallygb.com

Dayinsure Wales Rally GB itinerary

Thursday October 26

SS1 Visit Conwy Tir Prince 1.49km (0.92 miles) 1900

Friday October 27

SS2 Myherin 1 20.28km (12.60 miles) 1020

SS3 Sweet Lamb 1 4.24km (2.63 miles) 1100

SS4 Hafren 1 35.14km (21.83 miles) 1115

Remote tyre fitting zone, Newtown, 1253

SS5 Myherin 2 20.28km (12.60 miles) 1431

SS6 Sweet Lamb 2 4.24km (2.63 miles) 1511

SS7 Hafren 2 35.14km (21.83 miles) 1526

Parc Fermé 1951

Saturday October 28

SS8 Aberhirnant 1 13.91km (8.64 miles) 0755

SS9 Dyfnant 1 17.91km (11.12 miles) 0847

SS10 Gartheiniog 1 12.61km (7.83miles) 0959

SS11 Dyfi 1 25.86km (16.06 miles) 1028

SS12 Gartheiniog 2 12.61km (7.83miles) 1208

SS13 Dyfi 2 25.86km (16.06 miles) 1237

SS14 Cholmondeley Castle 1.80km (1.11 miles) 1548

Service Deeside 1637

SS15 Aberhirnant 2 13.91km (8.64 miles) 1855

SS16 Dyfnant 2 17.91km (11.12 miles) 1947

Parc Fermé 2213

Sunday October 29

SS17 Alwen 1 10.41km (6.46 miles) 0834

SS18 Brenig 1 6.43km (3.99 miles) 0908

SS19 Gwydir 7.49km (4.65 miles) 1006

SS20 Alwen 2 10.41km (6.46 miles) 1109
SS21 Brenig 2 6.43km (3.99 miles) 1218
Parc Fermé 1335

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