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News release

Reflections on Osian's fastest rally ever...

The dust has settled. The vertigo faded. The decompression complete.

Having taken part in the fastest ever round of the World Rally Championship, Osian has come in to land after averaging 71mph for 195 of the most fearsome miles of his career so far.

Rally Finland has a huge reputation for being fast and feared – how did you find it?

OP: We'd done it last year, but in a very different car. Last year we were in a one-litre, two-wheel drive Ford Fiesta. This time around we were in a four-wheel drive Fiesta with twice the power.

I can completely understand how Finland has this reputation. It is the fastest event in the world and it's absolutely one to be feared; if you put a wheel out of line it's going to bite you and being bitten at over 100mph between the trees isn't going to be pretty.

Poland had a nibble at you on the last round...

OP: It did. We were caught out and had a really big accident at high-speed. At the time, I wasn't so worried about the consequences moving forward from that event: Dale and I had come out of the biggest crash of our careers and we were in one piece, that was the only thing that concerned me.

M-Sport did an unbelievable job building a new Ford Fiesta R5 for us in just four days. I can't thank them enough for what they did and the way they looked after us after on these two events.

Competing on Rally Poland and Rally Finland was your prize for winning last year's Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy in the World Rally Championship. What are your feelings now those events are finished?

OP: Naturally, I wish we'd made a better start and not crashed in Poland. That ruined our hopes on that rally, but it also made Finland quite tough as well. We went to Finland on the back foot, knowing that a similar mistake and similar result would be an absolute disaster. Instead, I had to go there, take as much experience as I could, show some speed where I knew the roads from last year and, most importantly, be at the finish.

How many of those objectives did you achieve?

OP: I think we did all of them.

What was your lasting memory?

OP: Hitting any one of the jumps we flew over absolutely flat-out in Finland. The Fiesta R5 is the most amazing car I've driven, the speed we could carry and the way we landed was unbelievable.

What's it like flying through the air at 100mph?

OP: It's brilliant. And it's addictive. But at the same time, you've got to be absolutely inch-perfect. One of the real positives from Finland for Dale and I was the way our pace notes worked.

Pace notes?

OP: Yeah... we had two practice runs at each stage, done at a much slower speed when we write notes to describe every corner, bump and jump on the 195-mile route. When we're coming back at full speed, Dale reads the notes to me to tell me what's coming.

That's how you know it's safe to fly over a blind crest?

OP: Exactly. And there's absolutely no feeling quite like it: you climb up these jumps, which are totally blind and you can't see what's on the other side, and you do so because the person next to you tells you it's safe to do so. That demands real team-work and trust in each other.

But still, the flying thing is incredible. With no gravel hitting the bottom of the car, everything goes that bit quieter – it's almost serene – and you can even hear the crowds cheering on some of them!
Then the madness begins again!

What's next for you and Dale?

OP: It's the next round of the British Rally Championship, the John Mulholland Motors Ulster Rally later this month.

Confident?

OP: Reasonably. In the three years we were in a car capable of winning the BRC round there we finished on the podium every time and won it for the last two years.

How's the BRC going?

OP: It's going really well. We'd been on the podium every time and were leading the championship until the car stopped with a freak electrical problem.

What's the plan for the Ulster then?

OP: With this still being our first season in a four-wheel drive, we probably go there as underdogs – but we go there looking for a win and our championship lead back!

We're back in the Alpheria/Hills Ford Fiesta R5 in Northern Ireland and these last two BRC rounds of the season are a real opportunity for us to repay the

faith Alpera and Hills Ford have shown in Dale and I this year. There's a championship to be won, time for us to go to work!

Meet Osian...

Date of birth: 24.02.93

Lives: Machynlleth

Co-driver: Dale Furniss

First rally: Rally Kurzeme (Latvia) August 2009 – 37th overall, eighth 2WD

Rally starts: 72

British Rally Championship event wins: 5*

British Rally Championship results: 2nd (2013/14), 3rd (2012)

World Rally Championship starts: 13

World Rally Championship class wins: 3

Website: osianpryce.com

* Including Osian's dominant National Rally Cup victory on the Mid Wales Stages in 2016

2009 **Aged 16**, Osian heads to Latvia to contest the Latvian Rally Championship (drivers are allowed to compete from aged 15).

2010 Just days after passing his driving test, Osian starts his first season of competition in the UK, driving a Ford Fiesta ST. The **highlight** of 2010 is a **class win on his World Rally Championship debut** at Rally GB.

2011 Stays in the Fiesta for a season learning the ropes in the British Rally Championship, the pinnacle of the sport in the UK.

2012 Ends his first BRC season in a front-running Citroen DS3 R3T with **two podium finishes** and **third in the standings**.

2013 BRC championship runner-up after a **hat-trick of wins** in the second half of the season.

2014 Just misses out on BRC title after final-round thriller.

2015 Steps up to **Junior World Rally Championship** and **leads on his debut** (Rally Portugal) in the sport's premier feeder series. Finishes second on Rally Poland, having led until a mechanical problem late in the event.

2016 **Wins** the FIA World Rally Championship's **Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy** with two event victories and three podiums from five starts.

2017 **Podium** on his BRC return and series debut in a Ford Fiesta R5 at the Border Counties Rally. **Dominates** Rally North Wales, winning every stage and then comes close to his first BRC win of the year finishing second on the Pirelli International Rally. Continues his run of podiums with second in Scotland before moving into the **championship lead** on his first ever visit to Ypres.

Ford Fiesta R5

Engine: 1600cc turbo, 32mm restrictor

Max power: 280bhp @ 6,200rpm

Transmission: Sadev five-speed sequential gearbox; Sadev front/rear differential

Suspension: Adjustable Reiger dampers; MacPherson struts front/rear

Brakes: 300mm discs four-piston calipers; hydraulic handbrake

Wheels: OZ Racing 7x15-inch

Dimensions: length 3982mm; width 1695mm; height 1481mm; wheelbase 2490mm

The rest of 2017...

BRC round 6/7

John Mulholland Motors Ulster Rally

August 18-19

Based: Londonderry/Derry

A mainstay of the British Rally Championship, this mid-summer asphalt spectacular brings some of the UK's best lanes – quite often in some of the wettest and trickiest conditions.

BRC round 7/7

138.com Rally Isle of Man

September 14-16

Based: Douglas

The Manx. If Markku Alen knows about Elibank, Ari Vatanen will never forget the Isle of Man. The world over, these stages are known, loved, loathed and respected. A brilliant way to end the BRC season.

WRC round 3/3

Dayinsure Wales Rally GB

October 26-29

Based: Deeside

The final European round of the WRC takes crews through the forests of mid and north Wales, passing Osian's front door along the way. Rain, sun, ice and even snow regularly feature to add to the challenge of one of the world's finest motorsport events.

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