

04.07.15
News release

Misfire costs Pryce Junior WRC lead in Poland

Second place on a round of the Junior World Rally Championship would be a massive achievement for 22-year-old Welshman Osian Pryce – and he's just one day away from that at Rally Poland – but he's beyond disappointed. He's gutted to be second.

Rally Poland should have been – and could still be – his first Junior WRC win.

Leading the event by almost half a minute, Pryce and co-driver Dale Furniss were dealt the hammer blow of a misfire in the second run through the day's longest stage. It cost them 90 seconds and their precious lead.

Tonight, with just two stages remaining tomorrow, they are a minute off the lead in second place.

"Disappointed doesn't come close to how I feel," said Osian. "We had this one in the bag. We were sensible this morning and we were doing exactly the same this afternoon when the car started misfiring."

The DS 3 R3-Max had missed a beat briefly on the morning's final stage, but Pryce was confident the Citroen technicians would trace and fix any electrical issues at lunchtime service.

Unfortunately, the problem came back in dramatic fashion soon after the start of the day's penultimate stage.

"The car just wouldn't pull," said Osian. "It wouldn't rev at all. To be honest, at times, it was a little bit dangerous because we're committing the car to corners, desperate to make up time, and we had no idea if the thing would pull when we went back on the throttle.

"I suppose we have to look on the bright side and say second wouldn't be a bad result. And, in all honesty, anything can still happen tomorrow: we could still take the win – but at the same time, who knows if we don't have the same problem and drop even more time and places tomorrow..."

"This one's just a bit hard to take. We've come to the far side of Europe on a bit of a wing and a prayer, with no budget, desperate for a result which might help us get to the next round in Finland; Dale and I have done our bit and just as we're ready for what would have been the biggest moment of our careers, it looks like it might have been snatched away. It feels a little bit cruel – not to mention expensive!"

"Let's see tomorrow. Like I say, a win's still possible, but my biggest hope is that Citroen can fix the car to let us fight."

Today in numbers: Osian did what, when in his class?

SS10: 3rd fastest (**1st in Junior WRC**) *builds lead to 21.7s*

SS11: 2nd fastest (**1st in Junior WRC**) *just 1.3s off quickest*

SS12: **fastest (1st in Junior WRC)** *7s faster than anybody*

SS13: **fastest (1st in Junior WRC)** *ends morning with 28.7s lead*

SS15: Stage cancelled

SS15: 2nd fastest (**1st in Junior WRC**) *still 22.1s in the lead*

SS16: 5th fastest (2nd in Junior WRC) *misfire costs 1m30s*

SS17: 2nd fastest (2nd in Junior WRC) *0.1s off fastest – even with misfire*

Tomorrow in detail

Start: Mikołajki 0815

One stage run twice

Longest stage (and the only stage...): Baranowo (14.60 km/9.07 miles)

Competition day three distance: 29.20 km/18.57 miles

Total day three distance: 97.31 km/60.46 miles

Tomorrow's about one stage run twice. But, when Osian and Dale talk to the locals about going to Baranowo, they're getting slightly quizzical looks. And that's understandable. They need to be more specific.

There are nine Baranowos in Poland. Five of those are in the north of the country and two are in the Masurian district! Which is why it might be better to talk about going to Sunday's Rally Poland stage – there's only one of those. It's called... Baranowo.

The Citroën DS 3 R3-Max Osian's ride this week in detail

Engine: EP6 CDT 1598cc turbo, direct injection developing 234bhp and 430Nm at 3000rpm.

Bodyshell: Reinforced body with welded, multi-point roll cage.

Transmission: Front-wheel drive with six-speed sequential gearbox, activated from steering wheel-mounted paddle. Differential is self-locking ZF.

Suspension: front MacPherson struts with BOS three-way adjustable dampers.

Numbers: Bore and stroke 77 x 85.8mm width 1715mm length 3948mm wheelbase 2465mm fuel tank capacity 67 litres weight 1230kg.

Brakes: Alcon forged 4-piston front calipers, 2-piston rears. Vented discs 330 x 34mm (front) 300 x 8mm (rear). Hydraulic handbrake. Wheels: 6 x 15-inch.

About Osian Pryce

Date of birth: 24.02.93

Lives: Machynlleth
Co-driver: Dale Furniss
First rally: Rally Kurzeme (Latvia) August 2009 – 37th overall, eighth 2WD
British Rally Championship event wins: 4
British Rally Championship results: 2nd (2013/14), 3rd (2012)
World Rally Championship starts: 4
World Rally Championship class wins: 1
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About the Junior WRC

Won by such rallying greats as Sebastien Loeb and Sebastien Ogier, the Junior WRC title remains the most sought after drivers' title outside of the World Rally Championship itself.

The series is open to drivers under the age of 28 and is fought out over some of the world's most demanding rallies. The diversity of events Osian is hoping to contest this year is incredible: he'll go from flying 50 metres at a time through the forests of Jyvaskyla on what's known as the Finnish Grand Prix (Rally Finland) to the agonisingly slow Rally of 10,000 Corners (Tour de Corse).

Crews score on six of seven rounds of the Junior WRC. Osian and Dale missed the opening round of the season on Monte Carlo and will, therefore count all six from the calendar listed below.

All Junior WRC crews will drive the identical Citroën DS 3 R3-Max, the latest evolution of Citroën Racing's super-successful 1600cc turbocharged, front-wheel drive rally car. And all the crews will run identical Michelin tyres on all six rallies.

Osian and Dale will also compete for the WRC 3 title, which is the FIA's support series for category R3 cars.

Osian's last rally...

Rally of Portugal (May 21-24)

The combination of punctures, trouble with the dampers, auxiliary belt and electrical issues, powersteering failure and brake problems meant Osian and Dale didn't finish. In fact, they only managed eight clean stages over the three days. But, of those eight, they were fastest on three and in the top three times on another three. Not bad for their first time in Portugal.

And this rally...

Rally Poland (July 2-5)

A super-quick gravel round, Poland was one of the most popular rallies of last year. The event will run wholly within Poland this time, after experimenting with a cross-border route in Lithuania last year. Run out of the Polish Lake District town of Mikolajki, the event is always one of the best attended by fans.

Lotos Rally Poland detail:

Date: July 2-5

Base: Mikolajki

Stages: 19

Competitive distance: 194.82 miles (313.53 kilometres)

Total distance: 741.01 miles (1192.50 kilometres)

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