

News release
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Wales takes on Scotland as Osian looks to top the table

Second in the British Rally Championship, Welsh rally star Osian Pryce heads to Scotland with his sights set on the top of the table at next week's Scottish Rally.

The Scottish Rally is one of British rallying's greatest challenges (see below) and this year won't be any different as some of Europe's finest motorsport talent meets in Dumfries to take on the classic roads. And the midges.

"I've always enjoyed the Scottish," said Osian, who will drive his usual Alpera/Hills Ford Fiesta R5 next week. "It's an event with real heritage and when you see the names on the winner's trophy, you appreciate what this one means."

To Osian and co-driver Dale Furniss, victory would be nice, but it's points that are the real prize.

"It goes without saying that we want to win the rally, that's what we're going there for," said Osian, "but the objective this year is to be British Rally Champions; we've finished runner-up in this championship too many times!

"The problem with that kind of strategy in Scotland is that the event is quite short in mileage. We'll have to be right on the money from the start of the very first stage to make sure we don't drop time to our rivals. If you give away five or 10 seconds in the first one, you're on the back foot for the rest of the rally and trying to catch that time back on these roads can be very, very tricky. Some parts of the rough could be quite rough and there's a real risk of a puncture through there – you want to be going into those sections with some sort of margin. Ideally, you don't want to be on the doorhandles trying to pull time back.

"The perfect scenario for us is to be close to the pace at the front, but able to control our speed and drive our own rally."

Osian's well aware of the threat posed by his rivals and he'll be keeping an eye on Scotsman David Bogie next week.

"These are David's local stages," said Osian. "I drive my local roads in Wales, so I know what kind of an advantage it will give him next week. He will be more familiar with the place, but almost more than that he'll have a feeling, an edge; it's almost indescribable, but when you're at home everything's that bit more comfortable. And when it's comfortable, it's usually quick."

Osian knows what it takes to succeed in Scotland though, having led three years ago.

"We were going really well in the DS 3," he said. "But then the window on my side got blown out, ironically on the Windy Hill stage! The car then filled with dust, but that wasn't the biggest problem – we had a pretty major issue with the gearbox that cost us the lead and probably the win."

There's no pre-event running for Osian ahead of the Scottish, the testing budget is being saved for the switch to asphalt events which comes with the Ypres Rally in Belgium after Scotland.

"I'm feeling better and better with the car," said Osian. "The good thing with the Scottish is that it comes pretty hard on the heels of the last round [the Pirelli International Rally, where Osian finished second] and the terrain next week isn't too dissimilar to what we had in Kielder.

"The good news from the last rally is that Spencer Sport has discovered what had caused the couple of issues we had on the Pirelli, so – like Dale and I – the Fiesta is fit and ready for round three."

RSAC Scottish Rally – the detail

May 19-20

Based: Dumfries

Service Lockerbie

Stages: 10

Total distance 177 miles

Competitive distance: 74 miles

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Itinerary

Friday May 19

Start Dumfries 1900

SS1 Mount Joe 1 8.87 miles 1958

SS2 Mount Joe 2 8.87 miles 2058

Service Lockerbie 2129

Parc Fermé 2202

Saturday May 20

SS3 Twiglees 1 8.92 miles 0858

SS4 Castle O'er 1 5.79 miles 0917

Service Lockerbie 1004

SS5 Windy Hill 1 5.47 miles 1105

SS6 Ae 1 8.11 miles 1139

Service Lockerbie 1221

SS7 Twiglees 2 8.92 miles 1322

SS8 Castle O'er 2 5.79 miles 1341

SS9 Windy Hill 2 5.47 miles 1545
SS10 Ae 2 8.11 miles 1619
Finish: Moffat 1704

Scotland: once more to the north

First run in 1932, the Scottish Rally has been a staple of the British rallying calendar ever since. It's a classic and, while it's no longer the nationwide tour from Glasgow to the Highlands and back, the forest roads of Scotland's south-west still provide more than enough of a challenge.

Next weekend's event will bring to a close what has been something of a northern tour for the BRC so far this season. Starting in Jedburgh for the Border Counties, round two headed across country to Carlisle before hopping back across Hadrian's Wall to Dumfries for round three. There's nothing unusual with the BRC visiting the top of Britain three times in season, but previously it was for the Pirelli, Scottish and Jim Clark Rallies.

It's impossible to talk about Scottish rallying and not mention the nation's most famous family and arguably world rallying's most famous name: McRae. Jimmy, Colin and Alister all won their home round of the British Rally Championship, but it was Jimmy's boys who enjoyed the better record, winning the Scottish twice compared with just the one for McRae Senior.

Colin McRae isn't the only world champion on the list of former winners either – Hannu Mikkola, Ari Vatanen and Stig Blomqvist are all there too.

Osian's five Dumfries facts

Osian and Dale will visit the place in Britain – and, in fact, the world – with the shortest name at the Scottish Rally. Ae. Eh? No Ae.

Anybody visiting Dumfries, Lockerbie or the Borders from the south will have travelled some distance on Britain's longest motorway... the M6 starts at Rugby and stops at Gretna. A journey of 226 miles.

Sanquhar, just north of Dumfries, is home to the world's oldest post office. It opened in 1712 and remains open today. Apart from when it's closed, that is.

Osian, Dale and Sir Bradley Wiggins have a lot to thank Dumfries and Galloway resident Kirkpatrick Macmillan for. He invented the bicycle in 1838.

Take all of the books loaned from and returned to Dumfries and Galloway's libraries and pile them on top of each other. How high? As high as Mount Everest? Don't be silly. Far higher... four times as high as Mount Everest.

Last time...

BRC round 2/7
Pirelli International Rally
April 29-30

Based: Carlisle

Osian came within a whisker of registering his first British Rally Championship win of the season. Bouncing back from a day-one steering problem, he was zeroing in on P1 when a faulty handbrake stepped in and blunted his challenge. Second beckoned.

This time...

BRC round 3/7

RSAC Scottish Rally

May 19-20

Based: Dumfries

Slightly earlier date than usual might keep the midges away, but the challenge of classics such as Castle O'er and Twiglees will remain.

Next time...

BRC round 4/7

Kenotek Ypres Rally

June 23-24

Based: Ypres

One of European rallying's greatest asphalt rallies (not to mention the brilliant atmosphere), former winners include Walter Röhrl, Henri Toivonen and Kris Meeke.

The rest of 2017...

WRC round 1/3

PZM Rally Poland

June 29-July 2

Based: Mikolajki

The second fastest round of the World Rally Championship, Rally Poland involves three days tearing up gravel tracks of the Polish Lake District.

BRC round 5/7

Nicky Grist Stages

July 8-9

Based: Builth Wells

The BRC's only mixed surface event includes the best asphalt action on the fearsome Epynt military ranges together with forest stages which were once a regular feature of Britain's round of the World Rally Championship.

WRC round 2/3

Neste Rally Finland

July 27-30

Based: Jyväskylä

The fastest round of the World Rally Championship. You pull top gear on Friday morning and leave your car there until Sunday afternoon on a fast-forward journey through the forests of Finland.

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.

Osian Pryce – date of birth: 24.02.93

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.

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

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