

28.07.17
News release

The Pryce plan works a treat in Finland

After flying through the Finnish forests, Welsh rally star Osian Pryce has landed himself a strong top-six position in the WRC2 category at the end of the opening day of Rally Finland competition.

Osian and co-driver Dale Furniss set themselves a very simple task on day one: to get to the end and improve their pace as they went along. Winning remains the ultimate aim, but after a car-wrecking accident ended their last World Rally Championship outing in Poland last month, gaining experience became the order for this one.

Competing with the DMACK World Rally Team, Osian enjoyed a trouble-free day in the Ford Fiesta R5 and, good as his word, showed great progression as the day continued.

"I've been building the pace and the confidence all day," said the 24-year-old. "We had a bit of an intermittent misfire this morning which cost us a little bit of time – it was tricky to commit to some of the long corners, but otherwise it's been a good day.

"Nobody likes to come to rallies and go at any other speed than absolutely flat-out. Putting everything on the line to fight for every tenth of every second is what we do and it's why we're here, but every now and then you have to be realistic and you have to take a bit of a step back. I could have gone charging through the stages, holding my breath and throwing the car at the road, but there's a good chance you can get caught out here. And what's the point of having a plan if you don't stick to it?"

"I've only done this event once and that was when we were in a completely different car last year; it was the Fiesta R2 – which is only two and not four-wheel drive and has a lot less power. I've now learned the true value of a pre-event test, it would have helped so much to get me up to speed with these roads, but I couldn't afford it so now we have to get on with it."

Making the car stiffer for the day's final two stages gave Osian a further confidence boost and helped with his performance.

"The car was leaning and pitching a little bit too much," he said, "so we made some changes on the suspension and it really worked. I could be really precise with the car. The only problem we had was a bit of a practical one: in the rush to get to the stage after making those changes, I didn't shut the door properly and it flew open in the first corner!"

"I'm really looking forward to tomorrow now. Today has gone to plan, today, if you like, has been the test and now tomorrow we can look to take another step towards where we want to be.

"And tomorrow's roads are just incredible. The Ouninpohja stage is known all around the world – it's a real rollercoaster of a place. It's sensational and I can't wait to get there."

Weather:

Today: dry-wet-dry with a bit of sunshine and cloud thrown in.

Tomorrow: wet with a bit more wet thrown in.

Tomorrow is:

Saturday July 29

Osian's day starts: 0745

Osian's day finishes: 1900

Number of stages: eight

Competitive distance: 132.34km (82.23 miles)

Total distance: 573.55km (356.40 miles)

Longest stage: SS16/19 Ouninpohja 24.38km (15.14 miles)

Shortest stage: SS17/18 Saalahti 4.21km (2.61 miles)

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: 71

British Rally Championship event wins: 5*

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

World Rally Championship starts: 12

World Rally Championship class wins: 3

Website: osianpryce.com

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

About Rally Finland

Thursday July 27 – Sunday July 30

Based: Yväsylä

Surface: gravel

Stages: 25

Competitive distance: 314.20km (195.24 miles)

Liaison distance: 1111.76km (690.84 miles)

Website: www.nesterallyfinland.fi/en/

Rally Finland itinerary

Thursday July 27

SS1 Harju 1 2.31km (1.43 miles) 1900

Friday July 28

SS2 Halinen 1 7.65km (4.75 miles) 0712
SS3 Urria 1 12.75km (7.92 miles) 0745
SS4 Jukojärvi 1 21.31km (13.24 miles) 0848
SS5 Halinen 2 7.65km (4.75 miles) 1006
SS6 Urria 2 12.75km (7.92 miles) 1039
SS7 Jukojärvi 2 21.31km (13.24 miles) 1142
Service Jyväskylä 1317
SS8 Äänekoski-Valtra 1 7.39km (4.59 miles) 1500
SS9 Laukaa 1 11.76km (7.30 miles) 1613
SS10 Lankamaa 21.68km (13.47 miles) 1711
SS11 Äänekoski-Valtra 2 7.39km (4.59 miles) 1809
SS12 Laukaa 2 11.76km (7.30 miles) 1922
SS13 Harju 2 2.31km (1.43 miles) 2030
Service Jyväskylä 2050

Saturday July 29

SS14 Pihlajakoski 1 14.90km (9.25 miles) 0858
SS15 Päijälä 1 22.68km (14.09 miles) 1006
SS16 Ouninpohja 1 24.38km (15.14 miles) 1049
SS17 Saalahti 1 4.21km (2.61 miles) 1202
Service Jyväskylä 1252
SS18 Saalahti 2 4.21km (2.61 miles) 1455
SS19 Ouninpohja 2 24.38km (15.14 miles) 1608
SS20 Pihlajakoski 2 14.90km (9.25 miles) 1716
SS21 Päijälä 2 22.68km (14.09 miles) 1824
Service 2029

Sunday July 30

SS22 Lempää 1 6.80km (4.22 miles) 0925
SS23 Oittila 1 10.12km (6.28 miles) 1008
SS24 Lempää 2 6.80km (4.22 miles) 1147
SS25 Oittila 2 10.12km (6.28 miles) 1318
Finish Podium 1500

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Last time...

BRC round 5/7

Nicky Grist Stages

July 8-9

Based: Builth Wells

After building up a solid lead through the classic Welsh woods, Osian's Ford Fiesta R5 succumbs to a fuel-pump problem on the second day over the

Epynt ranges. Retiring hurts, but retiring from the lead always hurts just a little bit more.

Happening now...

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.

Next time...

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.

The rest of 2017...

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. 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

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