

27.07.17
News release

Osian's back on the World Rally Championship track

Welshman Osian Pryce is back in the World Rally Championship at this week's Rally Finland, the fastest rally of the year.

Osian and co-driver Dale Furniss have returned to the Drive DMACK World Rally Team for their second prize-drive event after winning last year's WRC-based Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy.

Osian's first outing with the front-running world championship squad came at Rally Poland last month, but ended in the biggest crash of his career. That accident is part of the reason why the Machynlleth driver took a measured approach to tonight's (Thursday) crowd-pleaser around the city streets of Jyväskylä in central Finland.

Ahead of that 1.43-mile first stage, the crews completed their last-minute preparations at the event's shakedown test.

"Shakedown was really valuable for us," said Osian. "Unfortunately, we didn't have the budget to test ahead of this event, so we've come here with a fairly off-the-peg set-up for the car and tried to tailor it to my driving this morning.

"Fortunately, we're here working with M-Sport – the best team in the World Rally Championship and the team leading the World Rally Championship right now – so we were able to make the changes and feel more comfortable in the car by the time we finished shakedown.

"I wasn't getting great feedback from the car after the first run this morning, so I immediately started making some changes. I'm starting to understand just how important a pre-event test really is..."

Of all the rallies in the WRC, Finland is the most specific. The switchback roads are constantly rising, falling, twisting and turning, throwing the car into the air at every opportunity. What every driver is looking for is for the car to be the glove on their hand.

"I came to Rally Finland for the first time and was competitive last year," said Osian. "We were leading and looking good for what would have been a pretty amazing debut win when we slipped off the road. I felt good and I was sure I'd be able to carry that feeling over from the two-wheel drive Fiesta R2 to this year's four-wheel drive R5 car. The reality has been quite a lot tougher. Let's just say, I haven't quite got the glove one yet!

"Tonight was all about not making any mistakes. I dropped a couple of seconds to the leader, but Dale and I took no chances and brought the car

back to service. The rally really starts tomorrow on what will be one of the longest days of the year with 12 stages. I can't wait to get into the woods and see what we can do. If the car's not right, we'll work on it and further refine my set-up – but the main thing is for me to take as much experience as possible from this opportunity to drive in a team that's right at the top of rallying's tree."

Tomorrow is:

Friday July 28

Osian's day starts: 0630

Osian's day finishes: 2130

Number of stages: 12

Competitive distance: 145.71km (90.54 miles)

Total distance: 641.03km (398.33 miles)

Longest stage: SS10 Lankamaa 21.68km (13.47 miles)

Shortest stage: SS13 Harju 2.31km (1.43 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: Yvässkylä

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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