

15.10.16
News release

Osian's world title chase goes down to the wire

Osian Pryce's hopes of taking the World Rally Championship's most lucrative prize will go down to the wire in Spain tomorrow (Sunday).

The Machynlleth driver is embroiled in a battle with Finland's Max Vatanen on the final round of the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy at this week's Salou-based Rally of Spain.

Osian's Ford Fiesta R2 was hit by a misfire on yesterday's opening loop of gravel stages in the hills of Tarragona, dropping him and co-driver Dale Furniss to 10th place. Such has been Osian's speed earlier in the season, however, he came to the final round with a 14-point lead – it's that lead which keeps Welsh hopes alive tonight.

After dropping time and places on day one, Osian is relying on bonus points for winning stages to keep him in the race. With one day to go, he and Vatanen are tied on points at the top of the table.

"I can't believe how close it is," said Osian. "This one really is going down to the final stage – what an incredible way to end the season. We have nothing to lose on the final day, we just have to push as hard as we can.

"I was pretty devastated yesterday, I've got to be honest. We've worked so hard all year for this, everybody around me – my friends and family – have put so much in and another win would have been amazing.

"Those same people really came together last night and lifted Dale and I again. We've got a job to do. We want to win this championship, we want to take this title back to Wales. This is a chance to really show how strong British rallying is and we're going to do absolutely everything we can tomorrow.

"We've managed some stage wins today, but the car's still not quite perfect. It's not nearly as bad as it was yesterday, but it's just not pulling cleanly between 3000 and 4000rpm – that's really hurting us on the tight and twisty stuff. Once we're up in top gear and above 4000rpm, happy days, she's singing along then and that's how we were able to be quickest in El Montmell – it's all quite quick in there.

"So, the season comes down to the final day and probably the final stage. Let's see what tomorrow brings!"

Today was...

Osian's day in detail. His times against his DDFT rivals:

SS8: 4th fastest (10th in DDFT) cautious start after day one trouble

SS9: fastest (10th in DDFT) happy with first fastest time on Spanish Tarmac

SS10: 3rd fastest (10th in DDFT) misfire back

SS11: 2nd fastest (10th in DDFT) misfire between 3000-4000rpm

SS12: 2nd fastest (10th in DDFT) clean run on afternoon opener

SS13: 2nd fastest (10th in DDFT) just 0.1s off fastest!

SS14: fastest (9th in DDFT) huge push and another point

SS15: 2nd fastest (9th in DDFT) missed quickest by 0.3s!

Weather:

Today: sunshine with temperatures from 11 to 24 degrees

Tomorrow: more sunshine on its way with similar temperatures

Tomorrow is...

Sunday October 16

Osian's day starts: 0705

Osian's day finishes: 1420

Number of stages: 4

Competitive distance: 39.02 miles (62.80km)

Total distance: 153.58 miles (247.16km)

Longest stage: SS16/18 Pratdip 11.99 miles (19.30km)

Shortest stage: SS17/19 Duesaigües 7.51 miles (12.10km)

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: 61

British Rally Championship event wins: 5*

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

World Rally Championship starts: 9

World Rally Championship class wins: 3

Website: osianpryce.com

* Including Osian's dominant National Rally Cup victory on this year's Mid Wales Stages

About RallyRACC Catalunya-Costa Daurada

October 13-16

Based: Salou

Surface: gravel/asphalt

Stages: 19

Competitive distance: 199.51 miles (321.08km)

Total distance: 856.48 miles (1,378.31km)

Website: www.rallyracc.com

RallyRACC Catalunya-Costa Daurada Itinerary

Thursday October 13

Shakedown, Salou 1.84 miles (2.97km) 0800

Ceremonial start, Salou 1315

SS1 Barcelona 1.98 miles (3.20km) 1806

Friday October 14

SS2 Caseres 1 7.76 miles (12.50km) 1008

SS3 Bot 1 4.03 miles (6.50km) 1036

SS4 Terra Alta 1 24.20 miles (38.95km) 1111

Service Ascó 1211

SS5 Caseres 2 7.76 miles (12.50km) 1418

SS6 Bot 2 4.03 miles (6.50km) 1446

SS7 Terra Alta 2 24.20 miles (38.95km) 1521

Service PortAventura 1721

Saturday October 15

SS8 Vilaplana 3.90 miles (6.28km) 0810

SS9 Alcover-Capafonts 1 12.38 miles (19.93km) 0849

SS10 Querol 1 13.21 miles (21.26km) 1021

SS11 El Montmell 1 15 miles (24.14km) 1103

Service PortAventura 1231

SS12 Alcover-Capafonts 2 12.38 miles (19.93km) 1357

SS13 Querol 2 13.21 miles (21.26km) 1529

SS14 El Montmell 2 15 miles (24.14km) 1611

SS15 Salou 1.39 miles (2.24km) 1800

Service PortAventura 1820

Sunday October 16

SS16 Pratdip 1 11.99 miles (19.30km) 0724

SS17 Duesaigües 1 7.51 miles (12.10km) 0813

Service PortAventura 0905

SS18 Pratdip 2 11.99 miles (19.30km) 1039

SS19 Duesaigües 2 7.51 miles (12.10km) 1208

Service PortAventura 1318

Finish Podium Salou 1341

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Now say hello to the Ford Fiesta R2T

Engine: 999cc turbo, 12-valve, three cylinders

Max power: 180bhp @ 6,200rpm

Max torque: 250Nm @ 4,000rpm

Transmission: Sadev five-speed sequential gearbox, plated limited-slip differential and uprated driveshafts

Suspension: Adjustable Reiger dampers, Eibach springs

Brakes: 285mm discs four-piston calipers (front gravel); 310mm discs four-piston calipers (front asphalt); 280mm discs two-piston calipers (rear); hydraulic handbrake

Wheels: OZ Racing 6x15-inch (gravel); 6.5x15-inch (asphalt)

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

Weight: 1030kg

Osian's guide to 2016

Osian and Dale will contest five rounds of the World Rally Championship in the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy. Here's the details and an Osian download on the big five.

Been and gone...

Rally Portugal

May 19-22

Based: Matosinhos

Surface: gravel

Osian outings: 2 (2015, retired – mechanical; 2016 1st in DDFT)

Result: **1st**

Stage wins: 4

Stages led: 1

Osian and Dale took a sensible approach to the first half of the Porto-based opener, but still remained in the top three throughout the event. Moved to the front on the final day and took the win by almost two minutes.

Rally Poland

June 30-July 3

Based: Mikolajki

Surface: gravel

Osian outings: 2 (2015, 2nd Junior WRC; 2016 2nd in DDFT)

Result: 2nd

Stage wins: 8

Stages led: 4

Rarely has second place been celebrated in quite such a fashion. Osian's result secured him the first major victory of the World Rally Championship season so far. Leading the points race after the first two DDFT rounds, Osian and Dale are now confirmed as factory DMACK drivers for two WRC events in a Ford Fiesta R5 next season.

Rally Finland

July 28-31

Based: Jyväskylä

Surface: gravel

Osian outings: 1

Result: 6th

Stage wins: 8

Stages led: 5

Osian and Dale showed the Finns the way home in Finland last time out. Quickest DDFT runners on days one and three, only a Saturday morning shunt spoiled the Welshmen's dream debut on the world's fastest rally.

Rally Germany

August 18-21

Based: Trier

Surface: asphalt

Osian outings: 1

Result: **1st**

Stage wins: 5

Stages led: 15

It doesn't get much better than this: Osian and Dale lead from start to finish in a supremely quick and perfectly controlled victory on their Rally Germany debut.

Happening now...

Rally of Spain

October 13-16

Based: Salou

Surface: gravel/asphalt

Osian outings: 0

Osian says: "Two rallies in one when we get to the final event in Catalunya. The first day is on the gravel, which looks to be fairly similar in places to Portugal, but then it's a weekend on the asphalt. The Tarmac stages are all really nice and now some of the most famous in the world. Generally, they're double-width roads which flow quite nicely and allow you to carry good speed.

"Like the four events before Spain, I can't wait to get there and try them out for myself!"

About the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy

The brainchild of M-Sport World Rally Team principal Malcolm Wilson and DMACK managing director Dick Cormack, the DDFT takes the best young drivers from around the world and pitches them into a five-round fight for the biggest prize south of the World Rally Championship itself.

There's a season in a Ford Fiesta R5 car at rallying's second tier – WRC2 – on offer to the winner after five rounds. The structure of DDFT has changed slightly this season, with rallies being paired (Portugal and Poland; Poland and Finland; Germany and Spain) and the crew gathering the most points from each of those two rallies will win two rallies in the R5 car next season.

Winning a full WRC2 season of 2017 competition in an M-Sport Fiesta R5 will require consistent speed from Osian and Dale this year.

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