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News release

## Osian steps onto the world stage

Osian Pryce has begun the World Rally Championship journey he hopes will culminate in him following countryman Elfyn Evans to the top of their sport.

Pryce, 22, will compete alongside Evans – now a full-time professional with M-Sport World Rally Team – at next week's Vodafone Rally of Portugal. Pryce drives his Citroen DS 3 R3-Max in the Junior WRC and WRC 3 categories and admits his fellow Welshman is an inspiration for him.

"Elfyn's done an incredible job," said Osian. "To be driving a works Ford Fiesta RS WRC for the M-Sport team is, I'll be honest, what we're all aiming at. It's such a boost for Welsh rallying to see a guy like Elfyn making that final step up into the world of professional driving in the World Rally Championship.

"That's exactly where I want to be and what we're doing this season is the next step on the road to getting where Elfyn is. Watching him [Evans] score his first ever world championship podium in Argentina last month and seeing the response from the rallying community and the media really confirms that the sport is prospering in this part of the world."

And that admiration works both ways after Pryce impressed Evans with his speed on last November's Wales Rally GB – where Pryce made his debut in WRC 2 with a one-off outing in a Ford Fiesta R5. Despite no experience of the car or competing at such an elevated level, Pryce and co-driver Dale Furniss set fastest times and fought for the class lead through the first half of the rally.

"Fair play," said Evans, "that was pretty impressive. OK, he was in some of his home stages early on, but he still had to drive the car. And competing on your home stages does bring a fair bit of pressure – trust me, I know!"

Pryce's preparations for next week are nearly complete and the Machynlleth driver leaves home, bound for Matosinhos near Porto in Portugal on Sunday.

The Vodafone Rally of Portugal will be the first overseas round of the WRC for Welshmen Pryce and Furniss, but the pair have no concerns about driving their Citroen on some of the westernmost stages in Europe.

"We've got Autosport Technology running the car with us this season," said Osian. "They have so much experience at this level, it's fantastic; Richard [Asquith] and his team have seen pretty much everything – and worked with some of the world's best rally drivers.

"For Dale and I, it's a case of getting out to Portugal and getting acclimatised to our surroundings. Yes, it could be a bit daunting that this is our first world championship event abroad, but at the end of the day we're going to be in our

Citroen DS 3, a car we know inside-out. As for the roads, we'll get to the start; five red lights will go out and one green one will go on and then I'll drive as fast as I can listening to everything Dale tells me until he says stop.

Osian's participation in WRC 3 will take him to some of the finest, fastest and most iconic rallies in the FIA World Rally Championship. And it's the enthusiasm, commitment and belief of sponsors G&M Pryce and THORUtilities that have allowed Pryce to make the step up from the British Rally Championship, where he has finished runner up for the last two years, to the sport's top tier.

"None of this would have been possible without the sponsors," said Osian. "The investment they have made makes the step viable financially and on a practical basis, but as well as that, knowing they have the confidence in me is great for me as well – it gives me such a boost as Dale and I step into the unknown."

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### **About Osian Pryce**

Date of birth: 24.02.93

Lives: Machynlleth

Co-driver: Dale Furniss

First rally: Rally Kurzeme (Latvia) August 2009 – 37<sup>th</sup> overall, eighth 2WD

British Rally Championship event wins: 4

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

World Rally Championship starts: 3

World Rally Championship class wins: 1

Website: [osianpryce.com](http://osianpryce.com)

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### **About Vodafone Rally of Portugal**

Date: May 21-24

Base: Matosinhos, Porto

Stages: 16

Competitive distance: 218 miles (352 kilometres)

Total distance: 950 miles (1529 kilometres)

Website: [www.rallydeportugal.pt](http://www.rallydeportugal.pt)

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