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News release

Pryce's dream turning to a nightmare

Rising Welsh rally star Osian Pryce's place on the World Rally Championship stage is hanging by a thread.

The Machynlleth driver will contest next week's Lotos Rally Poland, an event which could be his last of the season; an event which could mark the end of Osian's World Rally Championship dream.

In his last two World Rally Championship events, 22-year-old Osian defied all the odds to run second on his WRC 2 debut in a Ford Fiesta R5 (Wales Rally GB) and then lead the Junior World Rally Championship outright on his first time competing in that series (Vodafone Rally of Portugal) last month.

But a lack of cash looks ready to pull the plug on Pryce's inaugural FIA Junior World Rally Championship season.

Committed to competing in Poland next week, Pryce is burning the midnight oil in preparation for another new round of the world championship, while frantically trying to balance the books to make it to Rally Finland at the end of next month.

"I've wanted this all my life," said Pryce, "and I'm absolutely determined I'm not giving up on it. Basically, we've got the money to get to Poland, but right now, Finland is a step too far and there's just not the money to make it."

The frustration for Osian and co-driver Dale Furniss is two-fold.

"We showed real speed in Portugal," said Pryce. "We had a lot of problems with the car, but when it was running right, generally we were quickest. I wouldn't have minded so much if we'd been in the middle of the field, but we were there – we were leading and I know we could do this, it only we could get the chance!"

"The other frustration is that Finland's the most expensive event of the season for us, but if we could get through that one, we'd have a bit more time to chase the backing for the rest of the season."

While most of his rivals are out testing and training, Pryce is at work during the day, before switching his focus to surviving the season at night.

"I'll be honest and tell you it's pretty hard to concentrate at work, knowing what hangs in the balance right now," he said. "I'm on the telephone all the time, just trying to raise interest in what we've done and let people see what we have got to offer; what we can do. Like I said, the speed was there in

Portugal and people were really impressed with what I did in Wales last year when I drove the [Ford] Fiesta R5 for the first time, but we need to find some backers or, much as I hate to admit it, we're done.

"We have a chance – and I honestly believe we have a very good chance – of landing a dream drive next year: six rallies in a Citroën DS 3 R5, if we could win the Juniors this season.

"Regardless of what happens in trying to find the money for Finland, Dale and I will be completely focused on Poland next week and showing the world what we can do. We are both so massively grateful for the belief our current sponsors have shown in us and we want to go out there and do them and ourselves proud in Poland."

Ironically, time will run out for Pryce to compete in Finland just as he completes his preparations for Rally of Poland, based in the Polish Lake District, north of Warsaw in the town of Mikołajki.

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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 – 37th overall, eighth 2WD

British Rally Championship event wins: 4

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

World Rally Championship starts: 4

World Rally Championship class wins: 1

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About the Junior WRC

Won by such rallying greats as Sebastien Loeb and Sebastien Ogier, the Junior WRC title remains the most sought after drivers' title outside of the World Rally Championship itself.

The series is open to drivers under the age of 28 and is fought out over some of the world's most demanding rallies. The diversity of events Osian is hoping to contest this year is incredible: he'll go from flying 50 metres at a time through the forests of Jyväskylä on what's known as the Finnish Grand Prix (Rally Finland) to the agonisingly slow Rally of 10,000 Corners (Tour de Corse).

Crews score on six of seven rounds of the Junior WRC. Osian and Dale missed the opening round of the season on Monte Carlo and will, therefore count all six from the calendar listed below.

All Junior WRC crews will drive the identical Citroën DS 3 R3-Max, the latest evolution of Citroën Racing's super-successful 1600cc turbocharged, front-wheel drive rally car. And all the crews will run identical Michelin tyres on all six rallies.

Osian and Dale will also compete for the WRC 3 title, which is the FIA's support series for category R3 cars.

Osian's 2015 events

Rally of Portugal (May 21-24)

The combination of punctures, trouble with the dampers, auxiliary belt and electrical issues, powersteering failure and brake problems meant Osian and Dale didn't finish. In fact, they only managed eight clean stages over the three days. But, of those eight, they were fastest on three and in the top three times on another three. Not bad for their first time in Portugal.

Rally Poland (July 2-5)

A super-quick gravel round, Poland was one of the most popular rallies of last year. The event will run wholly within Poland this time, after experimenting with a cross-border route in Lithuania last year. Run out of the Polish Lake District town of Mikolajki, the event is always one of the best attended by fans.

Rally Finland (July 30-August 2)

Rallying's Holy Grail. If a driver can't win the championship, a Finland win is the next best thing. Rallying's a way of life in this country, but especially in Jyväskylä in the last week of July. The stages thread a stunning route between the trees and lakes, while the fans provide an amazing atmosphere on the WRC's fastest weekend of the season.

Tour de Corse (October 1-4)

Back in the championship for the first time since 2008, the French island provides one of the most challenging asphalt routes of the year. The cars will move between the beautiful towns of Corte, Bastia and Ajaccio as they tackle the toughest and twistiest stages of the year.

Rally of Spain (October 22-25)

The only mixed surface event of Osian's season. This rally starts in the heart of Barcelona, where a hugely popular superspecial stage sets the scene for an intriguing gravel-asphalt event. The service park is based in the seaside town of Salou.

Wales Rally GB (November 12-15)

Based out of Deeside, Osian's home round just keeps on getting better and better. The organisers have further innovations planned for this year, but there's going to be nowhere better for Osian to bring his season-long fight to a close.

About Lotos Rally Poland

Date: July 2-5

Base: Mikołajki

Stages: 19

Competitive distance: 194 miles (313 kilometres)

Total distance: 740 miles (1192 kilometres)

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