

News release  
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## Tom Davis... the local who brings the world to Wiltshire

Tom Davis is the organiser of Rallyday. As a local, Tom watched the event evolve and is now thrilled to be working on Europe's biggest one-day rally show from the inside.

How did you get involved?

TD: "I'd been to Rallyday as a spectator when I was younger and I absolutely loved it. As a motorsport fan, it was amazing to come in and get the access to the cars and drivers – I couldn't believe it, to be honest. From then on I just kept on coming."

How did you end up working on the event?

TD: "There was a job going at Castle Combe and I got it, simple as that – we took the event over in 2015 after the tragic passing of the original organizer Brian Stubbings. I had a relationship with Combe and the other rallyday organisers so it was a natural step, but daunting to fill such big shoes!"

You work full-time at Castle Combe?

TD: "I do, I work on all the race meetings and everything – but there's always something special about Rallyday."

It's a big deal for Castle Combe?

TD: "Of course it is! It's our biggest annual event and one which takes a lot of organising."

When do you start planning?

TD: "We'll start planning the 2018 show on Sunday September 24... this Sunday. While we're working on dismantling the 2017 show, the team is already working on next season; we're looking at how the show's been laid out; how the timetable worked and things like that. Then we have a debrief and go through the whole process to find ways to improve for the next year."

But this is the 17<sup>th</sup> event, how much more can you improve Rallyday?

TD: "There's always something that can be done and I think the minute you start to sit back and think you've got this thing cracked then you start to take your foot off the gas a little bit. We're always working on ways to improve."

What's been the highlight of the last 16 years?

TD: "I would have to say the years when we had Britain's World Rally Champions Colin McRae and Richard Burns attending. It's 10 years since Colin died and this year we'll have a special tribute to him with a parade lap of some of the cars he drove in his career."

"Another really special memory which Rallyday fans will cherish forever was when Richard made his last public appearance at the 2005 event. Tragically, he died a few months later, but watching him enjoy seeing some of his old cars being driven past was so special. His father Alex came back the following year and led a parade of those cars again, that was really emotional."

What's special about this year?

TD: "There's a big display of cars coming from the M-Sport World Rally Team in Cumbria. M-Sport is leading the drivers' and manufacturers' World Rally Championship; these guys are literally on top of the world and they're coming to Wiltshire on Saturday."

Give us one reason to make Rallyday our Saturday...

TD: "Rallyday is the first place in Britain you will get to see a 2017 World Rally Car driving at competitive speeds. Obviously, Rallyday's not competitive, but M-Sport drivers Elfyn Evans and Ott Tanak will, I'm sure, be pushing the Ford Fiesta WRC pretty hard.

"Can I give you another reason?"

OK, one more. What is it?

"Entry is free for accompanied under-17s and as well as the rally cars, we have a total of around 1000 rally-inspired cars to look at, an off-road display, brilliant interviews and, of course, a brilliant family area to keep the children busy.

That's more than the one reason... but now tell us what's so special about 2017 cars?

TD: "This is the new generation of rally cars, the fastest, loudest and most exciting cars in the history of the sport (since group B). The cars have competed on 10 rallies around the world already, but no car has been seen at speed in public in Britain... until Saturday."

How important is the event locally?

TD: "Naturally, I think it's massively important! But genuinely, Saturday is one day in the year when Rallyday, Castle Combe and Wiltshire is right at the heart of the rally world. People from all around the globe know about the event and we get visitors coming in from all over Europe and even further afield."

So the world really comes to Wiltshire on Saturday?

TD: "Fortunately, not all of it – I don't think the car parks could cope..."

And it's all thanks to you...

TD: "Absolutely not! We are a team here at Castle Combe and, of course, beyond the full-time team we have an incredible bunch of volunteer marshals – without them there wouldn't be a Rallyday and we have to say a big, big thank you to each and every one of them."

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