

# Press Information



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## MITSUBISHI RALLIART EVOLUTION CHALLENGE UK ROUND 5 - REPORT



- Todds Leap.com Rally NI 20 & 21 August 2010
- Alastair Fisher takes second Evo Challenge victory of the season.
- Jonny Greer consolidates series lead with a strong second place.
- Daniel Sigurdarson survives problems in the closing stages to finish third.

23rd August 2010

For the second time this season, Alastair Fisher and co-drier Rory Kennedy scored maximum points in the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge, when they won the fifth round of the series, the Todds Leap.com Rally NI. Jonny Greer/Dai Roberts finished second and, in doing so, strengthened their case for the title with one round still to go.

Based in Antrim, the Todds Leap.com Rally NI (or Ulster Rally as it was previously known) featured six stages on Friday evening followed by a further eight on Saturday, the combination of which provided competitors with a total of 127 miles of timed special stages on closed roads to the north and south of the town. The rally also hosted the sixth round of the Irish Evolution Challenge and the fifth round of the Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship.

Having retired after a crash at the previous round on the Isle of Man, Fisher/Kennedy showed no signs of hesitation and stamped their authority on proceedings right from the start, setting the fastest Mitsubishi times on the three opening stages before the first service halt. This was a particularly impressive performance, as a front suspension strut broke after a heavy landing in SS2 and Fisher had to drive with a strangely handling car for the remainder of the stage and then through SS3.

Greer/Roberts had an early scare when their brakes appeared to be non-existent at the first corner, but once the new set of pads had bedded-in, the problem quickly disappeared. Times at the service halt showed Fisher/Kennedy ahead by over 30 seconds from Greer/Roberts, with about the same margin separating them from third-placed Daniel Sigurdarson/Asta Sigurdardottir - the Icelandic siblings admitting they were still cautious on asphalt, but now getting quicker - although spin and a reversing manoeuvre at a chicane in SS2 had not helped their progress.

The second loop of three stages, which was a repeat of the first three, saw the gaps between the leading trio increase by roughly the same amount, albeit Greer/Roberts had been slowed by a potential problem with their car's centre differential during SS6.

Saturday saw another dry day dawn and, with a further eight stages in store - all of them different to those ran of Friday - the final result was far from decided. However, with a one-minute advantage, Fisher/Kennedy were in control and proceeded to claim the fastest Evolution Challenge times on all but two of the stages - Greer/Roberts achieving that accolade on SS10 and SS12.

Once again, Greer/Roberts had a worrying few moments towards the end of the day, this time when the gear linkage jammed and they had to complete the final part of SS13 with the car stuck in first gear. However, they were able to rectify the problem once on the road section and then complete the 14th and final stage to take second place and consolidate their series lead. They also continue to lead the British Rally Championship with one round to go.

For Sigurdarson/Sigurdardottir SS13 also proved to be jinxed, when a rear suspension arm snapped and consequently caused their car to progress at some strange angles - so much so, they spun and hit a bank with the front of the car. Thankfully, the damage was only cosmetic and, after nursing the Evo X through the last stage and back to the finish, they were delighted to claim another podium result and still keep their Evo Challenge title hopes alive.

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Such was Fisher/Kennedy's pace, as well as claiming their second Mitsubishi series victory, they also finished third overall in the British Rally Championship event. Indeed, it was a credible achievement for all three Mitsubishi teams to get to complete the event, as the demanding nature of the stages claimed a number of other competitors around them.

"I'm very pleased to take my second Evolution Challenge win of the season, but of course, it should really have been my fifth", said Fisher. "Following our retirement on the Isle of Man last time out, to win the Challenge and to finish third overall is an excellent result. With the car completely rebuilt after the accident I have to thank the team, as it has run perfectly throughout the event."

The final round of the UK Evolution Challenge takes place on 25 September in Yorkshire and, with one-and-a-half times the usual allocation of points there is potential 30 points up for grabs. Added to this, Greer is still to drop one score and therefore, he and Sigurdarson will battle it out to see who becomes 2010 Evolution Challenge Champion.

The Evolution Challenge Ireland also shared the Todds Leap.com Rally NI as a round of its championship, as did the Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship. The Irish Mitsubishi series was won by Brendan Cumiskey/Conor Foley, with the British Championship event won by Craig Breen/Gareth Roberts in a Fiesta S2000.

The 2010 Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge UK is supported by: Mitsubishi Motors UK, Pirelli tyres, Sunoco fuels, JRM, Cyprus Automobile Association, Fairways Mitsubishi, Speedline Corse wheels, Murray Motorsport, CL brake pads, Sparco racewear and PIAA lights - who sponsor the junior award for under 25-year old drivers.

For the first time this season the winner of the Evolution Challenge in the UK, Ireland and Sweden, will win the same prize: A supported drive in the FxPro Rally Cyprus, the final round of the IRC (Intercontinental Rally Challenge). Then, whichever of the three teams are first home on this event will be crowned European Evolution Challenge Champions. Added to this, the winning driver in the UK will be a guaranteed nomination for the Pirelli Star Driver shoot-out.

#### **Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge UK - Round five results**

1 Alastair Fisher (Trillick)/Rory Kennedy (Letterkenny)	1:44:00.4
2 Jonny Greer (Carrduff)/Dai Roberts (Carmarthen)	1:47:37.0
3 Daniel Sigurdarson (Iceland)/Asta Sigurdardottir (Iceland)	1:57:22.4

#### **Series standings after round five**

##### Drivers

- 1 Jonny Greer 96
- 2 Daniel Sigurdarson 68
- 3 Alastair Fisher 40
- 4 Euan Thorburn 18
- 5= David Bogie 16
- 5= Owen Murphy 16
- 7 Peter Horsey 15

##### Co-drivers

- 1 Dai Roberts 76
- 2 Asta Sigurdardottir 68
- 3 Rory Kennedy 40
- 4 Paul Beaton 18
- 5= Kevin Rae 16
- 5= James O'Brien 16

ENDS

#### **Photo caption**

Having led from the start, Alastair Fisher and co-driver Rory Kennedy recorded their second Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge UK victory of the season in round five, the Todds Leap.com Rally NI (*copyright free image*).

**For all media enquiries contact the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge  
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