



Press Information

MITSUBISHI RALLIART EVOLUTION CHALLENGE UK ROUND 6 - REPORT

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THE 2010
MITSUBISHI RALLIART
EVOLUTION CHALLENGE
UK
IS SUPPORTED BY:



- International Rally Yorkshire
24th & 25th September 2010
- Alastair Fisher wins season finale.
- Jonny Greer becomes tenth UK Evolution Challenge Champion Driver.
- Asta Sigurdardottir becomes Champion Co-driver.
- Daniel Sigurdarson finishes second in series by just one point.



27th September 2010

A dramatic sixth and final round of the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge UK saw Alastair Fisher and co-driver Rory Kennedy record a resounding victory and, in doing so, ensured that Jonny Greer became 2010 Champion Driver. Second place went to Daniel Sigurdarson and Asta Sigurdardottir, who claimed the co-driver's title.



The International Rally Yorkshire hosted the finale for the series' tenth consecutive season in the UK, and, following the previous five events this year, the battle for the drivers' title was between Jonny Greer and Daniel Sigurdarson. However, for the former Icelandic Rally Champion to claim the crown, he would have to win and Greer would have to record his first non-finish of the season.

Also the final round of the Dulux Trade MSA British Rally Championship, the event started on Friday evening from Marine Drive in Scarborough, the stormy conditions seeing waves crashing over the sea wall and into the service area which was based along the water front. For the 30-car BRC field, which included five Evolution Challenge crews, there was to be just one stage in the dark that night, a 16-mile run through Langdale Forest.

Coping well in the slippery conditions, Greer and co-driver Dai Roberts were fastest of the Evo Challenge competitors by 12 seconds ahead of Fisher/Kennedy, who were making their debut with JRM driving the team's new 'National' specification Evolution X. Sigurdarson/Sigurdardottir were third, a further 30-seconds behind, but could have easily been leading had they not spun off the road and into a tree half-way through the stage. Luckily, the damage was purely cosmetic and, after getting back on the road and then turning to face the right direction, they were able to continue to the end of the stage and managed to get back to the service area in Scarborough.

Fourth place before the overnight halt were Ramona Karlsson/Miriam Walfridsson, the regular Swedish Evolution Challenge competitors experiencing their first taste of British rallying and pleased to get through the first stage. Returning to the series after his one and only previous appearance on the opening round in March, was Peter Horsey. This time with Welsh co-driver Chris Davies, the Kenyan driver was pleased to make it through his very first night-time stage, even though the intercom had stopped working.

With the blustery conditions continuing and rain falling intermittently during the day, grip levels during Saturday's seven stages on the North Yorkshire Moors became even more unpredictable. Unfortunately for Greer/Roberts, they were the first to experience the treacherous nature of the changeable and slippery gravel roads when, towards the end of SS2, their car would not slow down enough to get round a down-hill right-hander. Their Evo launched itself off the road to become wedged on its side between the trees. And, although the damage was limited and the car would have been capable of continuing, it was stuck and the Champion elect would now have to spend the remainder of the event hoping that Sigurdarson would not overhaul Fisher.

Besides clipping a bale when negotiating one of the many chicanes designed to slow down competitors on the long straights for which the Dalby Forest complex is famous, Fisher/Kennedy extended their lead during the morning's three stages. They consequently returned to Scarborough for the service halt with a lead of just over two minutes ahead of Sigurdarson/Sigurdardottir, who had been slowed when their car's power steering stopped working just a few miles into the first stage of the day.

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Karlsson/Walfridsson were a further minute behind having also suffered mechanical issues, their's the loss of third and fifth gears due to a disconnected linkage. Fortunately, the Swedish pair were able to fix the problem and began to gather pace as they became more used to British gravel roads. Horsey was also familiarising himself with the UK forests, with he and Davies getting quicker as the rally went on.

Crews then embarked on the afternoon's loop of four stages and, with all of them a second run through the previous four, the conditions were likely to be even more treacherous. Impressively claiming two fastest overall stage times during the course of the day, Fisher/Kennedy continued to extend their lead, whilst Sigurdarson/Sigurdardottir could only hope that luck would allow them to win and subsequently claim the series title.

Karlsson/Walfridsson started to feel more comfortable with their car and were pleased with their progress during the afternoon. However, on the penultimate stage they were caught out by a slippery section of road and slid into a ditch. Although the car was undamaged, they were unable to extract it from its predicament and retired – an unfitting end to a spirited drive.

Horsey was also of the opinion things were getting better, until a puncture at the start of SS5 forced he and Davies to stop and change the wheel in the stage. Then, just when the finish was in sight, a fuel problem brought their car to a halt on the road section after the final stage.

Back in Scarborough, the time sheets revealed that Fisher and Kennedy had won their second Evolution Challenge round of the season, their performance good enough to see them finish in second place overall. Sigurdarson/Sigurdardottir ended their drama-filled day in second and, in doing so, allowed Greer to become the tenth driver to become Evolution Challenge Champion. However, because Roberts had missed a round during the season, Sigurdardottir was confirmed as 2010 Champion Co-driver.

"This has been an excellent event. In fact it couldn't have gone better", said Fisher. "I am extremely pleased to round off the season with another Evo Challenge win and to finish second in the event overall."

Although disappointed not to have retired for the first time this season, Greer was relieved that his three Evolution Challenge wins and two second places had been enough to secure him the title: "It was frustrating just to be watching what was going on, as I was powerless to do anything about it. I'm therefore pleased that Alastair won so I was able to come away with the Evolution Challenge title and add my name to the list with the nine other drivers."

By winning the series, Greer was awarded a Pirelli Star Driver nomination. He joins Fisher, who was also awarded a nomination for his performance on the event, to go through to a final shoot out to win a fully-funded drive in 2011.

Added to this, Greer, along with the Evolution Challenge Champions in Sweden (Jimmy Joge) and Ireland (Brendan Cumiskey), will now have the opportunity to take a supported entry in the FxPro Rally Cyprus, the final round of the IRC (Intercontinental Rally Challenge). Then, whichever of the three drivers are first home on this event, will be crowned European Evolution Challenge Champion.

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.

Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge UK - Round six results

1 Alastair Fisher (Trillick)/Rory Kennedy (Letterkenny) 1:10:27.3
2 Daniel Sigurdarson (Iceland)/Asta Sigurdardottir (Iceland) 1:13:08.0

Retirements

SS2 Jonny Greer (Carryduff)/Dai Roberts (Carmarthen) Accident
SS7 Ramona Karlsson (Sweden)/Miriam Walfridsson (Sweden) Accident
SS8 Peter Horsey (Kenya) /Chris Davies (Rhondda Cyon Taff) Fuel

Final series standings

Drivers

1 Jonny Greer 96
2 Daniel Sigurdarson 95
3 Alastair Fisher 70
4 Euan Thorburn 18
5= David Bogle 16
5= Owen Murphy 16
7 Peter Horsey 15

Co-drivers

1 Asta Sigurdardottir 95
2 Dai Roberts 76
3 Rory Kennedy 70
4 Paul Beaton 18
5= Kevin Rae 16
5= James O'Brien 16

ENDS

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