



# Press Information

## MITSUBISHI RALLIART EVOLUTION CHALLENGE IRELAND REPORT - ROUND FIVE



- Hotel Kilmore Stages Rally – 24th May 2009
- John McGlaughlin wins on Evo Challenge debut.
- Neil McCance leads for most of the rally, finishes second and now heads series.
- 2008 Champ Brendan Cumiskey settles for third.

26th May 2009

John McGlaughlin and co-driver Crawford Henderson emerged from the final stage of this weekend's Hotel Kilmore Stages Rally to win round five of the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Ireland. After an intense, day-long battle, they overhauled leaders for most of the event Neil McCance/Sean Ferris in the closing stages to record victory in what was their debut in the highly competitive series for Group N Mitsubishi's.

Eight of the 12 registered Evo Challenge crews entered the Cavan-based rally, which hosted the first one-round, one-day event in this year's Irish Evo Challenge calendar - both previous rounds being double-headers. Utilising a traditional one-day Irish tarmac event format, the rally comprised three stages run three times, with each loop split by a 20-minute service halt.

McCance/Ferris carried on from where they left off last time out and went straight into the lead following the first of the day's nine stages. McGlaughlin/Henderson followed just five seconds behind and set the scene for the battle that was about to unfold. The gap between the two leading cars increased to seven seconds on SS2, but was back to four on SS3, as McGlaughlin reported he was getting used to having more grip than he was previously used to, this being the first event using Pirelli tyres.

Looking to record his first finish of the year, 2008 Evo Challenge Champion Brendan Cumiskey, with stand-in co-driver Andrew Grennan, got off to what he regarded as a steady start and held third place when cars entered the first service halt of the day. Already he was 50 seconds behind the leading pair and realised that it would be difficult to get back on terms.

William Mavitty/Keefe Kilcoyne were fourth and frustrated to have lost time in the first loop when their car's front brakes overheated. Another crew slowed by mechanical issues were fifth-placed Stanley Ballantine/Donnacha O'Callaghan, when a sticking throttle on the first stage caused a few heart-stopping moments and they then took things steady until they could get the car back to the service area for further inspection.

For Michael Murray it was a welcome return to the Evo Challenge – this year with co-driver Brian Daniels. With it being his first event the season he admitted to being a bit rusty and he clipped a straw bale on SS2. After almost a full rebuilt following an off on the previous event, Tom White/Robert Murphy were concerned that their car appeared to be down on power, but that didn't stop them from having a spin on stage one.

Not completely happy with his car's handling was series leader Liam Egan, with co-driver Mary O'Kane. After a determined effort on the first two stages, they were caught out when the car went light over a crest, locked up and slid into a solid bank, the impact and subsequent damage bringing their rally to an abrupt halt.

The second loop of three stages again saw McCance/Ferris take time off McGlaughlin/Henderson in the first two stages, but not the third and this time the difference when they entered the service halt was 11 seconds. Their pace saw Cumiskey/Grennan drop further back, their situation not helped by a few spins, Cumiskey admitting that he could not find his rhythm.

Mavitty/Kilcoyne started their podium bid on stages four and five, but then had to slow things down for SS6, when their car's sump guard removed itself on the road section just after SS5. Unable to refit it at the second service interval they considered retiring, not wanting to damage the car's engine, but competitive spirit meant they decided to continue.

*continued...*

www.evo-challenge.ie

THE 2009  
MITSUBISHI RALLIART  
EVOLUTION CHALLENGE  
IRELAND  
IS SUPPORTED BY:



Ballantine/O'Callaghan were now making up for time lost earlier, whilst Murray/Daniels caught the same straw bale the second time round on SS5, breaking the co-driver's window. They were then delayed by a broken driveshaft on SS6. White/Murphy were still concerned about their car's power at the second service halt, but their fears were finally realised at the start of the ninth and final stage when the engine stopped completely.

There were no such problems for McGlaughlin/Henderson, who had been adjusting their car's suspension all day to correspond with the improvement in grip and were now very happy with its set-up. Therefore, when McCance/Ferris ran wide and momentarily visited a ditch in SS7, they were able to pounce and came out of the stage in the lead by one second.

Flustered by their brief excursion, McCance/Ferris lost a further three seconds on SS8 and two in SS9, which meant that McGlaughlin/Henderson crossed the finish line outside the Hotel Kilmore to record their first Evo Challenge win by nine seconds. They also finished third overall and won Group N outright.

"I'm over the moon to win a round of the Evo Challenge – especially on my series debut", said McGlaughlin. "It's been a great battle with Neil and I have been very pleased with the way the car has performed – especially the handling. I've really enjoyed being part of the Evo Challenge. I just wish I had joined up at the start of the season."

The sixth round of the Mitsubishi series is hosted by the ALMC Rally, which takes place on 19th July and follows a similar three-runs of three stages format to that of the Cavan event.

The Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Ireland offers competitors an extensive prize fund, with the Champion winning a supported drive in a James Foley Rallysport prepared Group N Lancer Evolution X for selected rounds of the 2010 Irish Tarmac Championship. Other prizes up for grabs include vouchers, tyres, fuel and awards on each event and at the end of the season.

The series is supported by: Pirelli tyres, Sunoco fuel, James Foley Rallysport, Carbone Lorraine, Murray Motorsport, Speedline Corse wheels, PIAA lights, Pacenotes, Sparco racewear and Mitsubishi Motors Ireland. Support was also received from Donnelly Group, Mullusk.

#### **Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Ireland**

##### **Round five results**

1	John McGlaughlin (Cookstown)/Crawford Henderson (Magherafelt)	1:15:49
2	Neil McCance (Comber)/Sean Ferris (Omagh)	1:15:56
3	Brendan Cumiskey (Dundalk)/Andrew Grennan (Monaghan)	1:18:54
4	William Mavitty (Eniskillen)/Keefe Kilcoyne (Westport)	1:20:15
5	Stanley Ballantine (Strabane)/Donnacha O'Callaghan (Mallow)	1:20:33
6	Michael Murray (Longford)/Brian Daniels (Waterford)	1:23:07

##### **Retirements**

SS3	Liam Egan (New York)/Mary O'Kane (Maghera)	Accident
SS9	Thomas White (Foulksmills)/Robert Murphy (New Ross)	Engine stopped

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

<u>Drivers</u>			<u>Co-drivers</u>		
1	Neil McCance	34	1	Sean Ferris	34
2	Liam Egan	27	2	Donnacha O'Callaghan	25
3=	Keith Cronin	24	3	Greg Shinnors	24
3=	Stanley Ballantine	24	4	Keefe Kilcoyne	23
5	William Mavitty	22	5	Ivor Lamont	20
6	Alan Carmichael	20	6	Colin Harkness	18
7	Geoff McMahan	13	7	Robert Graham	13
8	John McGlaughlin	12	8	Crawford Henderson	12
9	Brendan Cumiskey	8	9	Mary O'Kane	9
10	Tom White	5	10	Brian Daniels	6
10	Michael Murray	5	11	Robert Murphy	5
12	Alan Burrows	4	12	Gavin Burrows	4

ENDS

**Photo:** Round five of the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Ireland takes place this weekend at the Cavan-based Kilmore Hotel Stages Rally, where current series leader Liam Egan will be aiming to retain his advantage (copyright free image).

For media enquiries and copyright free images please contact the  
Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Manager & Press Officer Simon Slade:  
Tel: +44 (0)1935 424873 | Mob: +44 (0)7966 153555 | E.mail: simon@rpmprmo.com

For the latest Evolution Challenge news visit:  
[www.evo-challenge.ie](http://www.evo-challenge.ie)