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# Press Information

## MITSUBISHI RALLIART EVOLUTION CHALLENGE UK ROUND FOUR PREVIEW

- **Manx Telecom Rally**  
8th & 9th May 2009
- **Top three Evo Challenge teams prepare for battle on the Isle of Man.**
- **First asphalt event of the season for Mitsubishi series.**



### 4th May 2009

The trip half-way across the Irish Sea to the Isle of Man is the now traditional first asphalt surface rally in the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge calendar and this year is no exception, with the Manx Telecom Rally hosting the fourth round of the championship.

First of the Mitsubishi seeds are winners last time out Simon Hughes and co-driver Craig Parry. The Pirelli Tour of Cumbria was their first Evo Challenge victory of the season, having been runner-up on the previous two rounds. The switch to tarmac may well suit them and win on the island would take the tally to two-all between Hughes and current championship leader Daniel Barry who, with co-driver Martin Brady, could not have got their season off to a better start.

Barry admits he needs more time on asphalt and will not want a repeat of last year's outing on this event, when a series of incidents caused both bodywork and mechanical damage to his previous car. However, notwithstanding the dramas, a determined drive did see him claim a hard-earned third place for his efforts in 2008.

Next to cross the start line will be currently third in this year's series Nik Elsmore and Craig Drew. Although he has also had his memorable moments on the island, Elsmore likes the Manx roads and a clean run this year may well see him and Drew standing on the top step of the podium on Saturday afternoon.

After a frustrating drive on in round three last month, when an untraceable electrical fault caused their car's engine to cut-out intermittently, Owen Murphy and Dai Roberts have reluctantly withdrawn their entry from next weekend's rally, Murphy vowing not to put himself through the stress of another event until the wiring problem has been rectified.

Other Evo Challenge regulars that won't be seen on the island are Alan Carmichael and Ivor Lamont. Committed to contesting both the UK and Irish Evo Challenges this season, they are choosing to sit this one out, mainly due to their hectic timetable and the difficulty of getting suitable ferry crossings this year.

Although just three teams will contest this weekend's round of the Evo Challenge, the series still represents a over a third of the MSA Gravel Championship field and nearly half of the N4 Class entry.

"Even though these current economic times are having an effect on numbers, it is a little more reassuring to know that the Evolution Challenge proportionally still represents the same amount of entries as it has done in the past", said Championship Coordinator Simon Slade. "Needless to say, we would like to see more of our ten registered crews out this weekend. However, I am confident that numbers will increase when we get the next round and back onto gravel"

The Manx Telecom Rally starts on Friday evening from Port Erin on the Southern coast of the island and sees six stages before the overnight halt in Douglas. A further ten stages are planned for Saturday, with the finish taking place in the pit lane outside the TT Grandstand at 4.30 that afternoon.

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The 2009 Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge is supported by Mitsubishi Motors UK, Ralliart, Pirelli tyres, Sunoco fuels, JR Motorsports, Speedline Corse wheels, Carbone Lorraine brakes, Walkinshaw Performance, Sparco racewear and PIAA lights - who sponsor the junior award for under 25-year old drivers.

**Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge entries (in start number order)**

9 Simon Hughes (Abergle)/Craig Parry (Llanymynech)  
10 Daniel Barry (Enniskerry)/Martin Brady (Navan)  
12 Nik Elsmore (Coleford)/Craig Drew (Bream)

**Championship positions after round three**

Drivers

1	Daniel Barry	34
2	Simon Hughes	32
3=	Nik Elsmore	21
3=	Owen Murphy	21
5	Alan Carmichael	18
6	Andreas Magnusson	8
7	Neil Armstrong	4

Co-drivers

1	Martin Brady	34
2	Craig Parry	22
3	Craig Drew	21
3=	Dai Roberts	21
5	Ivor Lamont	18
6	Patrick Walsh	10
7	Henrik Hulterskog	8
8	Max Ferri	4

ENDS

**Photo:** Can Simon Hughes and co-driver Craig Drew make it two-all against Championship leaders Daniel Barry/Martin Brady this weekend, when they head to the Isle of Man for round four of this year's Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge, the Manx Telecom Rally (*copyright free image*).

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