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Press Information

MITSUBISHI RALLIART EVOLUTION CHALLENGE UK ROUND TWO PREVIEW

- **Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally**
20th & 21st March 2009.
- **Evo Challenge heads to Kielder Forest for the second of its eight rounds.**
- **Any one of five crews could win.**



16th March 2009

Round two of the 2009 UK Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge takes competitors to Northumberland and the infamous Kielder Forest for this weekend's Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally. And, if round one is anything to go by, it's going to be difficult to predict a winner in the Mitsubishi Championship.

Although entry numbers are reduced from those usually enjoyed by the official series for Group N Lancers, with just five of the ten registered crews making the trip to the Borders, the competition is destined to be as fierce as ever.

First of the Evo Challenge runners to leave the start in Jedburgh will be round one victors Daniel Barry and co-driver Marttn Brady, doubtlessly looking to carry on from where they left off three weeks beforehand in Bournemouth.

Following them into the forests will be runner-up last time out Simon Hughes, who will be partnered for the first time this season by experienced co-driver Craig Parry. Hughes made a good impression on his first Evo Challenge outing last month and almost won, finishing just 2.8 seconds behind Barry/Brady.

Third off the start-line will be Nik Elsmore/Craig Drew, who are always seen at the front of the Evo Challenge field. They initially led the opening round and will therefore be out to prove that this time, they can maintain their pace throughout the day.

Having had to contend with handling problems during the Rallye Sunseeker, Owen Murphy/Dai Roberts are aiming to make amends this time round. They will certainly be a crew to watch and may well spring a surprise on the others.

Last year's Irish Evo Challenge front-runners Alan Carmichael/Ivor Lamont are next in line. Having contested mainly asphalt events in 2008, the Ulster-based pair admit that they are still building on their gravel pace and will be aiming for a good haul of points this weekend.

Notable by their absence are the foreign competitors who provided the Mitsubishi Championship with an international flavour in round one. However, all have promised to return during the season: clashing events, car preparation and business commitments cited as the restricting factors for making the trip to the UK this time.

The format of the Border Counties Rally changes this year, with the organisers introducing for the first time two night-time stages on Friday evening. Following the overnight halt, crews will then embark on a further five stages on Saturday to give a total stage distance of 60 miles before returning to Jedburgh for the finish in the afternoon.

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.

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Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge entries (in start number order)

- 4 Daniel Barry (Enniskerry)/Martin Brady (Navan)
- 7 Simon Hughes (Abergle)/Craig Parry (Llanymynech)
- 10 Nik Elsmore (Coleford)/Craig Drew (Bream)
- 20 Owen Murphy (Cork)/Dai Roberts (Carmarthen)
- 27 Alan Carmichael(Ballymena)/Ivor Lamont (Ballymena)

Championship positions after round one

Drivers

1 Daniel Barry	12
2 Simon Hughes	10
3 Andreas Magnusson	8
4 Nik Elsmore	7
5 Owen Murphy	6
6 Alan Carmichael	5
7 Neil Armstrong	4

Co-drivers

1 Martin Brady	12
2 Patrick Walsh	10
3 Henrik Hulterskog	8
4 Craig Drew	7
5 Dai Roberts	6
6 Ivor Lamont	5
7 Max Ferri	4

ENDS

Photo: Daniel Barry and co-driver Martin Brady will be out to repeat their round one victory in this weekend's round two of the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge, the Jedburgh-based Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally (copyright free image).

For media enquiries and copyright free images please contact the Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge Coordinator & Press Officer Simon Slade: Tel: 01935 424873 | Mob: 07966 153555 | E.mail: simon@rpmpromo.com

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