

THE ARMSTRONG



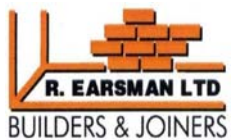
SUNDAY 30 OCTOBER 2011

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Media Release/For Immediate Release, Monday 24 October 2011

RALLY STARS FLOCK TO GALLOWAY HILLS

A quality field, headed by four-times winner and event sponsor Jock Armstrong and co-driver Kirsty Riddick, will line up for the start of the Galloway Hills Rally in Castle Douglas on Sunday.

The popular end-of-season challenge, which has been brought forward from its traditional December date, has attracted leading competitors from Scotland, England and Ireland.

They will tackle five classic forest stages, totalling around 42 miles.

With his Subaru Impreza still sidelined after crashing out on the Speyside Stages in August, Armstrong will take to the wheel of an unfamiliar Mitsubishi Evo 9, as he aims to become the first driver to win the event five times.

The Castle Douglas ace has been lent the car by Yorkshire-based Steve Petch of SGP Motorsport, whose son Stephen starts second in a Hyundai Accent WRC, co-driven by John Richardson.

"I look forward to the Armstrong Galloway Hills Rally every year - it's my favourite event", said Armstrong: "With my own car still being re-shelled following the Speyside accident, Steve has very kindly lent me an Evo. It's left-hand drive, which should make things interesting for the first couple of miles! However, both Kirsty and I are really looking forward to the weekend - it would be hard to find smoother stages anywhere in Scotland".

Third seed Chris Collie has impressed in the MSA Scottish Rally Championship this season in his Subaru Impreza with four top-ten finishes. The Aberdeen-based drilling engineer, who'll be co-driven by the experienced Neil Shanks from Elgin, finished sixth in the overall drivers' standings.

Ex-Irish champion Pat O'Connell and co-driver Mark Wiley in a Mitsubishi Evo 9 head a twelve-strong Northern Ireland contingent who will make the ferry crossing to Stranraer thanks to continued support from Stenaline.

Two local drivers - Mark McCulloch from Newton Stewart and New Abbey's Richard Dickson - will be chasing a podium place in their respective Subaru Imprezas.

McCulloch and co-driver Craig Wallace have only contested three rallies in their ex-Sara Williams Impreza, but powered to an impressive ten overall on the Merrick Stages in September, after taking the runners-up spot on the Solway Coast the previous month.

Dickson, meanwhile, with navigator Sanny Dobie, has a strong record on the Galloway Hills: clinching the final podium spot last year following a fourth place finish in 2008.

Belfast's Liam Regan, co-driven by Damien Duffin, will be one to watch in his 4-wheel drive Mitsubishi-powered Peugeot 206. It proved to be one of the "star cars" of the Merrick Stages, where he finished a very creditable eighth overall on his first visit to Galloway.

Ian Paterson and Jim Haugh will be another local crew looking to mix it at the sharp end of the leaderboard in front of home support.

Paterson, who took his Subaru Impreza to fourth overall in 2010, starts one ahead of Newton Stewart's Craig McMiken - who in the past four years has finished second, third, fifth and seventh in his Mitsubishi Evo 9.

The top ten is rounded off by Port William crew Fraser Wilson and Steven Broll who have shown steady improvement in their Mitsubishi Evo 6 since switching to 4-wheel drive at the start of the 2011 Scottish championship campaign. It culminated with a twelfth overall and Group N honours on the final Colin McRae Stages round earlier this month.

The leading 2-wheel drive competitor - seeded eleventh - is Northern Ireland's Shane McGirr who finished sixth overall in 2009 in his 1600cc Toyota Starlet. With the engine now boosted to 2000cc, some good times are expected.

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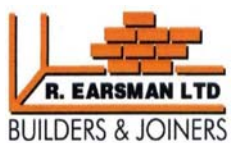
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Jim Sharp from Stranraer goes into the weekend fresh from a fine fifth overall in his Subaru Impreza on last Sunday's UTS Cheviot Keith Knox Rally.

Meanwhile, 2010 Scottish Junior Champion Peter Stewart and dad Richard will be looking for a strong family finish in their respective Subaru Imprezas.

Peter and navigator Phil Shortt are seeded at No 15, while Richard, co-driven by Carin Logan from Kelso, starts a further eight places back, one ahead of the Impreza of Stuart Paterson and Colin Maxwell.

There are no fewer than thirteen Ford Escorts of varying spec in the line up – headed by experienced Irish crew Paul McErlean and Niall McKenna.

Among the local Escort competitors, Castle Douglas navigator Michael Baird will be on the notes for Dingwall's Charlie Munro in a Mk 2, while Dumfries' Roy Eide-Johansen, with Mark Simpson from Moffatt navigating, will field his impeccable Mk 1.

Iain Haining and co-driver Mairi Riddick will be targeting class honours in their Vauxhall Nova, following an excellent championship campaign where they finished runners-up. However, they are likely to face stiff competition from Ayrshire's Blair and Alex McCulloch, also in a Nova, who took third place in the championship, while father and son Donald and Scott Peacock from Castle Douglas will also be aiming for a strong finish in the same class in their Peugeot 205.

Penpont's Jim Robertson, with daughter Claire on the notes, will again go head to head with fellow Citroen C2R2 competitor Gareth White from Melrose.

The pair have battled it out in Class 4 in the SRC all year, with White and navigator Mike Dickson winning the category, and Robertson having to settle for fourth after a couple of retirements. However, only seven points separated the two at season's end.

Callum and Ian Bendall from Castle Douglas will also be competing on their local event in a Ford KA and Vauxhall Corsa respectively, and Billy Thomson and Jim Little from Glenlochar will be making a rare appearance in a Mitsubishi Evo 9.

The rally, which is jointly organised by Solway, Machars and East Ayrshire car clubs, will start from the Market Hill in Castle Douglas at 08:31, before heading to the first stage THISTLE INN CROSSMICHAEL Glengap at 09:02.

That is followed by the MARCHBANK BAKERS THORNHILL Cairn Edward at 09:37.

Competitors will then return to Castle Douglas for a service break at the Market Yard from 10:20 - 11:00.

The R.EARSMAN LTD Dalbeattie stage will follow at 11:22, followed by a re-run of stages 1 and 2 at 12:34 and 13:09 respectively. All times are for Car 1.

Spectator information can be found on the event website www.gallowayhillsrally.co.uk

Seeded Entry List – with car nos:

- 1 Jock Armstrong (Castle Douglas)/Kirsty Riddick (Haugh of Urr) Mitsubishi Evo
- 2 Stephen Petch (Hamsterley)/John Richardson (Northallerton) Hyundai Accent WRC
- 3 Chris Collie (Aberdeen)/Neil Shanks (Elgin) Subaru Impreza
- 4 Pat O'Connell (Cashel)/Mark Wiley (Mitcheltown) Mitsubishi Evo 9
- 5 Mark McCulloch (Newton Stewart)/Craig Wallace (Kirriemuir) Subaru Impreza
- 6 Richard Dickson (New Abbey)/Sanny Dobie (Castle Douglas) Subaru Impreza
- 7 Liam Regan (Belfast)/Damien Duffin (Rasharkin) Peugeot 206
- 8 Ian Paterson (Dumfries)/Jim Haugh (Stranraer) Subaru Impreza
- 9 Craig McMiken (Newton Stewart)/Susan Shanks (Elgin) Mitsubishi Evo 9
- 10 Fraser Wilson (Port William)/Steven Broll (Port William) Mitsubishi Evo 6
- 11 Shane McGirr (Fivemiletown)/Steven O'Hanlon (Ballygawley) Toyota Starlet
- 12 Jim Sharp (Stranraer)/TBA Subaru Impreza
- 14 Paul McErlean (Magherafelt)/Niall McKenna (Magherafelt) Ford Escort Mk2
- 15 Peter Stewart (Lochfoot)/Phil Shortt (Dumfries) Subaru Impreza
- 16 Jimmy Donnelly (Enniskillen)/ Fabian McAleer (Enniskillen) Subaru Impreza
- 17 Lee Hastings (Dumfries)/Brian Findon (Dumfries) Subaru Impreza
- 18 Colin Gemmell (Stair)/Paula Swinscoe (Withnell) Subaru Impreza
- 19 Allan McDowall (Tarbolton)/Gavin Heseltine (Gilberdyke) Opel Kadett

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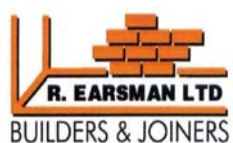
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- 20 Ronan Campbell (Trillick)/Paul Corry (Enniskillen) Ford Escort Mk2
21 Barry Jordan (Newark)/James Gratten-Smith (Chesterfield) Ford Escort Mk2
22 Matthew Robinson (Ripon)/Nigel Hutchinson (Easingwold) Ford Escort Mk2
23 Richard Stewart (Lochfoot)/Carin Logan (Kelso) Subaru Impreza
24 Stuart Paterson (Dumfries)/Colin Maxwell (Dumfries) Subaru Impreza
25 Mickey McGillin (Omagh)/Aaron Johnston (Fintona) Ford Escort
26 Ross Cree (Hurlford)/Billy Gower (Galston) Subaru Impreza
27 Iain Haining (Dumfries)/Mairi Riddick (Haugh of Urr) Vauxhall Nova
28 Blair McCulloch (Drongan)/Alex McCulloch (Drongan) Vauxhall Nova
29 Derek Crossen (Comber)/Peter Martin (Co Antrim) Mitsubishi Evo 6
30 Robert Adamson (Kilmarnock)/Dick Wardle (York) Ford Escort RS 1800
31 Gareth White (Melrose)/Callum Atkinson (Lauder) Citroen C2R2
32 Brendan Campbell (Trillick)/Ciaran McAnespy (Derrylin) Ford Escort Mk2
33 Ross McFadzean (Ayr)/Scott Thomson (Ayr) Subaru Impreza
34 Jim Robertson (Penpont)/Claire Robertson (Penpont) Citroen C2R2
35 Callum Bendall (Castle Douglas)/Richard Millener (Workington) Ford Ka
37 Greg Pollock (Cumnock)/Michael Cruikshank (Crieff) Ford Escort Mk1
38 George Bryson (Catrine)/Jacqueline Bryson (Catrine) Ford Escort Twincam
39 Charlie Munro (Dingwall)/Michael Baird (Castle Douglas) Ford Escort Mk2
40 Scott McMinn (Kilmarnock)/Stephen Marshall (Newton Stewart) Subaru Impreza
41 Donald Peacock (Castle Douglas)/Scott Peacock (Castle Douglas) Peugeot 205
42 Neil Wallace (Dalbeattie)/John Wallace (Dalbeattie) Talbot Sunbeam
43 Andrew Ritchie (Stonehaven)/Gordon Ritchie (Stonehaven) Ford Escort RS Mk2
44 Roland Wessel (Hammersmith)/Malcolm Vie (Montrose) Lancia Delta Integrale
45 Ronald Horne (Nairn)/Wayne Horne (Nairn) Subaru Impreza
46 Billy Thomson (Glenloch)/Jim Little (Kirkcudbright) Mitsubishi Evo 9
47 Alan Forrest (Prestwick)/Christine Brown (Ochiltree) Subaru Impreza
48 Ian Bendall (Castle Douglas)/Richard Barber-Fleming (Castle Douglas) Vauxhall Corsa
49 Leroy Mills (Trillick)/Robert Fyffe (Omagh) Vauxhall Corsa
50 Ian Henry (Ballymote)/James McDermott (Ballinacarron) Peugeot 206
51 Douglas Watt (Furnace)/Donald Munro (Inverary) Ford Escort
52 Michael Hunter (Dumfries)/James McWhir (Carlisle) Lada Samara
53 Darren Martin (Longtown)/Martin Steele (Longtown) Ford Escort Cosworth
54 Roy Eide-Johansen (Dumfries)/Mark Simpson (Moffat) Ford Escort Mk1
55 Garry Russell (Dumfries)/Peter Linton (Castle Douglas) Peugeot 309 Gti
56 David Alexander (Cumnock)/John Ireland Frew (Mauchline) Vauxhall Nova
57 David Coleman (Carlisle)/Josh Davidson (Morpeth) Skoda Felicia

<ends>

For more information Event Press Officer, Robin Wyllie, via admin@gallowayhillsrally.co.uk