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Creighton Holds Off McGarrity's Challenge in Challenging Conditions!

The first round of the 2014 McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland, took place on Saturday 18th January on the New Year Stages Rally at Kirkistown. Despite such an early start to the season, five junior drivers, aged 14-17 lined up to lead the field away in their 1000cc machines. This series, now in its third year provides a superb stepping stone for future rally stars to learn their skills.

Crumlin's Philip White in his Nissan Micra led the field off into a treacherous first stage, and Philip was to find out just how treacherous it was, with a spin on the chicane before the top hairpin, losing over forty seconds to the leaders. On stage two he was third fastest showing what might have been, and was joint second fastest on the final stage. Second off the line was William Creighton, in his Citroen C1. After third in last year's series and picking up a win at Bishops court along the way, the Moira driver was hot favourite for this extremely wet opening round, and he didn't disappoint on as was fastest on stage one, and second fastest on stage two.

Moiras James Partridge was making his debut in the ex Kyle White Peugeot 107, and he had a torrid first stage, sliding down the grass and re-joining just in front of Michael McGarrity, the whole escapade costing James over twenty seconds. 15 year old Michael McGarrity was on a flyer. He was also in a new car, a freshly built Citroen C1, and after some winter driving tuition has a renewed focus on this season's Junior 1000 series. Second fastest on stage one was followed by his first fastest time in the Junior 1000 series which put him into a 2.9 second lead.

There was a lot of change on the car front this weekend, as Newry's Eoghan Bogue was making his debut in the 2012 championship winning Micra of Ben Crealey. Eoghan had just tested the car for the first time the previous day, and added to this it was his first time in left hand drive, which made his day's rallying all the more impressive as he slotted into an early third place.

On stage three William Creighton took the lead and stage four was cancelled for the Junior's so two tests made up the rest of the mileage, as the Kirkistown circuit was continually belted with heavy rain. On the penultimate test Michael McGarrity was fastest, to start the final test just two seconds behind. Behind them the positions looked settled with Eoghan Bogue third, despite a few moments, James Partridge fourth, after a promising third fastest time on stage three, and a recovering Philip White fifth.

In the end it was William Creighton who took the spoils after an excellent, trouble free run, where he steered clear of trouble, and held off Michael McGarrity's challenge. An off road excursion, in which he lost over a minute on the final stage meant that Michael had to settle for second place, a superb result in his new C1. Also in a new car, Eoghan Bogue took a fine third, with James Partridge fourth and Philip White fifth.

17 year old Kyle White who finished second in the 2013 series, made his adult rallying debut at the wheel of a Citroen C2 R2 Max, and recorded a fine result- 12th overall and 3rd in two wheel drive.

To keep up to date please check out our new Facebook page-Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland.

<http://www.facebook.com/pages/Junior-1000-Rally-Challenge-Ireland/588151257878544>

McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge- Rnd 1 Positions

1	William Creighton/Liam Regan	Citroen C1	35m 09.4s
2	Michael McGarrity/ Stephen Massey	Citroen C1	+1m 06.8s
3	Eoghan Bogue/Aidan O'Connor	Nissan Micra	+1m 31.6s
4	James Partridge/Billy Regan	Peugeot 107	+2m 02.0s
5	Philip White/ Wendy Blackledge	Nissan Micra	+2m 06.1s

Championship Points after Round 1

1	William Creighton	12pts
2	Michael McGarrity	10pts
3	Eoghan Bogue	8 pts
4	James Partridge	7pts
5	Philip White	6pts

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