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Three In a Row for William in Junior 1000 Rally Challenge!

The third round of the 2014 McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland, took place at Kirkistown on Saturday. Run by the 500 MRCI, seven Junior crews tackled six special stages in their own rally, which took place alongside a Sprint meeting at the Co.Down circuit. The series also supported by rally classified ad site www.rallysales.eu is now in its third season, as the 14-17 year olds in their 1000cc machines hone their rallying skills.

Leading the field away was Moira's William Creighton. Winner of the first two rounds, and indeed a round of the UK Junior challenge this year, the 16 year old was firm favourite again in his Citroen C1. On stage one he clocked fastest time, by 1.9 seconds, and never looked back all day to record a fine third victory in the series. *"It was a very enjoyable day"* commented William. *"We had no problems, and were pushing on, but Michael and Eoghan were never too far behind."* On stage one Michael McGarrity was second fastest in his similar C1, but on stage two he suffered a big spin and dropped over ten seconds. On stage three he was third fastest, but it all went wrong for the 15 year old on stage four clipping a tyre on the concrete section at the bottom hairpin, which tossed the C1 onto its roof. Michael and co-driver James McKee were perfectly ok, and completed the event, but the stage maximum incurred dropped them to seventh at the finish.

There was a mighty battle for second place between Eoghan Bogue, Philip White and James Partridge, all three drivers separated by just 0.5 of a second after stage one. Eoghan however was on a real charge over the rest of the event, and got to within 2.3 seconds of winner Creighton's times, to secure an excellent second place, in a drive that impressed MSA coach James Wozencroft. *"I actually learnt a bit from the coaching session last Sunday"* commented Eoghan. *"I went back and had a look at my in-car from Bishops court and found a few things to improve on. It seemed to work, and it was a great run for us."* Just nine seconds behind at the end of the event was Philip White in a similar Micra, the Crumlin driver also applying some new steering techniques taken on board from the coaching. *"The first stage was good, but I over-drove a bit on stage two, and lost a second. It went well for us on the other stages, but we just couldn't catch Eoghan."*

Moira's James Partridge was also right in the thick of this battle, and was ahead of Philip White after stage two. On stage three which utilised the tight concrete rally section he dropped a few vital seconds, and at the end of the day he finished just 3.8 seconds behind Philip. It was a clean, fast run for James, to collect valuable championship points.

Ending up fifth at the end of the day was 15 year old Bailie McClinton making a series debut in a newly built Nissan Micra. The Broughshane driver had some tuition in the car the previous day and was an excellent sixth after the first two stages. Co-driver, Sligo's Niall Burns was also on his Junior 1000 debut and thoroughly enjoying the event. After Michael McGarrity's accident they moved up to their eventual finishing position of fifth, and this was a good debut for a driver who is completely new to the sport of rallying. For 15 year old Alex Harper, it was her second event, after a good run at Bishops court. Things didn't start so well here however with a time consuming third gear spin on stage one costing over twenty seconds. The Hillsborough girl got into gear on stage three where she was sixth fastest, before taking two fifth fastest times on the last two stages.

Round four of the McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland takes place on 5th May at St. Angelo airfield in Enniskillen. *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 3 Positions

1	William Creighton/Liam Regan	Citroen C1	15m 25.8s
2	Eoghan Bogue/Aidan O'Connor	Nissan Micra	+14.8s
3	Philip White/ Matthew Mason	Nissan Micra	+24.2s
4	James Partridge/Billy Regan	Peugeot 107	+28.0s
5	Bailie McClinton/Niall Burns	Nissan Micra	+1m06.6 s
6	Alex Harper/Andrew Bushe	Nissan Micra	+1m17.2s
7	Michael McGarrity/ James McKee	Citroen C1	+2m52.7s

Championship Points after Round 3

1	William Creighton	36 pts
2	Eoghan Bogue	25
3	Michael McGarrity	24
4	Philip White	22
5	James Partridge	21
6	Alex Harper	10
7	Bailie McClinton	6

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The Junior 1000 Rally Challenge is affiliated with the Association of Northern Ireland Car Clubs and the MSA.

