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Bennett Brilliant at Shackleton, Round 4 Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland

The fourth round of the 2016 McGrady Insurance ANICC Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland, in association with Rallysales.eu took place at Shackleton near Ballykelly, for the Maiden City Motor Club's MJM Group Dogleap Stages event. Just four Junior 1000 crews lined up for the six stage event, in dry conditions, as the 14-17 year rally stars of the future took to the vast venue that is one of the favourite events of the year. For three of the Juniors there was a brisk trip to catch the ferry to contest, round five- the Solway Coast Junior Rally, where an impressive twenty-nine Junior crews started this encounter of the Scottish, English and NI Championships.

Winner of the first three McGrady Insurance N.I rounds has been the reigning champion- Josh McErlean. The 16 year old with co-driver Tommy McErlean in his familiar SDC Trailers Peugeot 107 was seeded number one for both rounds. Indeed the Kilrea teenager set off as favourite, but he was to be outclassed on his home venue.

15 year old Peter Bennett with co-driver Andrew Bushe. Peter, the reigning Scottish Junior 1000 Champion along with his team has been sorting out the teething problems with the new Boost and Boom Skoda Citigo, and his confidence in the car is growing. This was illustrated as he took a decisive nine second lead on stage one, further extending this on stage two. On the third stage Josh spun and got wedged on a bridge dropping over ten seconds. The result was more or less settled and Peter's only drama was an over-shoot at a slippery hairpin on stage five, otherwise he was fastest on five stages.

Scottish visitor 14 year old Peter Beaton in his Citroen C1 is really enjoying the varied venues of the series, and Shackleton was no exception. With co-driver Kenny Foggo they settled into an early third place. However on stage three they ended up over-shooting into a field losing two minutes, and were also caught out at the treacherous hairpin on stage five. It was the first rally for 14 year Marcus McElwee in his Nissan Micra. The Magherafelt teenager had the experienced John Henderson alongside, and his pace improved rapidly throughout the day. Despite clipping Peter Beaton's car on stage five when he was off at the slippery hairpin, Marcus had a very consistent day and took a podium spot on his first ever Junior rally. Overall it was a very enjoyable six stages laid on by the Maiden City Motor Club.

2016 McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland- Rnd 4 Positions

1 st	Peter Bennett/Andrew Bushe	Skoda Citigo	42m 53.6s
2 nd	Josh McErlean / Thomas McErlean	Peugeot 107	+43s
3 rd	Marcus McElwee/ John Henderson	Nissan Micra	+8m 01.7s
4 th	Peter Beaton/ Kenny Foggo	Citroen C1	+9m 52.2s

McGrady Insurance Junior 1000 Rally Challenge Ireland Calendar 2016

<u>Date</u>	<u>Venue</u>	<u>Organising Club</u>
23rd January	Kirkistown	500 MRCI
13th February	Kirkistown	North Armagh MC
2nd May	St. Angelo	Enniskillen MC
6th August	Shackleton	Maiden City MC
7 th August	Solway (Scotland)	Solway Car Club
24 th September	Kirkistown	500 MRCI (Reserve)
12 th November	Bishopscourt	BADMC (Reserve)
30 th December	Shackleton	Maiden City MC (Reserve)

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Pictures thanks to Philip Stewart- www.philpics.net

Regulations and points for the series are available on www.anicc.org.uk