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Derek Dominant at Bishopscourt!

Round Two-2015 MSA ANICC McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship!

The second round of the 2015 MSA ANICC McGrady Insurance MSA Northern Ireland Rally Championship was on a dry but cold day at Bishopscourt, as the Ballynahinch and District Motor Club ran fourteen stages around the County Down circuit and its vast in-fields.

Number one seed Derek McGarrity had sold his round one winning Mini WRC to Derek McGeehan, and arrived at Bishopscourt in a striking Subaru Impreza S14 WRC. *"This car came from Holland. It was a car built that never actually competed in the WRC, and it's in very good shape"* said Derek before the start. After stage one it was clear he meant business, finishing the 1.72 miles a full 3.8 seconds ahead of Kenny McKinstry in a similar S14, with Peadar Hurson third in his S10 example. Indeed it was to be a master-class from McGarrity as he simply streaked away from the opposition, fastest on all fourteen stages to win by over a minute. *"I really enjoy this place, always have, and the car was superb. Now we look forward to the Circuit of Ireland at Easter."*

Indeed it was the race for second that was the focus, as Kenny McKinstry and Derek McGeehan were swapping times, and the Mini driver got ahead on stage five. Going into the final stage Kenny was 0.2 of a second behind Derek, but two big spins cost the Banbridge ace twenty seconds and he hung onto third ahead of Peadar Hurson, returning to the sport after a long lay-off. *"It wasn't a great day for me"* said Kenny *"just one of those days!"*

Lisburn's Jonny Morrow, after an eight year absence decided to treat himself to a run in an S9 Impreza and took a fine fifth place with brother Simon enjoying the spin. Regular English visitor Ray Brammer retired on stage five whilst lying fifth, and former Northern Ireland Champion George Robinson retired his Evo from sixth on stage eight as the dry surface took its toll on transmissions.

Alastair Cochrane didn't put a wheel wrong all day and the Bushmills farmer took his 2 litre MK2 Escort to two wheel drive honours and sixth place overall. That was just five seconds ahead of the Carryduff Forklift R2 Wales winner Jon Armstrong in his 1600cc Peugeot 208 R2 who claimed eighth. The ERC competitor had been led on the early stages by Kyle White who was an amazing fifth overall after stage two in his C2 R2 Max, but the former Junior 1000 runner up ran into gear change difficulties on stage three dropping time he would never make up. Nevertheless he took second, with Omagh's Alan Smyth a fine third in his lesser specification C2 R2. The R2 incentive with the Rally Wales GB prize drive is a welcome boost to the McGrady Insurance NI series.

Group N victory was once again taken by Toomebridge rally car dealer Kieron Graffin, but it was not an easy win, as Donegal's Martin Doherty led after stage five, then Graffin took over with the Evo 10 eventually overtaking the R2 winner on the final stages. Clive Kilpatrick's late charge saw him finish just 0.1 of a second behind Doherty to claim third in Group N.

Now the challenge of the championship moves up a gear, as the crews will contest two days on the closed public roads for the Circuit of Ireland at Easter, where they will tackle classic tests like Hamilton's Folly with its epic jumps. Indeed the Northern Ireland Championship crews will make up a large percentage of the entry this year on the Easter extravaganza, as they run on the same rally as the European Rally Championship crews.

McGrady Insurance MSA ANICC Northern Ireland Rally Championship 2015-Round Two

1 st	Derek McGarrity / James McKee	Subaru Impreza S14 WRC	38:42.7
2 nd	Derek McGeehan / Laurie Smyth	Mini Countryman WRC	+1:05.1
3 rd	Kenny McKinstry / Noel Orr	Subaru Impreza S14 WRC	+1:28.4
4 th	Peadar Hurson / Damien Connolly	Subaru Impreza S10 WRC	+1:37.9
5 th	Jonny Morrow / Simon Morrow	Subaru Impreza S9 WRC	+2:41.0
6 th	Alastair Cochrane / Brian McFall	Ford Escort MkII	+3:06.0
7 th	Kieron Graffin / Paddy Robinson	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X	+3:08.6
8 th	Jon Armstrong / Noel O'Sullivan	Peugeot 208 R2	+3:10.4
9 th	Martin Doherty / Darragh Doherty	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX	+3:20.4
10 th	Clive Kilpatrick / Trevor Glass	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX	+3:20.5

Pictures please credit- Wayne Turkington

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