



Greer Takes Title Fight to the Wire!
Round Six of the 2017 MSA ANICC McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship!

Desi Henry and Liam Moynihan powered their Skoda Fabia R5 to an impressive twenty-seven second victory on the Omagh Motor Club's Bushwhacker Rally, round six of the 2017 MSA ANICC McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship. It was a great performance from the Portglenone driver, who won the recent Tyrone Stages, but for the championship race itself Jonny Greer's second place finish in his Citroen DS3 R5, was extremely significant and sets up the series for an exciting winner takes all finale on 4th November.

When number one seed Mark Donnelly retired on stage two, Jonny Greer and Kirsty Riddick were running first on the road in the R5 Citroen. "It's the first time I have ran first on the road on gravel, but the stages are in good condition, everything is going well and our times are thereabouts" said the Carryduff driver, as he took that important second place. For championship leader Derek McGarrity, on his second outing in an R5 Skoda, fifth place was the eventual position, as he freely admitted the pace at the front was hot. "I maybe wasn't sharp enough out of the box on the first stages, but Desi and Jonny are flying. Ok they know there cars better, but they still have to drive them and fair play to them."

In third place overall was Scottish visitor Jock Armstrong with local co-driver Graham Henderson after a remarkable run in his Subaru Impreza, and fourth place was another exceptional drive from Omagh's Paul Barrett out in a hired Mitsubishi Evo, a far cry from the Historic MK2 Escort that he has campaigned more recently. Monaghan's Sam Moffett had a steady run to sixth in his Fiesta WRC, whilst Ballymoney's Alan Carmichael really enjoyed his return to the forests after a nine year absence, and it was his first forest foray in the Mini WRC. He claimed seventh just one second ahead of local driver Alan Smyth, who recently moved from his front wheel drive Suzuki to a four wheel drive Evo 10. Adrian Hetherington was learning his right hand drive R5 Fiesta all day, finding it very different to the MK2 and the Corolla WRC, and was happy with ninth. Eleventh overall was Enniskillen's Jonny Leonard in his Evo 6 with former N.I champion Kenny McKinstry dropping to twelfth in the afternoon in his WRC Impreza.

Tenth overall and first in Group N was Niall McCullagh in his Evo 9 after a trouble free day's sport, with Liam Regan in his similar machine fourteenth overall and second in the category. Cathan McCourt took third despite losing power on one stage, and Jordan Hone fourth after a gear selector problem on stage one. In the two wheel drive battle Comber's David Crossen in his MK2 Escort was first home in a fabulous sixteenth overall. He was as high as eighth after two stages, but backed off on the later tests, as rival Frank Kelly retired with mechanical maladies after four stages. Oran Donnelly had a fine run to claim second two-wheel drive in his MK2 Escort, but Vivian Hamill who went off and Donall Sweeney who had mechanical issues were notable MK2 Escort retirements.

Last year's ANICC Junior 1000 Rally Champion, Josh McErlean took the 1600cc class honours in his Citroen C2 R2 Max, the young Kilrea driver edging out Belfast's Kyle White in his Peugeot 208 by eleven seconds. Class one winner Gareth Deazley in his Honda Civic from Dromore, County Tyrone also had much to celebrate. As the Junior category leader in the N.I series, after the Bushwhacker he was awarded the valuable Road to Wales prize of a free entry to Wales Rally GB National (WRGB). The rally this year is on 26th-29th October, which is just before the final N.I Championship round, and it will quite a challenge should young Gareth take it up.

Other class winners on the Bushwhacker event were: Derek Mackeral- class 3 (Vauxhall Nova), Josh McErlean- class 4 (Citroen C2), Hugh McQuaid-class 5 (MK2 Escort), Mickey Conlon- class 7 (MK2 Escort).

There has been much work behind the scenes in recent weeks as the Magherafelt Motor Club will run their reserve championship rally on 4th November, following the cancellation of the Down Rally. With their preferred forests not in ideal condition after recent heavy storms, it's looking likely now that the final decisive McGrady Insurance round could take place on tarmac at a single venue location, with full details expected to be announced very shortly. Both Derek McGarrity and Jonny Greer go well on these type of events, with McGarrity a master of Bishopscourt, and it's all building up to a unique and exciting finale to the 2017 championship. Will Derek make it eight titles, or can Jonny claim his first major rally title?

2017 McGrady Insurance MSA ANICC Northern Ireland Rally Championship-Round Six results

1 st	Desi Henry / Liam Moynihan	Škoda Fabia R5	37.45.0
2 nd	Jonathan Greer / Kirsty Riddick	Citroën DS3 R5	+0:27
3 rd	Jock Armstrong / Graham Henderson	Subaru Impreza	+0:31
4 th	Paul Barrett / Gary McElhinney	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X	+0:43
5 th	Derek McGarrity / James O Reilly	Škoda Fabia R5	+0:49
6 th	Sam Moffett / Stephen Thornton	Ford Fiesta WRC	+0:57
7 th	Alan Carmichael / Ivor Lamont	MINI WRC	+1:18
8 th	Alan Smyth / Mac Kierans	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X	+1:19
9 th	Adrian Hetherington / Gary Nolan	Ford Fiesta R5	+1:33
10 th	Niall McCullagh / Ryan McCloskey	Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX	+1:35

*Reserve event-Magherafelt & District MC- 4th November

To keep up to date please check out the NIRC Facebook page-<http://www.facebook.com/nirallying> and check out www.anicc.org.uk for the series regulations and latest points. Rally results available on www.rallyscore.net

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