

MAJOR MOTORSPORT WIN BRITISH TITLE !

The 3 day Rally Isle of Man made up the last two point scoring rounds of the 2014 British Rally Championship for Gus Greensmith and Melanie Holmes, both crew members had everything to play for with a number of championship titles up for grabs, with the deciding last few points to be awarded over the 24 stage event.

The rally started on the Douglas sea front with a Super Special Stage on Thursday night, setting competitors off head to head in front of large crowds. The night was rounded off with 3 more stages ran in the dark around the island which the crew safely navigated to be leading their class overnight.



Friday consisted of a huge variety of stages, from fast flowing stages using the islands main roads, to tight and twisty technical stages with dangerous jumps, drops and corners to catch even the most experienced of drivers out. Gus and Melanie aired on the side of caution and decided to keep all risks to a minimum over the 200 mile event, a decision which paid off as many other competitors retired throughout the day, but the R1 Fiesta was still going strong at the end of the second day.

The final day started drama free for Gus and Melanie, however that all changed on SS21. Gus had decided he wanted to push on and try and set some improved stage times on the home straight to the finish, unfortunately this backfired when the crew came flying into a chicane which had a considerably more slippery entry than the day before! The Fiesta locked up and crashed head on into a half tone round hay bale, and then veered into a ditch via a few small trees, one of which unfortunately smashed the windscreen.

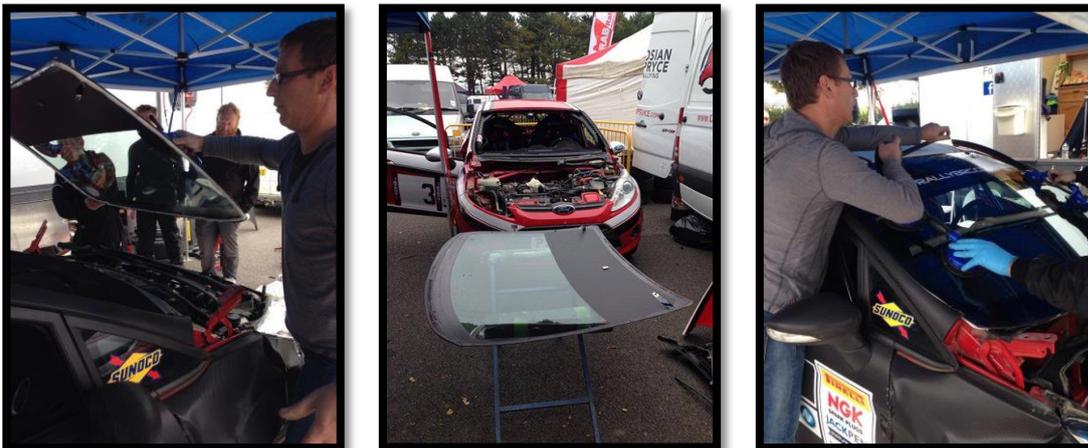
Co-Driver Melanie said "I thought it was game over at that point, I was so disappointed but the car was stuck on its side in the ditch. Gus' door was lying flat on the ground, we tried to drive the car out but we just kept sinking deeper and deeper into the ditch. The marshals indicated that they would have to stop the stage, but then a group of spectators came over, and together they managed to push us out of the ditch! It was incredible teamwork by a bunch of strangers, we were so grateful to

them. A quick toot on the horn was all we could offer by way of thank you before we disappeared off to limp our way to the end of the stage!”



That was where the pressure turned to the service crew, the team would not be able to continue with the car so badly damaged. Gus and Melanie phoned ahead to inform the service crew of the repairs needed, the biggest job being to change the windscreen as they only had a 30 minute service before the final leg of the rally.

Thankfully, Major Motorsport had prepared for the worst and bought an entire spare rally car with them in case any parts were urgently required! This turned out to save the day as we had a new screen on hand, a quick call out to a local windscreen repairer meant that it was all hands on deck when the car arrived back in service.



The service crew, Henry, Justin and Simon all got straight to work and did themselves proud as they managed to change the windscreen, re-attach all loose body parts, adjust the front wings so that both front doors could open again, check over the whole car etc etc in a mere 34 minutes!! Allowing the crew to carry on into the final leg of the rally with no penalty applied!

With only 3 stages to go the team simply wanted a clean drive to the finish, Gus said “It was a very positive weekend with very simple aims; to be champions! We had a good pace but decided to play it safe to ensure we made it to the end of the rally (even though we almost didn’t!)”.

Finally, after 2 and a half hours of competitive rallying, the crew flew down the final section of the island's famous TT course into the grandstand, to be crowned 20th overall, class 3 winners and with enough points to win a collection of British Rally Championship Titles.



Their 2014 championship results now include:

- BRC3 Driver CHAMPION
- BRC3 Co-Driver CHAMPION
- Pirelli Star of the Future Nomination
- MSA British Rally Junior CHAMPIONS
- Overall BRC 5th Driver
- Overall BRC 4th Co-Driver
- MSA British RALLYTWO Championship 3rd Driver
- MSA British RALLYTWO Championship 2nd Co-Driver
- 2nd RAVENOL Oils Newcomers Trophy
- 3rd Ford Feista Sport Trophy

Gus was ecstatic with the outcome “The Isle of Man Rally was a special event which I have looked forward to since the beginning of the year, and it didn’t fail to impress. It’s been great, the team did an awesome job and have performed exceptionally!!”

Team manager Simon Mauger said “Major Motorsport are really pleased to have had a 100% finish rate with the car this year to enable us to be British Junior Rally Champions. Gus is obviously a talented young driver with every chance of going very far in this sport. We are looking forward to seeing how he can progress and would like to thank everyone who has helped make this achievement possible.”



A full breakdown of results can be found here:

<http://results.djames.org.uk/results/index.php?EventID=344>

The BRC Championship points table can be found here:

http://www.rallybrc.co.uk/docs/results/2014_MSA_British_Rally_Championship_points.pdf

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