

Another WRC under the belt for Breen

Craig Breen's rollercoaster season continued last week when he took part in the WRC Rally Spain.

It was a first for Craig also to compete in Rally Spain, with his newly purchased Fiesta R2 1600cc machine. This was an important Fiesta Sport Trophy International round and critical for Craig's chances of making it three Fiesta championships in one season. At one point however in Spain, he felt his title hopes sliding away, like the R2 Fiesta on a right hand bend! "We were having a small electrical problem with the car, it just wasn't picking up right, and I had to drive round the problem. The pace was hot too, but the stages were absolutely fabulous, fantastic to drive on, even though we were wearing RS5 hard compound tyres rapidly. We were having a great battle with Lambros Athanassoulas in his R2 Fiesta, and we both felt we were pushing on hard. Unfortunately though towards the end of Saturday I got caught out on a tightening right hander. I just wasn't concentrating properly for a split second, and trying to drive with the problem, and we hit a bank on the outside of the corner hard, and that put us on our side. I thought it was all over, but it is a testament to the strength of the R2 Fiesta that we



were able to bring the car back to service, replace the damaged parts and continue under Super Rally on day two. The Tom Gahan team did a swift and superb job to fix the car, and we were able to set fast times again on the second day."

But what at one point looked like a disaster, turned out to be a weekend where Craig's title hopes weren't unduly affected.

Recording a finish under Super Rally and bonus points for his 8 fastest FSTI stage times, Craig actually left sunny Spain with more points than his title rival, Germany's Patrick Anglade. "Despite the off we have strengthened our position in the series, but now it's all to be decided on the final round Rally GB. Yes, it would have been nice to wrap up the series in Spain, but

it just didn't happen, so now we must look ahead, and it seems likely at the moment also that we will continue with the R2 Fiesta in 2010. Another bonus from contesting Spain, Finland and Portugal, is that I feel me and Gareth have grafted a good set of pace-notes for these rallies, which will be useful in future seasons. It's all been a good experience."