

Breen and McCormack star in Corsica



Dani Sordo, driving an S2000 spec Mini took an historic victory in Corsica, the first IRC win for Mini and Sordo himself. Two top Irish drivers, Craig Breen and Marty McCormack also produced great drives.

Changing fortunes plays a huge role in rallying, twisting and turning as an event unfolds. This is precisely what transpired for Craig Breen. The Waterford driver competing on IRC Rally - Tour de Corse in the end finished an impressive sixth overall but that was after a hectic start, close encounters with the scenery and a brilliant fight back.

Breen got off to a flyer recording third best time on the initial test just 3.6 seconds down on Giandomenico Basso (Ford Fiesta S2000) who set the pace. At the end of the stage a delighted Breen stated, "I'm really really delighted with that time. I've put in a huge effort since the Circuit of Ireland and the car feels totally different now and my confidence is way better. This is only the start of the rally and we've a long way to go but this is a great start". The Waterford driver's joy was short-lived however as on the next stage he suffered from a broken front drive-shaft. Craig managed to drive to the end of the test dropping over a minute in the process, falling down the leader board to 11th.

The problem was then compounded as there was no service before stage three and Craig had to nurse the car through that stage, dropping a further

two minutes. At the end of the first day Craig was down in 23rd position.

Day two entailed five stages and Breen was in fight back mode and on a mission to climb the leader board. Setting top five times on almost every stage, Breen ended the day 7th overall.

The final day's action started with the Peugeot driver taking 6th place and on stage 10 Craig consolidated the position but did have a big moment during the middle of the test when he hit a rock face sustaining a front left puncture and dropping around 30 seconds. In service surveying the damage Breen recounted the incident, "As I approached a bridge, I could see I was too fast and tried to scrub off some speed but the car jolted to the right hitting the verge. It took some time to get back on the driving line and I wasn't sure of how much damage was caused. Then I noticed the front puncture. We lost 30 seconds but it could have been a lot worse, other than the puncture there was only some damage to the front bumper." At the finish a very happy Breen said, "it's good to be at the finish after a tough rally. I'm gaining a lot of experience. This is a fantastic event and I think I've taken a major step with learning this car (Peugeot 207 S2000), with my commitment and my pace. This rally is very specialised and for sure it has brought by tarmac experience beyond what has been before."