



by Trevor McGrath

Breen gunning for World Rally title number TWO!

Hello and welcome to this month's Motorsport installment in My Waterford. This issue we are looking ahead instead of back and there's good reason to do so as from November 8-12, Waterford rally driver Craig Breen will be fighting for his second World Rally title in two years.

Twelve months ago Craig and his co driver Gareth Roberts pulled off an astounding victory on Wales Rally GB to become the inaugural World Rally Academy Champions.

The pair moved up to the Super 2000 class within the World Rally Championship for the 2012 season and again kicked off on a high by winning the opening round in Monte Carlo.

Apart from their WRC duties Craig and Gareth also took on a limited campaign in the IRC (Intercontinental Rally Challenge) and it was on one of those events in June that the illustrious crew were served their severest blow. Competing in Sicily, Gareth lost his life in a fatal accident.

Following the ill-fated day, Craig found it hard to come to terms with such a devastating loss. It was only with the full backing of Gareth's family that Craig decided to continue his career.

The Slieverue native made his return at World Rally Finland in August and was joined by Killarney man Paul Nagle as his

new co driver. The result did not go their way on this occasion but Craig showcased all his talents under extreme pressure and the memories of that terrible day in June. By this time Swedish driver P-G Andersson had taken over as the champions of a non finish in Portugal and in Finland Craig had fallen to fourth.

With renewed confidence however the new Irish crew made their way to round six of the season in Wales. It has always been a place of triumph for Craig and as it turned out, there was an emotional victory for the the Waterford driver as he took an amazing win to put himself back in to joint second place in the championship standings and in with a chance of the SWRC title.

The penultimate round of the season was held in France a month ago. Craig took an early lead on the opening night but over the remaining three day's was involved in a battle with New Zealander, Hayden Paddon. The encounter being also heightened as the pair were locked together in second place in the championship standings and the victor here would take a huge step towards the title.

The rally turned in Breen's favour on the final day when the Kiwi crashed out, leaving Craig to take the win, his second in a row and more

importantly as P-G Andersson could only manage third, Craig took over as leader in the SWRC standings, holding a two point advantage over the Swede.

We are now set for the final showdown in Spain. World Rally Spain begins on Thursday, November 8th, you can cheer on Craig and follow his progress by logging on to his website www.craigbreen.com



