

Welsh Gravel next for Craig Breen

BY TREVOR MCGRATH

Next Weekend, Craig Breen returns to Wales Rally GB, where ten months ago he clinched the WRC Academy title. The 2011 event was a championship defining drive from the Irishman and as he stated himself, "We were left with no option but to go all out on every stage."

The same could be said for this year's event as Breen has been left behind in the World Rally championship, Super 2000 class fight after his penultimate stage exit in World Rally Finland. Craig now sits in fourth place in the championship standings with five events complete. Swede PG Andersson moved to the top with his win in Finland (68 points) and has a two point advantage over Kiwi, Hayden Paddon (62 points). Maciej Oleksowicz (53 points) overhauled Craig with his 12 points score in Finland and Craig still holds a total of 43 points and fourth place, which he picked up from scores in Monte Carlo and SWRC Sweden.

"My exit in Finland has cost me dearly. I was leading the class with two stages to go but even if I didn't win the event second place and the subsequent 18 points would have given a totally different look to the table. I was very disappointed initially but just to be in Finland and to be back rallying was an achievement under the circumstances. It's time now for Rally GB and I'm looking forward to a good event," said

there is only an opportunity for limited service at a remote halt in Newtown.

Day two's route takes competitors north from the overnight halt in Cardiff to the Crychan, Epynt and Halfway stages located within the Epynt military training ranges either side of a midday service halt in the Welsh capital. Rather than return to Cardiff following the second run through Halfway, crews will negotiate an all-new stage at Celtic Manor - a former Ryder Cup venue - on Saturday evening, which is expected to attract huge numbers of fans.

Sunday's route is based towards Swansea, west of Cardiff, for three repeated stages, Port Talbot, Rheola and Walters Arena, separated by service in Cardiff. The final 14.90-kilometre Walters Arena stage will form the event-closing Power Stage from 13:23hrs local time.

"Wales Rally GB is always one of the toughest events on the calendar. You never know what the conditions or the weather are going to be like. This year should differ slightly with the September start, plus with just a week to go the weather is very good. We'll just have to wait until the recce to view the stages," said Craig.

He then went on then stating, "As regards to the

championship, we won't be giving up. Our exit in Finland has made a big difference; not only for myself not to score but PG going on to take the win, but you never know. Rally GB is always tough on the cars and the season rounds off with two tarmac events so there's still could be an interesting end in store."

Apart from the rally action Craig is delighted to announce the launch a new section to his website that is dedicated to his former co-driver Gareth Roberts. "I'm sad but honoured to be launching this new section of my website honouring Ted. Rally GB was Gareth's home event and the venue where we claimed our biggest victory last season. We both took on this journey three years ago and it's appropriate now that I include this section which is dedicated to his memory. There's no way to bring back the little man but he will always be part of the team. The new section includes highlights of Gareth's career with photos, videos, the poignant eulogy from Gareth's funeral thanks to Howard Davies and the condolence book but the part I want people to focus on is the 'Gareth Roberts Memorial Fund'. This new initiative has been setup to honour Gareth's memory."

Emma is a winner alright



Club for
Byrne,
2010 and
Waterford GC



Club, Seated from
teating, Tommy

