

STAGE FLASH

Date: 25/2/12
Day: 1
Special Stage: Finish CEREMONIAL FINISH (km)

8. Desi Henry / Niall Burns (Citroen DS3 R3T)

I came here with a new car and new package, our aim was to get some good points. We took it easy at first to bed ourselves in and do a bit of work on the car. The last loop we said that we'd push a bit more and we managed to get up a few more places. There are only a couple of tenths of a second between second and third so it just shows that the car was working well as we were not so far away pace wise. The first two cars set a very, very hot pace. We were very fortunate, we're happy - it's one of those things. Sometimes you win, sometimes you lose. This time last year we sheared the wheel studs on the last stage so it's nice to get a good run and a good result on this event. There will definitely be a party tonight!

3. Elfyn Evans / Andrew Edwards (Ford Fiesta R2)

We got off to a little bit of a slow start this morning. After a kick up the bum in service and something to eat we got going and settled into a nice little rhythm without taking too many silly risks and eventually clawed back the time and eventually got to an R2 leading position. It was very very close in the last ground of stages. I was taking a second, he was taking a second. Unfortunately Jukka had a problem in the last stage as it would have been nice to see the battle through. The car has been brilliant and the car has been reliable. the car has performed well and we are pleased with the result. We have one eye set on the WRC Academy but we will be going to the Bulldog and see what happens.

2. Mark Donnelly / Dai Roberts (Renault Clio R3)

Absolutely fantastic! It was such a hard battle all day. Between me and Jarkko there wasn't any more than 3.6 seconds at any time. It was very disappointing to see him retire. The speed and reliability of the Renault Clio here, it is a competitive car in this championship, hopefully there will be a few more wins to come. Two wheel drive is definitely a move in the right direction. It means that people with smaller budgets like myself and younger drivers the chance to win a rally overall and get the profile that you get whenever you win a rally. It is definitely a fantastic step in the right direction. Hopefully more championships say yes and make the same move. It was flat out from the word go. I might have said that we were not flat but I think both of us were flat out all day. It was just half a second here and half a second there. After stage 9 it was all level and then out of service he took 1.2 seconds out of us. I think I overdrove or pushed too hard. The hardest part of the rally was just to keep it on the road after he had retired and not take any risks.

23. Matt Cotton / Glyn Thomas (Ford Fiesta ST)

It is overwhelming to be here, it was a number one goal of ours to get to the end of the first round. It was really important for confidence, really important for the team and really important for me in that I'm doing this because my Dad passed away last year so I'm doing it for him and I'm sure he would have wanted me to get here. My last BRC round was Wales Rally GB in 2008, we didn't finish sadly so yes, first time in a left hand drive car. Brand new team new codriver in Glyn Thomas who was absolutely spot on all day long. He was

really really good. Encouraged me along in the afternoon when we started making up a bit of time. There are a lot of new things but we seem to have settled into a good rhythm. Apprehensive this morning, the stages were not so nice on the first run through and that was slightly uneasy for me but certainly when the afternoon came and the stages dried up a bit and we got the smoother ones of the twelve that we had. Really really pleased.

25. Nick Allen / Andy Bull (Renault Twingo R2)

I'm very excited to be here, very happy to have finished. We knocked it down a notch or two on the last stage just to make sure that we made it here and we're pretty happy to be here. It's been a bit of a culture shock and a bit of a commitment, a kinda blind commitment coming over here but the two wheel drive format of the BRC I think is fantastic and really makes it a drivers championship, so I said "That's it, that's where I've got to go" and I'm here and I can't be happier with the decision I made.

11. Tom Cave / Craig Parry (Ford Fiesta R2)

This time last year we were on the podium, but this year we had a more challenging rally than we had last year due to the fact that we had a car that is not capable of winning. We did our best and scored some good points. We achieved the target that we had when we set out, which was to finish in the top ten and be on the pace of the other R2 cars which we were on a couple of stages. Happy enough with the result and it sets us in a good position for the Bulldog. The last event I did in a 2WD car was Monte Carlo in 2010. I'm happy enough with the result. It would have been nice to have been competitive with the likes of Elfyn, but he's been pushing hard and knows the car much more than I do. I will be in a new car for the Bulldog, it's my home round and we'll be hoping for a good result there. That's where the championship starts for us.

9. Osian Pryce / Iestyn Williams (Citroen DS3 R3T)

I'm very pleased. We started off with a top three time and I couldn't believe that we had the pace. We're happy enough. We're on home ground for the next event so hopefully we'll get some practice in the car and a bit more set up and tweaking.

30. Garry Pearson / Craig Wallace (Renault Twingo R1)

I've had a very eventful day to say the least. A couple of minor offs in the morning then I broke the steering this afternoon then it started to overheat on the last stage and we had to stop a couple of times to fill up with water. So it's been eventful but we're here! The suspension and brakes have been faultless. We've got some things to work on but I think we could probably beat a couple of R2's in the middle of the season hopefully. There is a lot more speed in the car, we were sat most of the day at 85% but we still managed to pick up problems along the way. We're very happy to be where we are and we're looking forward to having more time to prep the car before the Bulldog.

27. Arron Newby / Julian Wilkinson (Skoda Fabia R2)

Brilliant day, we started off cautious. We wanted to get to the end, learn the stages, learn the rally, learn the conditions you have to fight in and learn how fast the other people are, which is incredible. We've picked up throughout the day, I think stage six we were on for a really good time but unluckily for us we stalled it on the bridge on a lock up, but that's what rallying is all about. But we've been picking up throughout the day and we've finished fourteenth which we're over the moon with.

10. Jussi Kumpumäki / Jani Salo (Ford Fiesta R2)

The day was good for us. The second to last stage I found out how to drive junctions! I'm really happy to reach the end. The rest of the rallys so I'm really looking forward to them.

22. Gethin Jones / Kevin Devine (Ford Fiesta ST)

It's been really good fun, I'd forgotten what it was like. I'm definitely the oldest in the championship but hopefully not the slowest and we'll try and prove that throughout the year. There are some really good, quick young lads here but hopefully a bit of experience will pay dividends on these stages. It was a fantastic day I have to say, I really enjoyed it, the cars been faultless and the teams done a great job. I think two wheel drive is absolutely the right decision, 100% definitely the right way to go. The cars are more accessible for drivers, people can access these cars lower down the formula. If you look at the likes of Sebastien Loeb, he started off in front wheel drive cars, Sebastien Ogier, he started off in front wheel drive cars. If you can learn to drive one of these little cars quickly, you can drive a World Rally Car quickly. I think it's definitely the right way forwards.