



2010 RACMSA RALLY OF SCOTLAND: BUILDING ON 2009 SUCCESS INTO THE FUTURE

The 2010 Royal Automobile Club Motor Sport Association Rally of Scotland (15-17 October) once again will feature the UK's round of the 2010 Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC). With its fast gravel Special Stages and spectacular scenery, last year's inaugural RACMSA Rally of Scotland proved to be an instant hit with competing IRC crews and rally fans. The 2010 event will build on that success and confirm the status of the Rally of Scotland as one of the UK's premier motor sport attractions alongside the British Grand Prix and Wales Rally GB.

Significant changes for 2010 include a full weekend of competitive action, reduced admission costs for the public (see separate release) plus the promise of an even more star-studded entry as well as better weather conditions. While the event sticks to its established three-day format, the 2010 action now starts on Friday rather than Thursday evening and thus features competitive action on both Saturday and Sunday. Running a month earlier, the event should also avoid the atrocious weather experienced in 2009. Excitingly, the change of date promotes the Rally of Scotland to the penultimate round of the 2010 IRC – a move that's certain to attract a large entry.

Last year's event saw many fans turn out to support their home heroes, namely Scottish favourite Alister McRae, Northern Ireland's Kris Meeke and Darlington's Guy Wilks. Skoda driver Wilks went on clinch victory in Scotland in 2009 but it was Peugeot's Meeke who was crowned the IRC Champion. All three – including McRae in his Proton – will be back in 2010 to challenge for victory on home ground following a demanding calendar of events that will have seen them visit eight other countries, from South America to mainland Europe.

As in 2009 the competitive timed sections will be staged on closed Forestry Commission Scotland gravel roads in Stirling and Perth and Kinross – an area that benefited from more than £1.2 million in economic impact* as a direct result of the 2009 event according to independent research.

With the world-renowned Gleneagles Hotel backing the 2010 event as a supporting sponsor, the 2010 route will feature an easy-to-access central Service Park located at Perth Airport and – as in 2009 – will commence with a Ceremonial Start and two runnings of a spectator-friendly Special Stage at historic Scone Palace, home of the Earls of Mansfield and widely regarded as once the crowning place of Scottish kings and queens. The high-speed competitive action will then switch to the more traditional Forestry Commission tracks for some of rallying's most revered stages through Perthshire & Stirling before returning to Stirling Castle for the Ceremonial Finish.

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Rally of Scotland Clerk of the Course Iain Campbell comments: "This year's route builds on the successes from 2009 but also compacts the full itinerary with reconnaissance, scrutineering and the competition all taking place over Thursday to Sunday. This is to make the event even more attractive to our amateur competitors, but keeps to the spirit and challenge of Scotland's best stages. To finish with the monstrous Loch Ard, described by Kris Meeke as 'the best stage in the world' is going to mean the action keeps going right until the very end. Sunday is going to be a real test with over 93kms of special stages, yet only 15 minutes of remote service around midday. At a remote service only parts carried in the competing car can be fitted so the competitors will have to drive as much with their brains as their right foot!

"The Colin McRae Forest Stages Rally takes place in Perth three weekends before us and they wished to use some of the Errochty stage, but have very kindly offered us exclusive access to this test to ensure we have the very best to offer our international competitors and armchair fans watching this live on Eurosport. I am very grateful to them for their generosity."

Andrew Coe, Chief Executive of event organiser International Motor Sports, says: "We are delighted to be bringing the Intercontinental Rally Challenge back to Scotland in 2010. Last year's inaugural RACMSA Rally of Scotland was a memorable event and showed the world what Scotland has to offer as the perfect host nation for motor sport and other major sporting events. We look forward to building on the success of 2009 and through our exciting ticket options, which this year sees all children aged 15 and under and accompanied by an adult being admitted free of charge, we hope to be able to introduce rallying to a whole new generation of fans".

Paul Bush OBE, Chief Operating Officer at EventScotland, the national events agency, adds: "To generate more than £1 million in economic impact and more than £2 million in media exposure for Scotland last year is a great achievement and testament to the value of hosting motorsport events. Scotland is fortunate in that it naturally has fantastic and exciting terrain for rallying and an enthusiastic fan base and the coverage showcased these to a global audience.

"Last year's Rally of Scotland was a huge success and in 2010 we will build upon that success to ensure that maximum value is generated and that Scotland reaps further benefits from the world class event."

*The 2009 RACMSA Rally of Scotland, the final stage of the Intercontinental Rally Challenge, which took place in Perth and Kinross and Stirling, delivered more than £1.2 million in economic impact and more than £2 million in media coverage for Scotland according to official reports. The report on media coverage was commissioned by EventScotland from industry experts REPUCOM while the economic impact report was undertaken by economic and social development consultants EKOS.

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