



Press Information

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THE 2008
MITSUBISHI MOTORS
UK RALLY TEAM
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FIRST DAY DRAMAS SEE EARLY EXIT FOR MITSUBISHI TEAM



- Tesco 99 Octane MSA British Rally Championship – Round Two
- Jim Clark Rally – 23rd-25th May 2008
- Guy Wilks leads before car catches fire.
- Phillip Morrow sets top times then retires following stage one crash.
- Team puts weekend's dramas behind them to focus on next round.

26th May 2008

Round two of the Tesco 99 Octane MSA British Rally Championship, this weekend's Jim Clark Rally, did not go according to plan for the Mitsubishi Motors UK Rally Team.

Following a successful day of testing before the event, the team were upbeat about their chances to extend their lead in the teams and drivers championships, both Guy Wilks and Phillip Morrow happy with their car's set-ups for the first of the season's three asphalt rallies.

Following Friday night's ceremonial start in Kelso, followed by a short shake-down stage, competition got underway on Saturday morning with the first of a 16-mile run through Abbey St. Bathans.

Carrying on from where he left off, following his resounding round-one victory, Wilks stormed through the first stage to lead the British Championship field by 4.7 seconds. Such was his pace, he also held a position of second overall amongst the WRC cars contesting the Global Group Irish Tarmac Championship, of which the Jim Clark Rally is also a round.

However, for Morrow it was a different tale: After three miles into the stage, following a fast, down-hill section, as the road narrowed on a negative camber corner the car slid wide, clipped a bank and then rolled three times down the road. Thankfully, both Morrow and co-driver Daniel Barritt were unhurt - and the car ended-up on its wheels.

Although the energy of the incident suggested that the damage may be too bad to continue, that was not the case and, after the crew changed a broken wheel, they cautiously made their way through the remainder of the stage - and the one following - in order to get the car back to service and let the team's technicians get to work.

With most of the damage cosmetic rather than mechanical, Morrow continued on the next loop of four stages and, although not driving flat out, collected his thoughts and re-assured his abilities by setting one fastest, two second fastest and one third fastest time.

Meanwhile, Wilks had extended his lead to 6.2 seconds following stage three, but his day was about to take a turn for the worse. As he left the start-line on SS4 he heard a noise coming from his car's transmission. Then, after a few miles, the propshaft suddenly snapped, leaving him with front-wheel drive only and, with the flying finish almost in sight, the car came to a halt on an up-hill section.

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Getting out to see what could be done, Wilks discovered flames coming from underneath the car where the flailing propshaft had ruptured the fuel tank. Co-driver Phil Pugh quickly exited the Mitsubishi and, although other competitors stopped to help, try as they might they could not extinguish the flames. Within seconds their once pristine Lancer was engulfed by fire and continued to burn until there was nothing left other than the charred remains of the metal shell.

The baton was now passed to Morrow. However, on SS7, the young Ulsterman noticed the car's temperature gauge climbing and, on inspection at the end of the stage he found that the earlier incident had caused the fan housing to come loose and the blades had punctured the radiator. In order not to inflict any further mechanical damage, the team decided to call it a day, return the car to park fermé and adopt SuperRally regulations to ensure Morrow and Barritt would be classified as finishers.

The team now turns its attentions to round three, the Isle of Man Rally on and focuses on achieving a repeat performance of last year, when its cars finished first and second.

The team is sponsored by Lovell Group and Virgin Money, together with its technical partners: HKS, Sparco, Speedline Corse, PIAA, Ricardo, and Performance Friction Brakes. The two works Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IXs are built by Chesterfield-based ADR Motorsport, who also provide the all-important on-event technical support.

Team Quotes

Guy Wilks

The rally started really well for us. I didn't feel we had pushed too hard in the first stage, so to take the lead at what I regarded was a comfortable pace was just what we wanted. Once the propshaft had broken I knew there was a possibility of it damaging the fuel tank, so I drove with that in mind, but I was unaware of the fire until I got out of the car. I have to thank the other teams for stopping to help, but the fire became so intense it was impossible to get it under control. I was hoping that this year we might just be able to win all the BRC events, but we'll just have to make it all but one now!"

Phillip Morrow

"It was a weekend I shall remember – for the wrong reasons! I was really shocked when we rolled, but so impressed with the strength of the car as we could still drive it away from the accident. Once the lads had fixed some of the damage in service and a new screen was put in, I was pleased to be able to set some good stage times – and even one fastest time - so that was a bonus. I'm now going to focus on the remaining four rallies and aim to restore the team's chances for the teams and drivers championships."

Paul Brigden - Team Principal and Ralliart General Manager

"It has been a very unfortunate weekend for the team, but I am pleased to report that all four crew members were unharmed in their respective incidents. The fact that Phillip and Daniel could continue – and even set a fastest time – is testimony to the strength of the cars. We now need strong finishes from both crews for the remainder of the season to ensure we get back on track for the teams title and I look forward to resuming our British Championship campaign on the Isle of Man in a few weeks time."

Championship positions following round two

Drivers		Points
1	David Higgins (GB)	32
2	Stuart Jones (GB)	31
3	Jonathan Greer (GB)	25
4	James Wozencroft (GB)	24
5	Wyn Humphreys (GB)	23
6=	Guy Wilks (GB)	20
6=	Mark Higgins (GB)	20
8	Juho Hanninen (FIN)	18
9	Phillip Morrow (GB)	15
10	Patrik Flodin (S)	14

Teams

1	Atlas TEG Sport	65
2	Team TQ.com	62
3	Mitsubishi Motors UK	48
4	Revolution Wheels	41

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Notes for Editors

Guy Wilks is 27 and lives in Darlington, Co. Durham.

Phil Pugh 36 is and lives in Tywyn, Gwynedd.

Phillip Morrow is 24 and lives in Lisburn.

Daniel Barritt is 27 and lives in Burnley.

Photo Caption

Although setting a series of fastest stage times, the Mitsubishi Motors UK Rally Team did not have the weekend it was hoping for when the car of Guy Wilks/Phil Pugh (above) caught fire on stage four and Phillip Morrow/Daniel Barritt (below) pulled up after stage seven due to damage sustained following an accident in stage one (*copyright free images*).

For media enquiries and copyright free images please contact the Mitsubishi Motors UK Rally Team
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