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2010 HRCR MOTOSCOPE Northern Historic Rally Championship

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The 2010 HRCR MOTOSCOPE Northern Historic Rally Championship got underway last weekend where the contenders gathered in Thirsk for the opening round, the Riponian Stages Rally based at the Auction Mart just outside the town.

This year the rally was sponsored by Procters Luxury Travel. Managing Director Kevin Procter was competing on the event in his ex works Subaru Impreza WRC, but crashed while leading in SS7.

Ahead of the historic crews lay 12 stages within the Hambleton Forests- Boltby, Roppa, Riccal Dale, Pry Rigg, College Moor & Wass all of which were run twice and covered in snow and ice, it was going to be a day for the brave.

19 championship crews including some new names and faces lined up headed by 2009 champions Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby in their Ford Escort Mk 2.

The first stage of the event was a 2.34 mile run through the Wass stage. Charlie Taylor made the perfect start, beating the Escort RS2000 16V of Bob Bean by 3 seconds. Robin Shuttleworth was third fastest 9 seconds behind.

Second away from the start had been Ken Forster/John Stanger-Leathes in their usual green RS2000. The pair who have been regular contenders in the British Historic Championship have decided to contest the MOTOSCOPE series this year instead. They were 12th fastest on the opening stage after spinning 360 degrees in top on the ice. "This morning was awful, no grip anywhere." Ken said. They were also hit with a minute penalty for booking in early for SS3.

No more problems followed and they made the finish 8th O/A and 2nd in class.

Robin Shuttleworth/Ronnie Roughead had a 'fantastic morning' "Everything is fine, a little cautious maybe I think" Robin said

Bob Bean/Malcolm Smithson started well in their Mk1 RS2000 16V, but had a big moment in Boltby with a 200 yard slide. They had no other problems during the rest of the event until SS10 when they put the car on its roof and out of the rally.

Thirsk's Tim Pearcey/Jaime Edwards in their newly acquired ex-Chris White Ford Escort RS originally built by Grant Shand at Rally Xtreme and now in Willowgreen Homes livery didn't have the best of starts, stalling on the start line of SS1. Tim was enjoying being back in rear wheel drive but said "Can't get any grip anywhere and the conditions are awful out there!" During the event he built up a good rhythm and after recording 4 fastest stage times was quite happy until a collision with a gatepost in Roppa bent the back of the cars bodywork, however they made it back to the finish in a superb second place.

Jason Lepley/Howard Pridmore in their newly liveried Silkolene Escort RS1800 had a slow start keeping their nose clean and taking no chances to eventually take the lead of the event until SS8 when they retired with a broken cambelt.

Winners of Class D3 in 2009, Barry Jordan/Jaime Gratton Smith in their Escort RS2000 Mk 2 were struggling. "I'm enjoying it but can't build up a rhythm, we are going wide on corners and scrabbling. Dropped time in SS6 maybe a minute, just no traction." Barry said before service. A good afternoon saw them finish 7th o/a and 1st in class.

Second in last years championship Steve Magson/Geoff Atkinson in their Opel Ascona were determined to finish the opening round having retired last year with a broken clutch after SS3. This year the event started badly with the car cutting out on virtually every straight and corner. A trip down a fire break in Wass was then followed with a visit to a ditch. With no other problems they ended up 3rd overall and 1st in class.

Having spent 2009 in a Porsche Carrera RS, Peter Smith/Russ Langthorne began the 2010 championship in their Opel Kadett run by Opel Team Birkbeck. Peter debuted the car on last years MEM Malton Forest Stages, and after 3 events (Malton, Premier and Grizedale) decided to use the car during the 2010 championship. He is using the Porsche in the Dunlop Wonago.com MSA British Historic Championship.

After the first 6 stages he was lying 8th O/A "No problems this morning, never rallied in as much snow as what's out there, its enjoyable and interesting at the same time" Peter said. The afternoon loop went without any problems apart from a slight off losing a lot of time, but a successful start to their season finishing 10th O/A.

Roger Kilty/Lynette Banks in their Escort RS1800 didn't have any problems during the event and finished a very pleasing 4th O/A and first mixed crew. "We've made the finish and not scratched it" Roger said at the finish.

Warren Philliskirk/Emma Slights, more used to being seen in a MG Metro 6R4, have decided to go historic with their Mk 2 Escort. The car has been owned by Warren for over 20 years but only now has he got round to using it properly. "The snow in Wass caused us a few problems as we didn't run snow tyres. We even had trouble getting to the arrival control! The afternoon stages were much better, as a lot of the snow had gone. The second run's through Wass and College Moor were my favourites of the day" commented Emma at the finish of the event.

Tony Thompson/Paul Hudson, a newcomer to the championship in his Vauxhall Chevette HSR was competing in three titles fielding cars in both tarmac and loose surface trim.

"The current car is for gravel and I hope to have the second car ready for May, I am planning on 21 rallies, so we will be taking it steady and aiming for the first of many finishes." said Tony before the start.

On the rally itself they had a very good event, choosing the wrong tyres for the first few stages and a leaking washer bottle on the afternoon loop, but after the disappointment of last years Roger Albert Clark when they retired on SS21, they made the finish 11th O/A and 2nd in class behind Steve Magson's Opel Ascona 400.

Bringing the big Triumph TR7 16V out again were Martin Knapp/Mike Robinson. This car really sounds nice in the forests but is a lively beast. They had a troubled rally after breaking the ball joint and then radiator, so the car was overheating prior to first service “A very good event with well run and excellent stages, apart from being slippery we’ve thoroughly enjoyed our day.” Martin said at the finish.

John Cockerill/Jim Goodman in his orange Mk2 Escort kept their car on the straight and narrow. They hit a pothole and went “dancing” for a while afterwards trying to get the car back in line. They made the finish 9th O/A and 3rd in class.

Other newcomers to the championship were the Ford Escort RS2000 of Stewart Scott/Colin Tombs, the driver returning to rallying after a 35 year break. They had a very slow first stage taking it cautiously because of the conditions, the clutch jammed on a hairpin and they were caught by Mike Kent’s Talbot Sunbeam. Kent was also a newcomer to the championship and after a unhappy rally: spending 8 or 9 minutes in a ditch in one of the Roppa stages, having a sticking throttle and the engine boiling over, the car finally expired on SS10.

Class C1 winners in 2009: David Thirlwell/Dean Grabham were once again aboard their ‘Old Gold’ replica Mk 1 Escort. Another crew having a troubled rally with the car cutting out on three stages. They then nearly ended up on the roof after clipping a log on SS5 and suffered a misfire in SS7, but made the finish winning the class and 13th O/A.

One of the most eye catching cars in the championship, the ‘Tango TI’ of Ian Coulson/Joe Jones looked at its best as usual. This crew love their rallying and having no problems apart from a slight off started the season with a class win and 12th O/A.

Championship Co-ordinator Mark Casey said *“This has been a fantastic opening round to the 2010 championship. We’ve had more registered crews out on the first round compared to last year and we hope that it will set the trend for the rest of the season. It is also nice to see some new names and different cars in the championship aswell. We now look forward to Round 2- SG PETCH Tour Of Hamsterley, taking place on the Sunday 9th May.”*

Round 1 Results and overall Championship points

Drivers Championship

Charlie Taylor	45
Tim Pearcey	41
Steve Magson	39
Robin Shuttleworth	35
Roger Kilty	34

Co-Drivers Championship

Steve Bielby	45
Geoff Atkinson	39
Ronnie Roughead	35

Lynette Banks 34
Emma Slights 30

Category Winners:

Category 1: no starters

Category 2: Robin Shuttleworth/Ronnie Roughead

Category 3: Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby

Class Winners:

Class C1: David Thirlwell/Dean Grabham

Class C3: Robin Shuttleworth/Ronnie Roughead

Class D2: Ian Coulson/Joe Jones

Class D3: Barry Jordan/Jaime Gratton-Smith

Class D4: Steve Magson/Geoff Atkinson

Class D5: Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby

Championship points, event pictures reports and up to date information are available on the championship website: www.motoscope.co.uk/nhrc2010.htm

This site can also be accessed via www.motoscope.co.uk click on the NHRC2010 tab. _

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