

Press Information

For immediate release

CLASS BATTLES TOO CLOSE TO CALL ON SPEYSIDE STAGES

The 2016 ARR Craib Scottish Rally Championship has been closely contested on the first two rounds both at the front of the field and in the various classes, and that looks to be no different for round 3 of the series, the McDonald & Munro Speyside Stages.

The Class 2 battle will be headed by runaway class leader Angus Lawrie from Castle Douglas in his 1400 Vauxhall Corsa. Lawrie will have Paul Gribben alongside, having contested the first two rounds with Dane Jeanette Kvick.

Scott Sloan (Vauxhall Corsa), Michael Robertson (Peugeot 205), Grant MacRae (Peugeot 205) and Jacob Harlington (Volkswagen Polo) are amongst others looking to be the first to beat Angus Lawrie to a class 2 event win.

1600cc leaders Donald and Scott Peacock head the class 3 entry list in their Peugeot 205, with Scott MacDonald's Nova and Robbie Beattie's 205 expected to be well in the mix.

Border Counties class winner Scott Beattie is not competing on the Speyside Stages in his Talbot Sunbeam.

Steven Smith and Daniel Johnstone head the class 4 runners in their 16V Ford Escort, on the back of a strong victory in the Borders last month.

A whole host of front wheel drive machinery will be looking to topple him off his perch however, in the form of James Robertson, Thomas Gray and Murray Coulthard.

Gina Walker, the daughter of Louise Aitken-Walker, will also be one to watch after an impressive display on the Border Counties on what was her first forest event.

Class 5 winner from Jedburgh, John McIlwraith is the highest seeded class 5 runner, with competition coming from fellow Escort Mk2's of Andy Chalmers and Paddy Munro.

Class 6 for historic vehicles will be headed by Willie Stuart and Neil Ewing in their Ford Escort Mk1 on the Speyside.

First Historic home on the Snowman, Ian and Sandy Milne will be taking the challenge to Stuart and Ewing in their Mk2 Ford Escort, with winners from the Border Counties Steve Bannister and Kim Gray not taking part this weekend.



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The unusual 2 litre Ford Ka of Ian and Kathryn Forgan heads the class 7 contenders, with class winner from the Border Counties, Alan Cowan, absent from this round.

Cowan's closest rival on round 2, Caroline Carslaw, will be back out in her Ford Fiesta ST, with other runners including Andrew Grant (Peugeot 306 GT16), John MacLeod (Ford Focus) and Scott Burness (Ford Fiesta ST).

The battle in class 8 looks set to be one of the best of the rally. The field is led by SRC event winner Quintin Milne and Paul Hughes in an Escort Mk2, with Dougal Brown and Calum MacLeod and Grant Inglis and Robert Gray looking to fight Quintin for the win, all in Escort Mk2's.

Inglis and Gray have gained maximum points on both the previous two rounds to lead both the class and the SRC 2WD Championship going into the Speyside.

An intriguing entry is that of Sandy MacKenzie and Martin Fraser, who are using a rarely seen Opel Manta.

Gordon Murray, Scott Kerr and Donald Brooker head the billing in class 9, with Murray and Kerr taking on Brooker's BMW 130i with Mk2 Escorts.

Brooker took the victory last time out, and coupled with a second in class on the Snowman he leads the category for bigger engine 2wd cars.

Class 10 for Group N specification machinery looks like it will be between Fraser Wilson and Alasdair Graham, both driving Mitsubishi Lancer Evolution IX's. Racing driver and tarmac rally expert Alan Kirkaldy has also entered in another Evo IX.

Wilson has struggled so far this season with various issues so will be looking for a strong, clean rally while Graham is coming off the back of a brilliant class win last month on the Border Counties.

The battle within the SRC Challengers has been fierce thus far between Scott McCombie and John Wink, and that is expected to continue into the forests around Elgin. Wink heads McCombie by just 1 point heading into the weekend.

Other contenders worth looking out for are Alasdair Graham, Ross MacDonald, Scott MacBeth as he continues to adjust to his four wheel drive Mitsubishi Lancer Evo VII and Scott Mutch, who is also eligible for the Subaru Cup.



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The www.usedcarparts.co.uk Subaru Cup is for GC8 specification Subaru Imprezas, and was dominated last time by Scott Mutch who ran as high as ninth overall at one stage!

However, he and co-driver Greg McDonald suffered an off road excursion that demoted them down the leader-board, but they're certainly ones to watch on the Speyside!

Matthew Thomson and Ian Graham are expected to be the pair's main rivals.

The McDonald & Munro Speyside Stages gets underway on April 23, with the tests around the short Cooper Park being broadcast live on the Speyside Stages TV YouTube channel.

You can keep up to date with the SRC via the website www.scottishrallychampionship.co.uk or through Facebook and Twitter (@MSA_SRC).

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