

McWilliam Park Hotel and Fleet Transport Magazine

Mayo Stages Rally 2012

Sunday, March 11th 2012

Mayo & District Motorsport Club is delighted to officially launch the 2012 McWilliam Park Hotel and Fleet Transport Magazine Mayo Stages Rally. The rally takes place on the week-end of March 10-11, 2012

Headline features of the McWilliam Park Hotel and Fleet Transport Magazine Mayo Stages Rally 2012

- Rally returns to Claremorris for the third successive year
 - The McWilliam Park Hotel is again the rally headquarters and joint-title sponsor, with Fleet Transport Magazine coming on board as the second joint-title sponsor.
- New organizing team for the 2012 rally headed by Clerk of the Course Padraic Roche.
- After year out in 2011, Mayo Stages Rally returns as a counting round of the Dunlop National Rally Championship.
- Opening round of the 2012 Sligo Pallets Border Rally Championship.
- All new stages and route for 2012 event
 - Stages based in Balla / Kiltimagh, Bohola and Knock areas
 - Nine competitive stages totaling 120 kilometres featuring three stages, each repeated three times.
- Ceremonial Start on Saturday evening March 10th in Claremorris town centre
- Promotion of Road Safety message via special events with local schools
- Widespread coverage of rally on television, radio and social media.

Claremorris Hosts Rally For Third Successive Year

Mayo & District Motorsport Club is delighted to return to the town of Claremorris for the 2012 running of the Mayo Stages Rally. The rally has been a huge success since the event was first run from the town in 2010, with enormous support from the people and businesses of Claremorris and the surrounding area. In particular, thanks is extended to Seamus Gallagher and Danny McHugh of The McWilliam Park Hotel and Supermac's and Costcutters Ballindine for their enthusiasm in bringing the rally to Claremorris in the first place. Equally the event has been very highly regarded by visiting competitors and spectators, not least for the ease of access to the area from most parts of the country, as well as for the excellent stages on offer.

The McWilliam Park Hotel Claremorris is once again rally headquarters and joint title sponsor for the 2012 Mayo Stages Rally and Mayo & District Motorsport Club wishes to thank General Manager Fergal Ryan and Marketing Manager David Glynn for their continued support and enthusiasm in making the rally one of the best on the calendar.

Mayo & District Motorsport Club also welcomes **Fleet Transport Magazine** as the second joint title sponsor for the 2012 Mayo Stages Rally. Fleet Transport, which is based in Claremorris, is the leading publisher of a range of magazine titles for the fleet, commercial vehicle, and mobile leisure industries. Thanks is extended to Jarlath Sweeney and his team at Fleet Transport for supporting the event.

New Organising Team

Killala native Padraic Roche is the new man heading up the team responsible for running the 2012 McWilliam Park Hotel and Fleet Transport Magazine Mayo Stages Rally. A well known rally driver having competed in recent times in a Ford Escort and prior to that in a Vauxhall Nova, Padraic is also an experienced official, having undertaken a selection of roles in both rally and autocross events.

Of course, no one person can run an event of this size, and Padraic has assembled an experienced team to support him in this demanding role. Deputy Clerk of the Course is David Jordan. The Westport man is another seasoned rally official with a depth of experience behind him, including running a season of Autocross events in 2010. Liam Healy from Achill returns for a second year as an Assistant Clerk of the Course, among his tasks to manage the financial aspects of running this major event. Kathleen Kennedy from Tubbercurry is once again the Secretary for the Rally, while Ray Clarke from Killala is the Safety Officer. But it takes many more to ensure a successful rally, and a small army of people has been working hard for the past number of months to have everything in place for the big day.

A special mention goes to another key official on the rally, Tom Walsh from Westport who is the Club Stewart for the event. Tom, who is President of Mayo & District Motorsport Club, was honoured for his achievements in the sport in December, when he was presented with the Ivan Webb Memorial trophy for Most Outstanding Contribution to Irish Motorsport at the 2011 Motorsport Ireland Awards. This award, the highest the sport in Ireland offers,

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is a major honour for a man who can count among his achievements managing rally legend Billy Coleman during his most successful years, as well as being in charge of Rally Ireland, Ireland's round of the World Rally Championship in 2007.

A Counting Round of Two Major Championships

After a year out due to the rotational system within the series, the Dunlop National Rally Championship returns to Mayo for 2012. The National series is arguably the most popular rally championship in the country, and looks certain to attract a host of top line competitors to what will be round two of the series, following the season opener in Birr last week-end.

Additionally the Mayo Stages Rally is the opening round of the Sligo Pallets Border Rally Championship, the leading championship for clubman competitors. Because this championship is based on class rather than overall results, all competitors, regardless of what car they drive have an equal opportunity to claim the overall title. The Border Rally Championship is sponsored by Mayo & District Motorsport Club members Andrew Mullen and Elaine Doherty, who will be competing on the event on March 11th.

Already a number of big names have confirmed their entries for the Mayo Stages Rally, with a host more expected before the entry closing date. Among them are last year's winners Kevin Barrett and Sean Mullally in a Subaru World Rally Car, and Thomas Fitzmaurice and Fionn Foley who won the opening round of the Dunlop National Rally Championship in Birr at the weekend. Also entered are the reigning Sligo Pallets Border Rally Champions Arthur and Mac Kierans, while names such as Camillus Bradley, Frank Kelly, Declan Boyle and Seamus Leonard are sure to attract rally fans in their thousands to Mayo over the rally week-end.

All New Rally Stages For 2012

The rally may once again be based in Claremorris, but the 2012 event sees competitors tackle three entirely new stages to the north of the town. Each stage will be run three times to give a total distance of 120 stage miles. The first cars will leave the McWilliam Park Hotel at 8.50am on Sunday March 11th and after a busy day's rallying will return to rally headquarters for 5.25pm that evening. Service, which is sponsored by **Supermacs Claremorris** and **Kevin Kennedy Motors Belmullet and Ballina** is again located adjacent to the McWilliam Park Hotel.

- ⇒ Stages 1, 4 and 7 'Craggagh Hill'. Sponsored by Melissa Walsh of **MW Print & Design Claremorris**, this opening test was is located between Balla and Kiltimagh, and is a distance of 12.8 kilometres.
- ⇒ Stages 2, 5 and 8 – 'Thorn Hill'. Parts of this 13 kilometre stage were used on a single stage rally run by Mayo & District Motorsport Club in 2004. It is located near Bohola. Sponsor of this stage is Paul Hunt of **Hillside Service Station Claremorris**.
- ⇒ Stages 3, 6 and 9 – 'Eden'. The final test of the 2012 Mayo Stages Rally is the 14.3 kilometre 'Eden' stage. Sponsored by Tadgh Buckley of **EPS Ballyhaunis**, it is situated in the Knock area.

Ceremonial Start – Back By Popular Demand

Since 2010 when the Mayo Stages Rally broke new ground for a national rally in Ireland by hosting a ceremonial start on the Saturday evening prior to the rally itself, the opportunity to get to see the top drivers and cars as well as local competitors has proved to be an enormous success, attracting large

crowds gathering in Claremorris Town Centre. The 2012 edition promises once again to be a real crowd puller with commentary and interviews with the drivers as they pass through the official start ramp. Music and attractions such as a rally simulator will add to the appeal of this family occasion. The Ceremonial Start is sponsored by Fiachra Moran of **Moran Family Butchers Belcarra and Claremorris Chamber of Commerce**

Promoting A Safe Rally Message For All

Ensuring a safe Mayo Stages Rally for all is a key objective of Mayo & District Motorsport Club, and to help promote a road safety message amongst younger members of the community, the club has been involved in two initiatives in the run-up to the rally.

With the rally passing by on their doorsteps children at Bohola National School got a special opportunity to learn first hand about the safety measures that are in place to run a rally, as well as a demonstration of safety equipment on board a current rally car. Presented by leading young driver Toni Kelly from Donegal, who is also a Road Safety Authority (RSA) ambassador, together with members of Mayo & District Motorsport Club, Mayo County Council's Road Safety Officer Noel Gibbons, and An Garda Siochana, the children (whose school is located close to two of the stages on this year's event) were very interested in the presentation, with lots of questions, and much excitement about the forthcoming rally.

Separately, Mayo & District Motorsport Club and Mayo County Council Road Safety Officer Noel Gibbons have teamed up with Claremorris Chamber of Commerce in an initiative to get local schoolchildren to enter a competition to design a slogan or logo for the rally. The winners will be announced on Saturday evening at the ceremonial start for the rally, with local businesses offering exciting prizes to the winners, while the winning slogans will be prominently displayed in Claremorris town centre.

Social Media Tools Help Rally Reach New Audiences

In 2011 Mayo & District Motorsport Club became one of the first events to provide instant information on what was happening throughout the day via its Twitter account MayoMotorClub (<http://twitter.com/MayoMotorClub>). With over 100 updates posted during the rally, this proved to be a huge success, and has since been copied by other rallies. The club will again be providing this service on the 2012 rally. With 'tweeters' located at each of the stage ends as well as in service and rally HQ, this is the perfect way to keep right up to date with all the latest news including provisional stage times, quotes from competitors and any breaking stories.

Followers of the Facebook page Mayo Stages Rally will also receive many of these updates both in the run up to, and over the course of the rally week-end as well as links to video and photos over the rally week-end.

On the radio, there will be regular updates on Mid-West Radio while Claremorris Community Radio will again be providing extensive radio coverage with live coverage throughout Sunday including stage times, news and interviews. Claremorris Community Radio can be accessed locally on 94.6 FM and online on <http://www.claremorriscommunityradio.ie/>.

Post the event, the rally will be featured on both TG4 and Motors TV as part of the Dunlop National Rally Championship programme presented by On The Limit Sports.

About the Mayo Stages Rally

The Mayo Stages Rally is one of the biggest sporting events to take place in the region every year, and brings significant revenue into the area. In addition to the rally competitors, their service crews, friends and family many thousands of spectators, estimated at least in the tens of thousands will visit Mayo over the week-end. With all these people requiring accommodation as well as food and drink it has been calculated that the Mayo Stages Rally is worth in excess of two million Euro to the local economy.

About Mayo & District Motorsport Club

Mayo & District Motorsport Club, formerly known as Ballina Motor Club, has been in existence since 1976. Affiliated to the national motorsport organisation Motorsport Ireland, the club promotes official motorsport activity in Mayo. Drawing members from all over the county as well as neighbouring regions, Mayo & District Motorsport Club organizes a number of sporting events every year including the Mayo Stages Rally and Loose Surface Autocross events. The club meets on the first Wednesday of every month, new members are always welcome.

For further information contact:

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Appendix I: Main Sponsors of the 2012 Mayo Stages Rally

Company	Sponsoring
McWilliam Park Hotel, Claremorris	Rally HQ and Joint Title Sponsors
Fleet Transport Magazine, Claremorris	Joint Title Sponsors
Supermacs Claremorris	Service Area
Kevin Kennedy Motors, Belmullet & Ballina	Service Area
MW Design, Print & Signs, Claremorris	Special Stages 1, 4 and 7
Hillside Service Station, Claremorris	Special Stages 2, 5 and 8
EPS Ballyhaunis	Special Stages 3, 6 and 9
Morans Family Butchers, Belcarra Claremorris Chamber of Commerce	Ceremonial Start
Hastings Insurance Brokers, Westport, Claremorris and other offices	Scrutiny
KPS Colour Print, Knock	Programme Sponsor

Mayo & District Motorsport wishes to thank all of our main sponsors for their support in making the running of the 2012 Mayo Stages Rally possible, as well as the many sponsors who are supporting the event through the rally programme.

Appendix II: Officials - 2012 McWilliam Park Hotel and Fleet

Transport Magazine Mayo Stages Rally

Clerk of the Course	Padraic Roche
Deputy Clerk of the Course	David Jordan
Assistant Clerks of the Course	Joe Corcoran & Liam Healy
Motorsport Ireland Stewards	Alan Cullinan & Ivan Fuery
Mayo & District MC Steward	Tom Walsh
Safety Officer	Ray Clarke
Secretary of the Event	Kathleen Kennedy
Competitor Liaison Officer	Don Wilmont
Chief Marshal	David Doherty
Chief Timekeeper	Ciara Buckley
Chief Scrutineer	Brian Gilgan
Chief Medical Officer	Dr. Padraig Conneally
Event Rescue Co-ordinator	Fergal Heneghan
Press Officer	Cathal Doyle
Programme Co-ordinator	Andy Walsh & Sean Hassett
Scrutineering Co-ordinator	Seamus Murphy
Service Co-ordinator	Kenneth McHale
Equipment Officer	Jared Gill
Spectator Control	Aiden Harper
Stage Commander SS 1/4/7	David Breen
Stage Commander SS 2/5/8	Trevor O'Connell
Stage Commander SS 3/6/9	John Higgins
Deputy Stage Commander SS 1/4/7	Fergal Loughney
Deputy Stage Commander SS 2/5/8	John McCarthy
Deputy Stage Commander SS 3/6/9	David Healy
Radio Controller	Mary Fitzgerald
Road Closed	Willie Durcan
Car Accountability	Jimmy Feeney
Ceremonial Start Co-ordinator	Seamus Coffey