

West Cork Rally - 14-15 March 2009

Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy Win!
 Videos, Photos and News
 Slowly Sideways to run ahead of main field!
 Pre-Event Details

Quality Hotels West Cork Rally 2009 Final Report

The Quality Hotels West Cork Rally took place for the 31st time on March 14th & 15th last. Despite the economic woes at present, a full field of 151 cars were present on the start line for what would be one of the driest events in a number of years. There was some disappointment before the start when top seeds Donie O'Sullivan & Paul Nagle had to withdraw from the event because of problems with the paperwork for their new Proton Satria Neo S2000. Also missing from the start list were number 10 seeds Brian O'Mahony & John Higgins, whose engine began to give trouble on the way to scrutiny. There were to be eight stages on each of the two legs. The first day was north and east of Clonakilty around Ballinascarthy, Clogagh, Ring and Dunworley. Day two was west of the town bringing the crews to Sams Cross, Rossmore and Ardfield.

Day 1

John Dalton in his Darrian T90 GTR led the field away in brilliant March sunshine to the first stage in Ballinascarthy. In spite of the fine weather, the test was described as being very slippery in places by the leading crews. Liam McCarthy took the initiative straight away by pulling out a 5 second lead over Keith Cronin in his Mitsubishi Lancer. Jim Harrison was taking it steady and was a further three seconds back. Dalton and Denis Cronin made up the top five. It was to be a short event for local driver Sean O'Donovan who rolled out of the event and temporarily blocked stage 1 in his Subaru.

McCarthy extended his lead on the next stage to ten seconds with Harrison slotting into second. Keith Cronin's chances of springing a surprise on the event evaporated as he was off the road and into a field for 90 seconds on stage 2, dropping him outside the top ten. This promoted Phil Collins into fifth place while a superb start had netted local driver Fintan Canty sixth place. On the third stage Keith Cronin set a brilliant time, twelve seconds quicker than leader McCarthy to haul himself back into the top ten. The stage was interrupted when Edward O'Callaghan had a big accident and blocked the stage, fortunately without serious injury to the crew.

Keith Cronin again set fastest time on the following stage as Denis Cronin also began to creep up behind Jim Harrison who still hadn't gotten into his stride. Dalton was fourth with Collins fifth and Keith Cronin had now climbed to sixth. Ashley Field was having a very good run to hold seventh, followed by a trio of Escorts in the hands of Canty, Adrien Heatherington and Leonard Downey.

Stage five was the classic Ring test, and John Dalton set a scorching time here to take 13 seconds off McCarthy while Denis Cronin also closed the gap to the leader. Harrison was now losing some ground but just about held third. Not so lucky on Ring was Fintan Canty who crashed heavily on the exit of the village and Adrien Heatherington who retired with clutch failure midway through the test. Liam McCarthy took some time back from the chasing pack on stage 6, Dunworley, as Harrison dropped behind Denis Cronin into third. Keith Cronin lost more time here as he had a lurid 360 degree spin which cost him over a minute as he tried to restart his stalled engine. This allowed Phil Collins back into fifth place.

Dalton repeated his heroics on the second run over Ring to move into second place, while Cronin consolidated third place from Harrison. There was a dramatic change to the leaderboard on the last stage of the day with the second run over Dunworley. Jim Harrison stopped mid stage with mechanical problems and seventh placed Ashley Field went off the road and out of the rally on the first junction of the stage. Liam McCarthy took fastest time to lead overnight with more than 30 seconds to spare. Keith Cronin in fifth place took maximum points for round 1 of the Mitsubishi Evo Challenge. Damien McCarthy was top points scorer for round 1 of the Honda Cup and held ninth place overall. Adrian McElhinney won the first round of the Citroen C2 Cup and held 20th overall while the Historic Rally was being led by Eddie Murphy in his Mk 1 Escort.

Top 5 at the end of Day 1

- 1 – Liam McCarthy / Kieran Murphy – Corolla WRC 1:13:07.5
- 2 – John Dalton / Gwynfor Jones – Darrian T90 GTR 1:13:40.5
- 3 – Denis Cronin / Helen O'Sullivan – Impreza WRC 1:13:46.3
- 4 – Phil Collins / Derek Brannigan – Escort Mk2 1:16:00.8
- 5 – Keith Cronin / Greg Shinnors – Lancer Evo 9 1:16:55.2

Day 2

The second day dawned bright and sunny as the previous day and there was little change over the first few stages. John Dalton decided to give it a go and almost came to grief on the first stage, but got away with it. Denis Cronin had problems

with his gearbox jumping out of 4th and 5th gear which was costing him a little bit of time. Damien McCarthy had lost 4th gear and damaged a rim on the first stage which started losing him time. Manus Kelly had overtaken Frank Kelly for sixth place on the first of the morning stages.

On the next stage Dalton cut the gap to 28 seconds and the charge was now on. Behind the leading half dozen all hell was breaking loose as no sooner were drivers appearing in the top ten then they were out of the event. Manus Kelly crashed his Escort on stage 11 and Diarmuid Keohane had a halfshaft break on his similar car. Gwyn Thomas had made it to 9th before a timing belt broke and he was out. Marty McCormack was up to eighth but went off the road on stage 12. Damien McCarthy had now lost fifth as well as fourth gear and was struggling to stay going.

As the crews tackled the first run over Ardfield (Stage 13), Dalton knew he had to do something along the smooth coastal stage to try to grab a shock win. He took a staggering eight seconds off McCarthy to close the gap once again. There was now just 24 seconds between the leading two, while Denis Cronin's gearbox problems prevented him from making a challenge and he comfortably held third place. Liam McCarthy responded to the challenge however, and replied by taking three seconds back on the 14th stage. The gap was now out to 27 seconds with just two stages to go.

Leonard Downey had been as high as seventh, but then had problems with an overheating engine which caused his retirement after the penultimate stage. In a very sporting gesture Martin Cunningham had given a loan of a gearbox to Damien McCarthy who was struggling to stay in the event. Cunningham had gone ahead by over 50 seconds, but McCarthy began the fightback. This was resolved on the final stage with McCarthy overhauling his rival by setting a superb time to pip Cunningham by just six seconds.

Dalton took another seven seconds back from McCarthy on stage 15 to leave just twenty seconds between the leading two with just one stage to go. However Dalton wisely decided to back off rather than risk everything on the last stage and McCarthy took the win by 34 seconds in the end. Denis Cronin took third place with nephew Keith in fourth place and taking maximum points again in round 2 of the Mitsubishi Evo Challenge. Phil Collins led a trio of Escorts to take fifth place, his best ever West Cork result, with Frank Kelly in sixth place from Kevin O'Donoghue who was seventh. Daragh O'Riordan took class 6 and eighth overall in his Renault Clio. Thomas O'Rourke was top points scorer in the 2nd round of the Honda Cup with a superb drive to 9th place in a standard class 3 Civic. The top ten was rounded off by Thomas Davies from Wales in another Mk2 Escort. Adrian McElhinney was 15th overall and took round 2 maximum points in the Citroen C2 Cup. The Historic Rally was won by Denis Moynihan in his Mk1 Escort, with the Junior Rally won by David Brosnan in his Honda Civic. The Sunday Run was won by Adrien Heatherington who thrilled the spectators with some spectacular driving. A new winner has been added to the Quality Hotels West Cork Rally list in Liam McCarthy, and it can't be said that he hasn't deserved for all the years of trying and near misses.

RESULTS

- 1 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC) 133m 42s,
- 2 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR) 134m 17s,
- 3 Denis Cronin/Helen O'Sullivan (Subaru Impreza WRC) 135m 14s,
- 4 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N) 137m 25s,
- 5 Phil Collins/Derek Brannigan (Ford Escort Mk II) 138m 59s,
- 6 Frank Kelly/Liam Brennan (Ford Escort Mk II) 144m 02s,
- 7 Kevin O'Donoghue/Joe O'Leary (Ford Escort Mk II) 146m 44s,
- 8 Daragh O'Riordan/Sean McCarthy (Renault Clio S1600) 147m 00s,
- 9 Thomas O'Rourke/Tomas Scallan (Honda Civic R3) 147m 09s,
- 10 Tomas Davies/John Smithwick (Ford Escort Mk II) 147m 46s.

Group N Production class:

- 1 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors,
- 2 Thomas O'Rourke/Tomas Scallan,
- 3 Stephen Carey/Mark Lee (Civic) 154m 03s.

JUNIOR RALLY:

- 1 Simon Duggan/William Lynch (Sunbeam) 36m 23s,
- 2 David Brosnan/Donal Horgan (Civic) 36m 42s,
- 3 David Duggan/Sean Murphy (Corolla) 37m 14s.

HISTORIC RALLY:

- 1 Denis Moynihan/Dan Moynihan (Escort) 100m 26s,
- 2 David Cremin/Johnny O'Shea (Escort) 101m 10s,
- 3 James O' Mahony/Paddy McDonnell (Volvo 144S) 102m 02s
- 3 John Hackett/Michael Hackett (Mini) 107m 11s.

Stage Winners

- SS1 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
- SS2 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
- SS3 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)
- SS4 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)
- SS5 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR)

SS6 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
 SS7 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR)
 SS8 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
 SS9 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
 & Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)
 SS10 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR)
 SS11 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
 & Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)
 SS12 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)
 SS13 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR)
 SS14 Liam McCarthy/Kieran Murphy (Toyota Corolla WRC)
 SS15 John Dalton/Gwynfor Jones (Darrian T90 GTR)
 SS16 Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mit. Lancer Evo 9 Gp N)

[Click here for Full Times](#)
[RallyNews from Brian and Liz](#)

VIDEOS

[Click here for the TotallySideways.com footage from West Cork](#)
 More available here in the [Video Section](#)

[PhotosRallyPrint.com \(Trevor McGrath\)](#)
[Sean Moynihan Photos](#)

PRE_EVENT NEWS

[Click Here for Full Entry List in PDF Format](#)

[Full Time and Distance Schedule here \(bottom of page\)](#)

[Final Instructions here](#)

[Slowly Sideways to run ahead of mainfield!](#)

Provisional Slowly Sideways Entry List

B1 Austin Rover Metro 6R4 Bernard Daly/Philip Doherty (Irl) B 1986 Development Car Pond Rothmans
 B2 Triumph TR7 V8 John Anderson/Pamela Morrison (NI) B 1986 Circuit of Irl Llewelin Unipart
 B3 Austin Rover Metro 6R4 David Smith/Paul Fitzpatrick (Irl) B 1986 RAC Eklund Clarion
 B4 Lada VFTS Pat Horan/Noelle Horan (Irl) B 1983 Finland Ohu Works
 B5 Ford Escort Mk1 Conor Falvey/Liam Buckley (Irl) 4 1974 British Chps. Coleman Thomas Motors
 B6 Lancia Delta HF Paul Hillard/Linda Taylor (Irl) A 1988 Monte Carlo Biasion Martini
 B7 Mazda RX7 Fintan Foley/Tuan Foley (Irl) B 1982 RAC Millen Works
 B8 Opel Manta 400 Humphrey Deegan/TBA (Irl) B 1985 Circuit of Irl Fisher Shell Oils
 B9 Ford RS200 Frank McPolin/Davy Armstrong (NI) B 1986 Circuit of Irl Works
 B10 Talbot Lotus Sunbeam Kieran McAnallen/TBA (NI) B 1984 RAC

Quality Hotels West Cork Rally 2009 Press Release 2

Entries have now closed and seeding has been completed for the 2009 Quality Hotels West Cork Rally which takes place on 14th & 15th March. The event which will be running for the 31st time has proved to be as popular with competitors as ever even in these recession hit times. 151 cars will start in the main field and the downside of the events popularity is that there are over thirty drivers on the reserve list. As always there is a large variety of machinery even within the top 10. Top seeds are 2008 winners Donie O'Sullivan and Paul Nagle in the very exciting Proton S2000. This is the car which proved ultra competitive in the hands of Niall McShea on Rally Ireland recently. John Dalton & Gwynfor Jones are at 2 in their rapid Darrian T90 GTR and will be hoping for dry roads help them to go one better than last year when they finished second. Long time competitors Liam McCarthy and Kieran Murphy will have their Corolla WRC out again at number 3 and are still looking for their first West Cork win.

Jim Harrison and Harvey Bell are making their first appearance in West Cork since 2002 when they finished 3rd overall. This was their best result overall in the event to date. They will start at number 4 and will be Subaru WRC mounted this year. 2005 winner Denis Cronin with Helen O'Sullivan on the notes in their older model Subaru WRC are at five. Rapid Welshman Phil Collins is at 6 in his potent Mk2 Escort with Derek Brannigan co-driving as usual.

Numbers 7 & 8 sees the top GpN runners go head to head. Keith Cronin / Greg Shinnors and Alan Ring / Adrian Deasy should have a big battle for supremacy over St.Patrick's Weekend, and neither will be far away from the podium at the finish. James Stafford and Frank Dwyer will also be hoping to repeat last years fine fourth place in their Darrian T90 GTR and they will start at 9. Rounding off the top 10 is Carrigalines Brian O'Mahony with John Higgins on the notes in their Renault Clio S1600.

Outside of the top ten, the modified entry continues to be strong with entries of the calibre of Adrian Heatherington, Ashley Field, Kevin O'Donoghue, Manus Kelly and Edward O'Callaghan to name but a few. Trevor Bustard is the leading Mitsubishi Evo Challenge entrant at 26; Marty McCormack leads the Citroen C2 challenge from number 34, while Damien McCarthy does likewise in the Honda Cup at number 36. Denis and Dan Moynihan lead the Historic Challenge in their Escort Mk1. Their rally will begin on Saturday afternoon on Stage 5. Billy McCarthy & John Falvey are the top seeds for the Junior Rally which will cover stages 13 to 16 on Sunday afternoon.

For Accommodation and other Details see:

West Cork Rally
Cork Motor Club

Regulations available - Press Release 1

Regulations for Cork Motor Clubs popular two day event, the Quality Hotels West Cork Rally are now available to download.

The rally will run for the 31st time on March 14th & 15th next and for the seventh year in succession the rally will be sponsored by the Quality Hotel Clonakilty.

The rally is synonymous with St.Patrick's weekend and is a very social occasion which brings together competitors from Ireland, north and south, as well as Wales, England and Scotland. This is a mix which creates a special and unique atmosphere in Clonakilty and the surrounding area for that weekend. After eight years as clerk of the course Brian O'Connell has decided to step down and his place will be taken over by his assistant during that time, Darren McCarthy who also has experience of running the Cork Forest Rally these past few years.

Despite increased costs the club is pleased to announce that the entry fee is held at the 2008 price of €630 which is excellent value for 16 stages and 240km of competition mileage. Road mileage at 170km is again very low this year while service will be centralised as usual near Clonakilty.

As usual the rally is the first round of the Southern 4 Rally Championship, while this year sees the event being part of three other championships, rounds 1 & 2 of the Irish Mitsubishi Ralliart Evolution Challenge, rounds 1 & 2 of the C2 R2 Irish Cup as well as rounds 1 & 2 of the inaugural Honda Cup.

The Bones O'Connor Modified Challenge is back for a third year in 2009 where many crews will be bidding to take the crown from the 2007 & 2008 winner, John Dalton. This challenge incorporates cars from classes 9-15 (details on classes to be found on www.motorsportireland.com) and has been very competitive in its first two years.

There will also be a Historic Rally which will begin on Stage 5 on day one; the cost of entry here is €530 while the Junior Rally will cover the last four stages of the event at a cost of €330. After the success of the scheme in 2008, junior competitors are also reminded that if they go marshalling on the Saturday stages then they will get a refund of €100 on their entry fee.

Regulations & Entry Form

Room Rates at Rally HQ

More Details on Event Website

The 2009 event:

The 2009 Quality Hotels West Cork Rally will take place on the weekend of March 14 & 15. The event will, as always, be based in Clonakilty, Co. Cork and rally headquarters will be at the Quality Hotel & Leisure Centre, Clonakilty, Co. Cork. Tel 023 35400 (00 353 23 35400 from UK). Website: www.qualityclonakiltyhotel.com

This year's rally will see a new COC with Darren McCarty taking over the top spot from Brian O'Connell. Darren, who is the rally's fifth COC, will follow the tried and tested format for the event. There will be 8 stages run over four locations each day giving a total of 16 stages. Centralised servicing will take place after every two tests.

Entry fee: Despite the recession, Cork Motor Club have not increased the entry fee for the 2009 Quality Hotels West Cork Rally. There will also be a Historic and Junior section in the rally.