

NEWSLETTER, September 2018.

Well, the end of the season is almost in sight, with just the Birr event in October to finish off the year.

Following the Monaghan event, Peter Barrable has at least one hand on the championship. Second in Monaghan has given him an almost unassailable lead. It would need an unusual combination of circumstances for Karl O'Donoghue to take the title. Karl got stuck in a field in Monaghan and it needed muscle power from Evin Hughes to push him out. The delay was just too costly.

The battle in the 1a class has hotted up. Long-time leader Nicole Drought continues to lead the class championship. Peter Cummins has been chipping away at her lead but again it would need a very unusual set of circumstances for her to lose out.

Colin Sheridan has nipped in front of Mark Reilly for the Class 2 championship, while our sponsor Sean McEnroe still leads Class 3 – despite not doing Monaghan, although Samuel Patterson is snapping at his heels!

The other classes are poorly supported, as no one seems to do more than a couple of events; there has been no change in these.

Regarding navigators, Evin Hughes still leads the Championship, with Alan Dolan in second place. I don't mean to offend navigators (I'm a former Nav myself) and in the next Newsletter, I will give more details of these brave guys and gals. That well known rally driver Robin Eyre-Maunsell once said of navigators - "wonderful chaps – no imagination, of course!!"

Following a meeting of Clerks of the Course in July, a number of suggestions were made to the Navigation Sub-Committee, which oversees Navigation Trials, Endurance Trials and Classic Rallies. The Sub-Committee has accepted these in general; they concern issues of safety, a more fair imposition of penalties and the recommendation that code boards be abolished, as the opportunity for cheating are too tempting. The exact rule changes will be listed in a future Newsletter; they will not come into effect until the first event of 2019. For reasons too complicated to go into here, the name 'navigation car class' will be dropped and replaced by 'non Endurance specification cars'. This change will come into effect from 01/10/18 – i.e. before the Birr event. Competitors will retain points in that class – just the name of the class will change.

Also, the issue of 'maximum penalty' has been clarified; up to now, it has been taken to mean that the maximum penalty for a selective is the maximum time. This is not correct – on top of the maximum time, competitors will also have other penalties added – for example cone penalties. This in turn could lead to an unfair situation where a competitor might skip a selective and get the maximum penalty (maximum time). However, a competitor who attempts the test, hits a cone and gets a maximum (or a time of, say, 5 seconds under the maximum) as well as the cone penalty, will be penalised 5 seconds more than the person who doesn't even attempt the test, which is unfair. The new rules will address this inconsistency.

There are some other rule changes, so competitors should check the Motorsport Ireland Year book for 2019, when it is published.

It is fantastic to see that in 2018, so far 74 drivers have competed in the two Endurance Classes. In this regard, I must say that I was astonished to hear that by the end of the week after the Monaghan event, a total of 80,000 people had viewed a video clip of the event. Surely we can coax some of these into the sport?

If anyone wants to get involved, there are two cars available. We have a chipped Rover 200, built in the UK by the Rover Centre in St. Albans. It is to full Endurance specification, with cage, Compomotive wheels, etc. and is ready to go.

I also know of a Toyota Starlet for sale – but it is not rally prepared. The seller is looking for €500. Contact me on 087-6737074 or drfrankod27@gmail.com if more details are required.

While I hope that I don't get 80,000 enquiries (!), I'm happy to help with any advice I can.
Current championship points, both overall and class points, are attached and will be published on Rally.ie.

Frank O'Donoghue.