



2023 Corrib Oil Galway International Rally Press Release 3

The entry list for the 2023 Corrib Oil Galway International Rally has been revealed and it contains a stunning line up of drivers and machinery. Over 150 drivers have entered the traditional season opener in the West of Ireland, and it looks like being one of the most competitive ever seen. Top seeds by virtue of winning the Tarmac Championship last year are Josh Moffett & Andy Hayes in a Hyundai i20 R5. This crew also won Galway last year to set them on the way to championship success. Behind them are Meirion Evans & Jonathan Jackson with the Welsh pair using their usual VW Polo and looking to go one better than last year in Galway where they pushed Moffett all the way to the end.

Callum Devine & Noel O'Sullivan (VW Polo) are at three and are more than capable of taking a win. Fourth seeds Sam Moffett & Keith Moriarty are making a return to the international scene after a year having fun in a Toyota Starlet. The 2017 tarmac champion will be competing in a Hyundai i20 R5. At five is Desi Henry & Paddy Robinson (Ford Fiesta) who didn't have a lot of luck on the international front last year, leading two events but retiring from both. Jonny Greer & Niall Burns at six will also be looking to build on some strong showings in 2022 and can't be ruled out for a top result. Cathan McCourt & Liam Moynihan have shown glimpses of real speed but need to find more consistency, they are seeded at seven in a Citroen C3.

A trio of former Tarmac Champions round off the top ten seeds with Garry Jennings & Arthur Kierans leading the way in a Ford Fiesta. They are followed by Declan Boyle in a VW Polo who has also won this event in the past. Gareth MacHale makes a welcome return to Galway and having won the Summer Rally last August will be looking to muscle back in amongst the leaders and aim for a repeat of his 2010 International win. The opening round of the Samdec Irish Tarmac Rally Championship certainly looks like getting off to a strong start.

Outside of the top ten Andrew Purcell, Robert Barrable, David Kelly, Tim McNulty, and Patrick O'Brien are just some of the names capable of a top result. The modified section looks very good with Gary Kiernan, Jason Black and Kevin Eves the standard bearers, but others such as Marty Toner, Mark Alcorn and Eddie Doherty could also feature. Locally the top seeded Galway crews are Dylan Donoghue / Stephen Joyce, Tommy Cahill / Enda O'Leary and Frank Raftery / Sean McCaffrey all in Mitsubishi Evos, Des Lyons and David Quigley are in Honda Civics while Karl Egan is co-driving for Jason Black's rapid Toyota Starlet.

In what is a first for Galway, there is an entry from Iceland with multiple rally champion Gunnar Johansson entered in a Citroen C2. The Historic section is also well represented and has a

particularly strong UK presence. Tom Clark, Rob Smith, Will Onions, Meirion Evans and Duncan Williams are amongst the overseas crews, all with potent Escorts. The Irish element is competitive too with Luke McCarthy, Maurice Meskell, Ray Breen, Ross Forde, and Fergus O'Meara just some of the names. There are eleven juniors on the list with Jack McKenna, John Michael Kennelly and Darragh O'Donovan the top three seeds, all in Honda Civics

Parc Ferme will be in Galway Racecourse and a ceremonial start will take place in Eyre Square at 8pm on Friday the 3rd of February with the action getting underway on Saturday with the first stage near Coldwood at 8:45am. There will be three stages run three times in the Craughwell / Ardrahan / Kilchreest area with service after each loop. The second day will consist of two stages to the south and east of Loughrea attempted three times with service after each pair of stages. The first car is due back at the finish ramp in Galway on Sunday evening at approximately 16:30. The service area for the weekend will be at Loughrea Mart.

The Rally Headquarters is the Connacht Hotel on the old Dublin Road and still has some availability but rooms are rapidly filling up. The Hotel website is www.theconnacht.ie for anyone wishing to make a reservation at a competitive rate. Marshals are always required, and the club would be grateful to anyone who wishes to help in this way. Interested parties can contact the chief marshal Patsy Finnerty on 087-2870702. A list of programme outlets (which will include all Corrib Oil service stations) will be published in the coming days. Live coverage of the event will be streamed by Hylands Media Productions over the course of the weekend, and links will be put on the club social media sites.

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