



Transmission Trouble stops Alastair Fisher's Pirelli International Charge

The Pirelli International Rally, based in Carlisle, round two of the 2010 British Rally Championship, presented a tough challenge for the crews, with three night stages in the famous Kielder Forest complex on the Friday night, and a further nine stages before the event finished on Saturday afternoon. Sadly for young Alastair Fisher and his co-driver the experienced Rory Kennedy, their Group N Mitsubishi Evo 9 only took them to the start line of stage 7, before mechanical failure forced their retirement. However before this the MSA Rally Elite member was once again up near the front of Britain's premier rally series.

The rally started well for Alastair with third fastest time on the first Newcastleton stage, though a niggling problem with the intercom caused a few concerns on the second stage. *"There was quite a lot of dust on the stages, and the intercom was cutting in and out at times, so it was difficult to hear Rory, but we were still second fastest. On the next stage however we were travelling along a straight and we thought a back wheel had come off! What actually happened was that a tyre had just blown out, and we dropped 30 seconds putting us 5th overnight. That puncture in a way took us out of the battle with Craig Breen."* Indeed Alastair ended the leg eight seconds behind Dave Weston Jnr's Subaru, but he started day two on a real charge.

"On the first loop of Saturday morning we were second and third fastest on the stages, and we took 36 seconds from Dave Weston on those tests, which moved us up to fourth. I was very happy with the car, the set up felt perfect, and I feel we have made a real step up from last year." By stage 6 Alastair was 27.6 seconds behind third placed Craig Breen, and 25 seconds ahead of Dave Weston Jnr, but there was to be an unpleasant surprise in store as he rolled up towards the start line of stage 7-Roughside. *"As we edged forward to the start line of stage 7, the car just locked solid, and we couldn't move. We eventually had to get towed off the start line with a Land Rover, and it freed up for a moment only to lock solid again. At the moment the car is being checked and we think the problem could be in the front transmission."*

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It was the second unfortunate retirement for Alastair in the British Rally Championship this season, with the next round on tarmac in May on the Jim Clark International in Scotland. *“It’s not ideal to have no points on the board after two rounds, but there are others who have dropped scores. There is still a possible ninety points to be scored from four remaining rounds with three of those rounds on tarmac hopefully we can resurrect our BRC season. It would be nice to go to the Jim Clark and try and get a podium to boost the confidence again. We seem to be having better luck on the Irish Tarmac Championship this year! ”*

The third round of the Irish Tarmac Championship is this weekend on the Killarney International. *“We are lying second overall in the championship and leading Group N, so hopefully we can maintain this strong position.”* After his superb Circuit of Ireland drive it will be interesting to see how the team fare out in Killarney.



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