



JOSH MOFFETT WINS MONAGHAN RALLY

Monaghan's Josh Moffett (Hyundai i20 R5) co-driven by Jason McKenna took a start to finish victory in the Monaghan Rally, round three of the Triton Showers-backed Motorsport Ireland National Rally Championship. They finished twelve seconds ahead of the Ford Fiesta WRC of Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty. Armagh's Darren Gass (Citroen C3) co-driven by Donegal's Paddy Flanagan were a minute and 11.5 seconds further adrift in third.

As expected, Josh Moffett set the pace on the opening 11.78 kilometre state at Scotstown finishing 1.3 seconds ahead of his older brother Sam, who was onboard the Ford Fiesta WRC he last campaigned on the 2019 Donegal International Rally. DarRen Gass (Citroen C3) and Robert Barrable (VW Polo GTi R5) followed. Josh was also quickest on the remaining two stages of the loop and arrived at the Monaghan town centre service park with a 5.1 second lead over his brother Sam. Josh was delighted to be involved in a battle with his brother and was pleased with his own performance on the first stage. "He keeps me under pressure, It's good. Yeah, it was a nice stage to start the rally. I struggled a bit on the second stage."

Meanwhile, Sam remarked, "I knew he would be quicker than me on the first loop, hopefully, now we can close the gap. I was on new tyres while he (Josh) was on older ones."

Gass was third - 25.1 seconds further behind as he continued to acclimatise to his Citroen C3.

Fourth placed Barrable was just 0.6 of a second behind Gass and was on his first outing in some seven weeks, he found the third stage particularly difficult, declaring he couldn't find a rhythm.

Monaghan's Stephen Wright (Ford Fiesta R5) occupied fifth, he had a slight overshoot on the very first junction of the opening stage. Modifications to the rear

of his Ford Fiesta R5 proved positive as Seamus Leonard was pleased at how it performed.

Tydavnet's Dessie Keenan (Ford Escort) was seventh and led the two-wheel drive category, his Escort running with 15" rims and Reiger suspension, he was one of many drivers that didn't find the second stage to their liking.

The top ten was completed by Paul Barrett (Fiesta R5), Brendan Cumiskey (VW Polo GTi R5) and Damien Tourish (Ford Escort). Barrett spun on S.S. 3 and also had a slight overshoot. Elsewhere, Declan Boyle's Ford Fiesta WRC stopped as he exited a square left hand junction on S.S. 2. After about an hour, he was able to drive the car back to service and he completed the final loop under Rally2.

Niall Maguire spun on S.S. 1 and jammed his Ford Fiesta R5 between the fences, he also slid into a bank on S.S. 3. Tim McNulty had no digital display on the dashboard of his Ford Fiesta R5 for both the second and third stages.

On the repeat loop, there was little between the Moffett brothers with Josh quickest on S.S. 4 and 5 while Sam punched in the best time through S. S. 6 to trail by 7.2 seconds. Gass was best of the rest - some 52.5 seconds further adrift, having spun on S.S. 4. Earlier, Barrable had leapfrogged the Armagh driver and was 5.7 seconds ahead until his VW Polo GTi punctured a rear left wheel on S.S. 6 with some four kilometres remaining of the stage. At the final service, he trailed Gass by 13.6 seconds.

Seamus Leonard (Fiesta R5) in fifth backed off towards the end of the sixth stage due to the amount of stones that were scattered on the roads due to the drivers making cuts. Cumiskey and Barrett were next, the latter caught the Fiesta R5 of Joe McGonigle, who had spun earlier on S.S. 4.

Tourish in eighth moved into the lead of the modified section, the final top ten places were occupied by Tim McNulty and Dessie Kennan, the latter reckoning a change of tyres cost him the category lead. Stephen Wright (Fiesta R5) punctured S.S. 4 and lost more time when the jack fell as they attempted to change the wheel.

Out on the final loop, Josh set the seal on his third win in as many rounds. He was quickest on stages seven and eight, the final stage was cancelled due to timing issues as Josh claimed a 12 second victory over his brother Josh. Gass won the battle for third even though Barrable had cut 13.6 second deficit to 8.8 on S.S. 8.

Leonard and Cumiskey rounded out the top six. Paul Barrett (Fiesta R5) came home seventh ahead of the similar car of Tim McNulty. The top ten was completed by the Escorts of Damien Tourish and Dessie Keenan.

1. Josh Moffett/Jason McKenna (Hyundai i20 R5) 50m. 59.5s
2. Sam Moffett/Keith Moriarty (Ford Fiesta WRC)+12s
3. Darren Gass/Barry McNulty (Citroen C3 Rally2)+1m. 23.5s
4. Robert Barrable/Paddy Robinson (VW Polo GTi R5)+1m. 32.3s

5. Seamus Leonard/John McCaffrey (Ford Fiesta R5)+2m. 17.1s
6. Brendan Cumiskey/Daragh Mullen (VW Polo GTi R5)+2m. 40.6s
7. Paul Barrett/Kevin Reilly (Ford Fiesta R5)+2m. 41s
8. Tim McNulty/Paul Kiely (Ford Fiesta R5)+2m. 47.0s
9. Damien Tourish/Domhnall McAlaney (Ford Escort)+2m. 47.5s
10. Dessie Keenan/Enda Sherry (Ford Escort)+2m. 56.9s.

Provisional Championship Positions after Round 3: 1. J. Moffett 61 points; 2. D. Gass 47pts; 3. R. Barrable 33pts.

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