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The Valleys await the FST

Round 3 of the VK Fiesta Sporting **Trophy** UK series takes place next Saturday 31 May 2008 as crews head into Wales for the first time for the mid-point of the season event - The Severn Valley Clubman's Rally. The event based at Builth Wells showground will give competitors over 45 miles of classic Welsh forestry stages.

17 registered crews will take to the start of the event, with James Everard (22) from Hull currently leading the series. After two consistent points finishes on the first two rounds, the FST UK regular finds himself leading the championship with new co-driver Sam Collis. The pair have found extra speed and confidence in 2008 and this has rewarded them with their current championship position.

Liam Regan (20) from Belfast is currently lying second in the standings and he returns to the event with Neil Dashfield reading the notes. Regan has stepped up his game this year with two top-four finishes on the previous two rounds and he will be hoping to score well on this event. Being only five points adrift on the championship leader Everard, the young Northern Irishman will be hoping to snatch the series lead by the end of the rally.

Third in the standings is the young Welshman Elfyn Evans (19), from Machynlleth. Evans is currently leading the Irish FST championship and will be partnered by his regular navigator Gareth Roberts. Evans is making an impressive mark on both series and, without an unfortunate mechanical problem on the first round, he could well have been leading both the UK and Irish championships at this point in the year. Team-mate to Elfyn, Meilyr Evans, will also be hoping for a successful result and has shown increased pace on both the UK and Irish rounds to date, culminating in a podium position in Killarney, a clean run on the event could see him take another top-three spot.

Another series regular Max Utting (22) holds fourth place in the championship. Max has had an unlucky start to the season with a number of punctures denying him of possible podium positions, however he has driven well despite the problems and has been rewarded with a good haul of points. Utting will be without his regular navigator Jemma Bellingham as she is competing in the Barbados Rally Carnival. Also missing from Builth Wells next weekend will be championship sponsor Steve Perez, who will also be competing in Barbados with his Ford Focus WRC. The FST UK TV presenter Howard Davies will also be out in the Caribbean swapping his microphone for pacenotes and navigating for Perez.

Holding fifth in the series is 2007 Irish FST champion Alastair Fisher (19) from Trillick, Co. Tyrone. Fisher will be partnered as usual by Paul Morris, and after a non-finish on Round 1 and a win on the previous round, the Pirelli National, Fisher will have one aim and that is to take the victory. Fisher will also be competing on the Jim Clark Memorial Rally before the event in his quest to secure a place in the Pirelli 'Star Driver' competition.

Other drivers of interest to watch are Kris Hall (18) from Appleby, Hall has shown a positive pace from the word go in the championship and is creeping ever closer to the podium spots. Round one winner Stevie Brown (20) from Peterhead will compete the rally in his freshly rebuilt Fiesta after a roll on the Pirelli. Brown also won his class on the recent Granite City Rally, where he beat fellow FST UK driver Alick Kerr (19) from Bothwell by a margin of one second. Kerr will be aiming to score some points after a non-start on the Pirelli following an engine problem diagnosed only hours before the event began.

The third round sees the arrival of two new crews: Tom Walster (21) from Nottingham is well known to the championship and returns with an aim to make a late charge for the overall championship title, it will be a tough challenge with only four rounds remaining but could still be

possibility. The second new crew is that of Dez Rowland, from Bedfordshire who will be partnered by Martin Abbot. Rowland has been treated to an entry into the rally by his family as a birthday present.

Registered crews are competing for a prize fund of £17,550 over the course of the year, with the winner on each round taking home £750, down to £75 for eighth position – an impressive total of £2,295 on each round of the series.

FST championship leader James Everard said:

“The Used-Garage-Equipment team are happy with the preparation for the event, Sam and I are raring to go on Round 3 of the VK Fiesta Sporting Trophy UK. We will be attacking the Severn Valley Stages rally with the intention of taking a third consecutive podium finish to stay at the front of this years championship.”

Championship standings

Position	Driver	Points
1	James Everard / Sam Collis	47
2	Liam Regan / Neil Dashfield	42
3	Elfyn Evans / Gareth Roberts	38
4	Max Utting / Jemma Bellingham	31
5	Alastair Fisher / Paul Morris	30
6	Stevie Brown / Ian Morrison	30
7	Meilyr Evans / Andrew Edwards	28
8	John Lloyd / Mark Egglestone	26
9	Kyle Orr / Tony McDaid	20
10	Richard Archer / Matthew Whattam	19
11	Barry Greer / John Lemon	18
12	Kris Hall / Chris Ridge	16
13	Alick Kerr / Drew Sturrock	14
14	Nick Edwards / Mark Ammonds	11
15	Luke Francis / Chris Jones	11
16	Phillip Liddle / Alex Procter	10
17	Richard Parry – Jones / Sara Price	9
18	Clive Hilton / Martyn Taylor	-
19	Andrew Wheatley / Glenn Patterson	-

For further information on the Fiesta Sporting Trophy UK, please contact UK series co-ordinator Richard Millener on millener@m-sport.co.uk

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