

For immediate release, 28 September 2007

Fiestas take to the roads of Spain for fun in the sun

Having settled the Fiesta Sporting**Trophy** International (FSTi) championship on last month's ADAC Rallye Deutschland, 2007 Champions Barry Clark (25) and co-driver Scott Martin (25) will arrive for Rally Catalunya next weekend (4 -7 October) with the intention of gaining further tarmac experience in their GpN Fiesta ST. The British Stobart Motorsport crew have been a dominating force in the one-make championship, winning all five 2007 rounds to date. Even though the pressure to win has been removed, Clark will be sure to push for his sixth consecutive win.

The seven-round series follows the FIA World Rally Championship calendar and Rally Catalunya is the sixth and penultimate round of the competitive FSTi championship. Spain will be the second of two tarmac events in 2007 for the crews in their identical 2-litre GpN cars, and will be followed by the gravel forest stages of Wales Rally GB in November.

After one year of being held in the spring, Rally Catalunya returns to its traditional Autumn fixture. Based in the PortAventura Theme Park in the popular tourist destination of Salou, the rally is considered to be the smoothest of the asphalt events in the WRC, with sweeping roads providing the fastest sealed-surface stages of the season. Driving technique pays dividends in Spain, as the pilots aim for smooth lines through the fast turns to maximise their speeds. Fiesta drivers may face slightly more uncertain conditions, as the World Rally Cars at the front of the field cut the corners, dragging gravel onto the road for the cars behind them. Drivers will need to have instant reactions and well-researched pace notes.

As part of the reward for his phenomenal dominance in the 2007 FSTi, Clark has been invited to put the 2006 spec BP-Ford Focus WRC car through its paces in front of thousands of spectators during the inaugural running of the Rally Show at Chatsworth in the UK (29-30 September). Having already received a guaranteed entry in the FST International Shootout in December to compete against top FST drivers from around the world at M-Sport, M-Sport Managing Director Malcolm Wilson intends to boost the Scot's prize to form a more complete package as such opportunities present themselves.

Lithuanians Vytautas Baranauskas (23) and co-driver Gediminas Celiešius (35) will be pushing hard to challenge for their first win of the season. The crew have been swapping fastest times with Clark throughout the year, and have demonstrated that they have the pace to challenge the champion.

Joining FSTi for the first time from the FST Canary Islands championship will be Jose Maria Santana (18) and co-driver Luis Hernandez (25). The Canaries driver is currently the youngest in Spanish rallying, having only obtained his driving licence one week before the start of the season. Born into a rallying family, he currently stands seventh overall in the FST Canary Islands championship and has been fighting for the top-three positions on every rally this year.

The Fiesta service area will also see the welcome addition of Heriberto Godoy (35) and co-driver Jose Yeray Diaz (29) in the FST Canary Island E85 Bio-Ethanol Fiesta ST. Bio-Ethanol is a mix of ethanol, a highly flammable liquid which can be manufactured by

fermenting a wide variety of agricultural produce, including forest residue, sugar cane, sugar beet or grain, and then mixed with normal petrol. The mix is defined by the codename – E85 – being 85% ethanol and 15% petrol. Godoy received this drive as a prize for winning the 2006 FST Canary Islands championship and is currently leading Class 3 of the Canary Islands National Championship. As FSTi intends to run all cars on E85 in 2008, this should be an interesting one to watch, although it will not be eligible for FSTi points this year.

2007 FSTi Champion Barry Clark said:

"It's going to be a busy, but exciting, couple of weeks for Scott [Martin] and I. I'm really proud to have been asked by M-Sport to step in and drive the Ford Focus at Chatsworth, and I think the fact that I have dominated and won FSTi has proved that I'm capable of doing a sensible job for the team. Scott will be co-driving in the FST UK series on the McRae Stages while I'm at Chatsworth and the next weekend is the rally in Spain, which I'm really looking forward to. Any pressure to win the championship has now gone and we can just have fun. Vytautas [Baranauskas] has stepped up his game as the season has progressed; neither of us have anything to lose, so I'm anticipating a full-on battle for the win!"

Vytautas Baranauskas said:

"Barry [Clark] has driven an amazing season this year and I have enjoyed racing against him. I think that my driving has improved very much and I have been able to go faster than Barry on some stages. Now I have to concentrate on making fewer mistakes and maintaining my speed. I am very pleased to be in second place and am excited about my entry in the M-Sport International Shootout in December, but I will try to win before then."

Championship standings after round 5 of 7

			NOR	POR	SAR	FIN	GER	SPA	GB	TOTAL*
1	B CLARK	GBR	10	10	10	10	10			50
2	V BARANAUSKAS	LIT	DNF	6	4	8	8			26
3	E VERTUNOV	RUS	8	5	8	-	-	-		21
4	S HUGHES	GBR	5	8	6	-	-	-		19
5	G BARBATI	ITA	-	4	5	-	-	-		9
6	S BIELTVEDT	NOR	6	-	-	-	-	-		6
7	M MONTEIRO	POR	-	3	-	-	-	-		3
8	J M SANTANA	SPA	-	-	-	-	-			-

*6 of 7 scores to count

Event specifics

Total distance: 1359.96 km
 Number of stages: 18
 Stage distance: 352.87 km
 Stage surface: Asphalt
 Longest stage: 26.51 km (SS16/18)

For further information, please contact Fiesta Sporting Trophy International Co-ordinator, Kate Rhodes, on +44 (0) 7894 622 492 or krhodes@m-sport.co.uk. Copyright free images available at www.fiestasportingtrophy.com.