

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Matthew Wilson to drive Ford Abu Dhabi WRT Fiesta RS WRC at Rallyday 2011

Rallyday is pleased to confirm that M-Sport Stobart Ford World Rally Team driver Matthew Wilson will pilot the Ford Abu Dhabi-livered Fiesta RS WRC car at the UK's premier rally car show at Castle Combe Circuit on Saturday 17th September.

Matthew's attendance means that both of Britain's top WRC drivers will be at Wiltshire's annual rally extravaganza, as Kris Meeke's participation with the MINI WRC Team was announced last week.

Matthew will head to the event fresh from competing on Rally Australia (September 8-11), the tenth round in the 2011 FIA World Rally Championship, where he finished fourth - equally his career-best result. To date this season the 24-year-old has scored points in eight of the ten events and he is currently seventh in the standings with 52 points on the board, leaving him just 4 points behind team-mate, Mads Østberg and ahead of both former F1 World Champion Kimi Räikkönen and his other M-Sport Stobart Ford colleague Henning Solberg.

"I'm delighted to be attending this year's Rallyday at Castle Combe," said Matthew. "I was at 2009's event alongside my Dad [M-Sport Managing Director, Malcolm Wilson] and both the spectators and the atmosphere were incredible.

"As a British rally driver I always like to be able to support rally events such as Castle Combe but sometimes it can be difficult with my busy schedule competing in the WRC. It'll be great to attend this year's event with the new-for-2011 Ford Fiesta RS WRC - I can't wait to entertain the spectators with our car."

Rallyday organisers, Brian Stubbings and Darin Frow are both pleased to see Matthew return following his outings at the event in 2007 and 2009.

"I'm really pleased to see Matt back at Rallyday this year," said Darin. "He was hugely entertaining when he drove the Ford Focus RS WRC at Rallyday 2009, and I'm sure he'll have everyone cheering again when he's behind the wheel of the new Ford Fiesta RS WRC.

"In fact it will be a very special Rallyday for us seeing him alongside Kris in the MINI WRT John Cooper Works WRC - two of the UK's top WRC drivers in two current WRC cars!"

Matthew and Kris won't be the only top British rally drivers' in attendance however, as Subaru Rally Team USA driver David Higgins will also put in an appearance, along with his co-driver, Craig Drew.

David and Craig won the 2011 Rally America National Championship back in the summer in their BFGoodrich Tires-shod 2011 Subaru Impreza WRX STI rally car. The 2011 title is the third for David in the USA having won the SCCA ProRally Championship in 2002 and 2003. He also won the British Rally Championship in 2004 and enjoyed much success in the Chinese Rally Championship from 2007 to 2010.

“After all the years Rallyday has been going this will actually be the first time I have had the chance to go,” David remarked. “My last five or six years has mainly been taken up competing in events outside the UK - in either America or China. It will actually be quite nice to be involved in something in the UK for a change. It is so easy when you are away so much competing overseas to fall out of touch with the British motorsport scene, but everybody loves watching the historic cars and seeing some of the old stuff - and obviously it will also be good to see the new MINI John Cooper Works WRC car at this year’s Rallyday as well the all-new Fiesta RS WRC. I am just looking forward to the whole day.”

The addition of Matthew and David completes the star-studded roster for Rallyday 2011. Other rally celebrities already confirmed include, as mentioned previously, MINI WRT Team pilot, Kris Meeke, as well as ex-WRC works ace Harri Rovanperä (who will drive MML Sports’ new R4 Mitsubishi Lancer EvolutionX) and former British Rally Champions Jimmy McRae, Russell Brookes and Gwyndaf Evans. Top Gear’s former Stig, Ben Collins is also going to put in an appearance, there to raise funds and awareness for the Race2Recovery campaign, which has set itself a challenging goal: to compete in, and finish, the 2013 Dakar Rally and in the process, raise £2m for wounded British servicemen and their families.

“We are very pleased with how everything has come together and can’t wait to see all the different cars, new and old, at the show. Having two current WRC teams at the show is absolutely incredible. There is certainly more to see and do at the show than ever before plus we are very excited about the dedicated 4x4 Rally Raid Zone, which should be a real hit with the spectators. We’d like to thank all the drivers, teams and traders for their support and wish them an enjoyable Rallyday 2011,” Brian concluded.

Spectator tickets for Rallyday 2011 cost £20 per adult on the gate. Accompanied children under 16 can enter for FREE.

For more information visit: www.rallyday.com <<http://www.rallyday.com/>>

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