

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## MINI WRC Team and Kris Meeke to attend Rallyday 2011

Rallyday is delighted to announce that the MINI WRC Team will appear at the UK's premier rally car show at Castle Combe circuit on Saturday 17th September, with Britain's Kris Meeke putting the MINI John Cooper Works WRC car through its paces in the Castrol-sponsored Feature Rally Stage.

Rallyday will give UK rally fans a chance to get up close to the MINI John Cooper Works WRC car ahead of the MINI WRC Team's first competitive outing in the UK in November, when the Prodrive-run outfit tackles Wales Rally GB, the final round in the 2011 FIA World Rally Championship.

MINI officially announced its come comeback last July, with the MINI John Cooper Works WRC car based on the MINI Countryman. This season MINI has opted to take in six FIA World Rally Championship events ahead of a full campaign in 2012 and already the Banbury-based outfit has had fantastic success, with Meeke's team-mate, Dani Sordo securing a brilliant third place finish on the recent ADAC Rallye Deutschland, the ninth round in the 2011 World Rally Championship and only MINI's third WRC event and its very first on asphalt.

Meeke, who is one of Britain's top rally drivers and who of course won the Intercontinental Rally Challenge in 2009, will attend two weeks ahead of the MINI WRC Team's fourth WRC outing of the year on Rallye de France Alsace from 29th September to 1st October.

"The last time I was at the Rallyday was seven years ago so to come back after all this time and debut the MINI will be pretty special," said Meeke, a former protégé of the late great Colin McRae. "It will also be my first time back in the car since Rallye Deutschland, so it will be great to get some more time behind the wheel on tarmac as we build up to our next events in France and Spain. We'll be using the event to do some further development of the car, but I'll also be looking to have some fun and to entertain the crowds too."

Rallyday organisers, Brian Stubbings and Darin Frow are both extremely pleased that the MINI WRC Team will appear at the event with Kris Meeke.

The news follows on from confirmation that the Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team will attend with the new Fiesta RS WRC car (driver to be announced shortly), as well as the appearance of 'Flying Finn' and former WRC works ace Harri Rovanperä, who will drive MML Sports' new R4 Mitsubishi Lancer EvolutionX.

"We are delighted MINI can attend the show this year, especially as it's their first year back in the FIA World Rally Championship," Brian said. "Rallyday is always about a mixture of historic and current World Rally Cars and having the MINI John Cooper Works WRC car there brings it bang up to date."

"MINI is a name synonymous with rallying so it's fantastic to have the team at Rallyday, and having another current WRC manufacturer in the paddock will be another great new attraction for all the spectators," Darin added.

Meanwhile, other highlights planned for Rallyday 2011 include a collection of very rare original Sierra Cosworth Rally Cars, with former British Rally Champion's Jimmy McRae, Russell Brookes and Gwyndaf Evans being reunited with the cars they originally campaigned in the 1980's.

The event has also expanded to include a new dedicated 4x4 Rally Raid Zone this year, featuring Qt Wildcats, Challenge driving demos, club displays, trade stands and more.

Ben Collins – some say he was the Stig from Top Gear – will also be with the Qt Wildcats in the 4x4 area to raise funds and awareness for the Race2Recovery Team, several members of which were recently featured on Top Gear's last show of the hit TV series. Ben will also do a live interview at Rallyday along with the team of injured servicemen who are on a campaign to compete on the gruelling Dakar Rally in 2013. There will also be a very limited number of Qt Wildcat rides available with Ben for £250 with all proceeds going to Race2Recovery. These specific rides are advance booking only. See the official Rallyday website for more information.

As usual all the action will be commentated on by Rallyday host extraordinaire, 1972 RAC winning co-driver and former Top Gear presenter Tony Mason.

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) <<http://www.rallyday.com>>

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