



Seventh Heaven for McGarrity- Down Rally win for Camillus Bradley!
Round Eight-2016 MSA ANICC McGrady Insurance Northern Ireland Rally Championship

The Rathfriland Motor Club's Down Rally provided a fitting climax to the Northern Ireland Rally Championship's year. Clerk of the Course Paul Biggerstaff and his team had laid on six closed road special stages, which would decide the title between Derek McGarrity in his Fiesta WRC, and Camillus Bradley in his MK2 Escort. For McGarrity, seventh or better was all he needed to ensure his record breaking seventh title, but after two stages he was a lowly twenty-sixth, suffering from a severely misted windscreen in the saturated opening stages. With Camillus Bradley leading from start to finish, the pressure was on McGarrity as the driver from Mossley on the outskirts of Belfast climbed back to an eventual third overall, claiming that amazing seventh title. *"It's fantastic to get the Northern Ireland Championship title again. The stages were very good on this rally, but it's hard to describe how much water was on them this morning. Even so a car like this shouldn't have misted up, but at least we had none of our engine problems on this event, and once we could see where we were going, we could make our move back up. A big thanks to James O'Reilly in the co-driver's seat today, and to the team for their efforts all year"* said Derek.

Camillus Bradley drove valiantly all day, his 2.5 Escort skimming through the initial wet tests, to fend off a day long challenge from the similar machine of Damian Toner. Just over eight seconds after six stages was the margin. *"I didn't even think about the championship until the third stage and it nearly put me off my stride!"* said Camillus. *"We had a good battle today with Damian, the car ran perfectly and it was great to get the win. There was nothing more we could do about the championship."* Holding third until the final loop was Brendan Cumiskey in his R5 Fiesta, but he got stuck in a ditch on stage five, whilst Kenny McKinstry ended the event in fourth despite serious gear-change issues afflicting the S14 Impreza. Davy Armstrong had held third for the first three tests in his MK2 Escort, before going off the road on stage four. Another early casualty was Wesley Patterson who crashed on stage two. Surviving all the drama to take a fine fifth was John Devlin in his two litre Sunbeam, with Alastair Cochrane in his MK2 Escort sixth a result which sees him clinch the championship class. It was a fine result for the Bushmills farmer, who's farming duties, meant that he had no time complete a pre-event recce.

Gilford's Marty Taggart ended the day in seventh, just ahead of Omagh's Alan Smyth in the Swift S1600. Alan clinched class four in the McGrady Insurance NI Championship, despite a few dramas during the day including bending the rear suspension badly on stage two and re-arranging a front corner on stage three. However he held on with championship rival Kyle White also a fine eleventh overall in his C2 R2 Max. Another challenger Adam Bustard retired his Fiesta R2 on the road section between stages three and four.

Keith White in his 2.5 MK1 Escort, and Marty Toner in his rebuild Sunbeam completed the top ten, as Clive Kilpatrick dropped out of ninth when he went off on the final test. This provisionally means that the Group N NI Champion is Colm McFall who ended the rally in a competitive twelfth overall and first in the class. Another Group N runner to show well was local driver William Herron, up to eleventh at one point, and finishing the day seventeenth, just behind championship sponsor Fintan McGrady.

Andy Johnson in the Vauxhall Chevette HSR took Historic honours ahead of Drew Wylie's MK2 Escort RS1800. However Drew clinched the championship title. Class three winner Colin Price also clinched his championship class in the nimble Vauxhall Corsa.

Other important class winners on the Down Rally included Janice Magee who won class eight with the big Audi, and Malcolm Pedlow who took class eleven Historic honours on the day and in the series in his BMW 2002 tii.

2016 McGrady Insurance MSA ANICC Northern Ireland Rally Championship—Round 8 Results

1 st	Camillus Bradley / Crawford Henderson	Ford Escort MK2	41:38.3
2 nd	Damian Toner / Denver Rafferty	Ford Escort MK2	+0:08.7
3 rd	Derek McGarrity / James O'Reilly	Ford Fiesta WRC	+0:30.1
4 th	Kenny McKinstry / Noel Orr	Subaru Impreza S14	+0:51.0
5 th	John Devlin / John McCarthy	Talbot Sunbeam	+1:17.8
6 th	Alastair Cochrane / Gary McElhinney	Ford Escort MK2	+1:24.1
7 th	Martin Taggart / Dessie Wilson	Ford Escort Mk2	+1:28.9
8 th	Alan Smyth / Mac Kierans	Suzuki Swift S1600	+1:34.4
9 th	Keith White / Damien McCabe	Ford Escort Mk1	+1:52.8
10 th	Martin Toner / Sharon Clarke	Talbot Sunbeam	+2:03.0

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