

Early despair but promising pace for Hockridge

Phweli based Andrew Hockridge suffered at the cruel hand of fate when a loose cattle grid ripped apart the fuel tank on his Citroen C2R2 less than half way into the opening stage of last weekends Jim Clark international Rally. Although Andrew returned on the second day to set a string of top 3 times the damage had been done by missing the whole of leg 1 and he was eventually classified seventh in the Citroen C2R2cup.

Andrew, who is co driven by fellow Welshman Tony Derrick in the Gino's Pizza Cheese supported Citroen, had arrived at the start in Kelso in a confidence frame of mind, following a recent tarmac test on the Isle of Man. The winners of the opening round of the 2008 Citroen C2R2cup had been hoping to be challenging for top 3 class times from the outset but when a loose cattle grid flicked up and hit the bottom of the car mid way through the opening run of Abbey St Bathans, the fuel tank was ruptured and the little GRH Foods backed C2 ground to a halt shortly afterwards.

Although they were able to return to action for the second day the Geoff Jones Motorsport assisted pair had accumulated massive penalties for missing 12 stages. Over the 5 stages on the final day Andrew showed his true pace, consistently inside the top 3 and his times would have been good enough to have placed him second overall amongst the little pocket rockets!

Obviously I am disappointed that our rally ended so early. We were in confident spirits and our times on the second day showed that we had the pace to run at the front. Apart from the problem with the fuel tank being damaged by the grid the car was faultless all weekend and behaved really well over the jumps and crests, so now we just have to focus on the Isle of Man and hope we have a good run there.

Although Andrew and Tony were only classified seventh in class they are still in the thick of the title fight, a mere two points off the lead of the championship. Next up for the pair is the Isle of Man International Rally. After setting times that were quicker than those of a Super 1600 on their last visit to the island Andrew will be hoping for a similar run when they return in July.

For more on Andrew please visit www.andrew-hockridge.co.uk
For more on the British Championship please visit www.rallybrc.co.uk