



press release

PEREZ PIPPED FOR VICTORY ON BORDER COUNTIES RALLY

Kick Energy rally driver Steve Perez was denied his second win of the month by the smallest of margins when he just missed out on victory on today's Brick & Steel Border Counties Rally which comprised round two of the 2009 Pirelli MSA Gravel Rally Championship.

Driving the ex Marcus Grönholm Ford Focus RS WRC 07, the Chesterfield businessman, along with Welsh co driver Paul Spooner, held the overnight lead by over half a minute after the two Friday night stages in Wauchope Forest and was continuing his charge in the fast and dusty stages of Kielder Forest to lead after SS4 by 28 seconds over defending ANCRO Champions Marcus Dodd and Andrew Bargery (Hyundai Accent WRC

But it was on the event's fifth stage that saw Perez lose the lead when he overshot a junction and dropped over half a minute which saw Dodd claim the lead.

Thereafter, a titanic battle between the two former National Champions ensued over the final couple of tests but at the Jedburgh finish, Perez just missed out on repeating his Malcolm Wilson Rally win a fortnight ago, by a mere 5.7 seconds after nearly an hour of competition.

"My experience of night driving on the Roger Albert Clark Rally paid dividends and we had a good lead overnight but we lost time to Marcus on stage three before we took some back on stage four. I wish the whole rally was in the dark!"

"On SS5, the tyres seemed to go off and after a square right, we just went off with an overshoot and lost about thirty seconds which ultimately cost us the rally."

"We had a problem with the handbrake in the last two stages, it was loose, but I'm pleased to have beaten Paul Bird so he owes me some champagne now! I'm glad to be back up there but I'm a bit disappointed to lose the rally by such a small margin."

Perez's next outing is next weekend when he tackles the opening round of the British Historic Rally Championship in the venerable Lancia Stratos on the Bulldog Rally in mid-Wales.

Results

- 1 Marcus Dodd/Andrew Bargery (Hyundai Accent WRC) 57:33.7
- 2 Steve Perez/Paul Spooner (Ford Focus WRC 07) 57:39.4**
- 3 Paul Bird/Ian Windress (Ford Focus WRC 07) 57:58.2
- 4 Daniel Barry/Martin Brady (Mitsubishi Evo 9) 59:09.9
- 5 Simon Hughes/Craig Parry (Mitsubishi Evo 9) 59:56.4
- 6 Willie Bonniwell/Neil Ewing (Subaru Impreza) 1:00:16.0
- 7 Alan Cookson/Julian Wilkinson (Subaru Impreza WRC) 1:02:16.2
- 8 Owen Murphy/Dai Roberts (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9) 1:03:22.4
- 9 Alan Carmichael/Ivor Lamont (Mitsubishi Evo 9) 1:05:08.4
- 10 Nik Elsmore/Craig Drew (Mitsubishi Evo 9) 1:05:53.0

Provisional Championship Positions (after round 2)

- 1 Daniel Barry 41
- 2 Simon Hughes 38
- 3 Alan Cookson 33
- 4 Nik Elsmore 32
- 5 Owen Murphy 31
- 6 Alan Carmichael 29
- 7 Marcus Dodd 26
- 8 Sean Devine 25
- 9 Steve Perez 23**
- 10 Paul Bird 21

