

SPORT

Ingram's inspired as the rally returns

By Phil James

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Thousands of fans flocked to Garstang and the surrounding area for the Legend Fires North West Stages Rally as closed-road motorsport returned to Lancashire lanes.

The rally, in partnership with Simpson's Skoda and ND Civils, raises thousands of pounds for charity and is the biggest event of its kind in the North West.

Spectators filled Garstang's High Street on Friday evening for the ceremonial start before heading out to watch the special stages on Saturday.

The High Street was packed again on Saturday evening to see 2019 European Rally Champion Chris Ingram and co-driver Craig Drew celebrate victory in their Skoda Fabia Rally2.

Their win was predicted but wasn't without incident as a high-speed spin on the Long Knots stage, near Chipping, ended with the Skoda nose diving into a hedge.

Incidents on the first Nicky Nook stage, particularly one involving the VW Polo of Jason Pritchard and Phil Clarke, resulted in the stage being cancelled but further runs proceeded as scheduled. In an extremely tough event, 46 of the 125 starters did not finish.

Ingram won by 52 seconds from the second-placed Ford Fiesta Rally2 of Scots duo Paul McKinnon and Paul Beaton, while Leyland's Mark Kelly and co-driver Neil Col-



Chris Ingram and co-driver Craig Drew won the Legend Fires North West Stages Rally in their Skoda Fabia Rally2 Picture: www.pro-rally.co.uk

man from Darlington finished third in their Fiesta R5.

Hambleton duo Simon Bowen and Richard Robinson claimed bragging rights among the strong contingent of Blackpool South Shore Motor Club entrants.

They brought their Ford

Fiesta S2000T home sixth, three places ahead of the VW Polo GTi R5 of John Stone and Tom Woodburn.

Fleetwood's Mark Holmes and Craig Simkiss finished 13th in their Fiesta S2000, two places ahead of Pilling's Neil Wearden and

co-driver Mark Fisher, who took the top Class C Award in their Hyundai i20 F2. Another Hambleton crew, Paul Murro and Callum Cross, finished 19th in a Fiesta R5.

Blackpool's Benson brothers, Dave and Steve, won the second in Class B Awards in

their Honda Civic.

The event went ahead thanks to the co-operation of Wyre Council, Lancaster City Council, Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council, Garstang Town Council and parish councils throughout the route.

Win's no flash in pan hope Lightning

Lightning B gave themselves a slight chance of avoiding the wooden spoon in the Blackpool and District Badminton Association with their first division one victory over relegation rivals Kingfisher B.

They were helped by Kingfisher forfeiting eight games because of a missing player.

Kingfisher's Tim Chetwood won five of his eight games but player of the match was Rob Cockerill with five wins from six.

Also recording their first win were Lids in division two. They edged past Kirkham Charter B after Helena Lempur and James Norman won the final set after the match had been tied at 11-11.

Kirkham moved 10-6 ahead before Wan Desmond and Mark Green took the next four games. Green was player of the match with eight wins, while Kirkham's Anita Driscoll won six.

Hesketh Fleetwood B's return to division one as champions was confirmed by a 22-2 win over Stanley B, maintaining their 100 per cent record. Percy, Percy and Percival each had eight wins.

The exciting second v third match between Stanley A and Project 12 ended 12-12.

Stanley edged the levels 7-5 thanks to five wins for their men. They moved 11-9 up only for Project's Kat Platt and Jon Jackson to win the crucial penultimate set. Reehan Khan, Sarah Coultas and Platt all had six wins.

Levels leaders Hesketh Fleetwood A made it eight straight wins against Lids as Mino Mandahar won eight games. Hesketh Fleetwood B are up to second after beating Bloomfield 11-5 in a tight match. Mandahar's eight wins made it 16 in two matches.

Hats off to debutant Will in boss Rowe's fine start

SPENNYMOOR TOWN 0 AFC FYLDE 1

A debut goal by Will Hatfield sealed three points for the Coasters and avenged this season's FA Cup defeat at Brewery Field.

The midfielder's 65th-minute strike from Tom Walker's cross made it 10 points from four National League North games for new boss James Rowe.

New signing Hatfield and Luke Conlan replaced David Perkins and Nick Haughton in the starting line-up, with Sam Osborne on the bench after injury.

Hatfield, whose move from Darlington was confirmed hours before kick-off, had an early chance but his effort from the edge of the box was blocked.

At the other end, Chris

Neal saved from Glen Taylor and tipped away Luke Spokes' effort at full-stretch.

Neal's opposite number Jordan Amissah saved Jorrome Slew's strike with his foot and denied Conlan, then was relieved to see the ball fly over the bar after a clearance straight to Stephen Dobbie.

Moments later, Hatfield stretched out a leg to meet Walker's cross and divert the

ball past Amissah, who later denied Osborne.

Fylde now have a five-point cushion in third place ahead of Saturday's trip to manager Rowe's former club Gloucester City.

AFC Fylde: Neal, Morrison, Davis (Obi 18), Stott, Tollitt, Conlan, Joyce, Hatfield, Philliskirk, Walker (Osborne 75), Slew (Dobbie 60); **Subs not used:** Evans, Gregson.

Spennymoor: Amissah, Pye, Tait, Taylor, Ramshaw, Oyibo (Hall 71), Preston, Curtis, Richardson (Ofosu 83), Spokes, Thewlis; **Subs not used:** Flatters, Mason, Chandler.



Will Hatfield scores Fylde's winner at Spennymoor Picture: STEVE McLELLAN