

Crowds out in force for rallying's big weekend

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The weekend weather brought thousands of fans to Garstang and the surrounding area for the Legend Fires North West Stages Rally in partnership with Simpson's Skoda and ND Civils as closed-road motorsport returned to the Lancashire lanes.

The rally raises thousands of pounds for charitable causes is the biggest event of its kind in the North West.

Spectators filled Garstang's High Street on Friday evening for the ceremonial start.

The High Street was packed with fans again on Saturday evening to see 2019 European Rally Champion Chris Ingram and co-driver Craig Drew spray the champagne having taken victory in their Skoda Fabia Rally2.

Whilst their victory was widely predicted it wasn't without incident. A high-speed spin on the Long Knots stage near Chipping ended with the Skoda nose diving into a hedge.

Earlier in the day a number of incidents occurred on the first Nicky Nook stage, the most notable involving the VW Polo of Jason Pritchard and Phil Clarke.

By the finish Ingram had a 52 second lead over the second placed Ford Fiesta Rally2 of Scots duo Paul McKinnon and Paul Beaton while Leyland's Mark Kelly and co-driver Neil Colman from Darlington finished third in their Fiesta R5.

Hambleton duo Simon



Legend Fires North West Stages Rally winners Chris Ingram (right) and Craig Drew (photos: Phil James/Quentin James)

Bowen and Richard Robinson claimed the bragging rights amongst the strong contingent of Blackpool South Shore Motor Club members who contested the event.

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 S2000two 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 Murre 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 but it didn't end well for all the Fylde Coast entrants.

Thornton's Adrian Atkin-

son and co-driver Dave Riley from Blackpool were forced to retire their Mitsubishi Lancer Evo6 and an ignition issue halted the Ford Escort Mk1 of Lytham St Annes duo Roy Wadley and Steve Wilson.

Racer Herd targets more joy after a year of success

A Preston racing driver is hoping his success of last year does not prove to be beginner's luck.

Andy Herd competed in his first ever racing championship in 2021 at the grand old age of 38.

And the daredevil showed that age is no barrier as he secured a super second-placed finish in the No Limits Super Twins Club Championship.

He is now hoping to fol-

low that by going one better this year and he has also set his sights on bigger achievements, dipping his toe in road racing with the final goal of racing in Ireland and at Isle of Man's famous Manx Cup.

First, though, he has the small matter of making sure his Kawasaki 650 CC twin cylinder is in optimum shape.

Between the no limits rounds he will be dipping his toe into real road racing,

events similar to the Isle of Man, held on closed roads. There are a number of these events held in Ireland

Herd said: "In late November 2021, I rolled open the workshop doors to take a long hard look at the bike that had carried me to some fantastic results through the 2021 season," said Herd, who works during the day as a gas engineer.

"It had been a tough year

following numerous crashes at numerous tracks, the damage sustained to it was quite bad.

"At the start of the year, the bike was in pristine condition. Everything brand new, shiny and clean.

"Now, looking at it, it's full of scuffs dents, broken panels. I grabbed the notepad and started writing down the long list of parts I needed to buy before stripping the bike down to

put it back to its former glory." This season the championship will take him to circuits all over the country, including Snetterton, Anglesey, Brands Hatch, Donington Park, Cadwell Park and Croft.

The No Limits Championships is also holding an eight-hour endurance race at Oulton Park, which Herd is set to enter riding his BMW 1000RR Superbike.

"The bike has had a full a

full strip down, right back to a bare frame and rebuilt," he said.

"Every nut and bolt that's needed replacing has been changed everything repainted every part inspected to ensure it's ready."

Herd thanked his sponsors ALC Steel, owned and run by Ashley Cornall. He also thanked his father Steve, who has also provided financial support.