

# NORTH WEST STAGES

Garstang  
19 March 2022.  
Stages: 14 (13 actual) Stage Miles: 60.  
Starters: 125. Finishers: 79.  
Organisers: Motor Sport (North West) Ltd.



## Ingram Takes North West Win!

**Chris Ingram and Craig Drew christened their new partnership by bringing their Skoda Fabia Rally2 to victory at the Legend Fires North West Stages after heading the standings throughout the day over the closed road stages. Phil James reports...**

Bright sunshine and clear blue skies promised perfect conditions for the rally that was comprised of three legs with a scheduled 14 stages and two interim services at Myerscough College.

Ingram immediately laid down his marker, stopping the clocks 11 seconds up on closest challengers Paul MacKinnon and Paul Beaton through the opening 4.85 miles of Beacon Fell. The Scots crew reckoned to be making a cautious start competing in the Ford Fiesta R5 in which Stephen Petch won the previous week's Malcolm Wilson Rally but were still three seconds quicker than Neil Simpson and Michael Gibson's Fabia Rally2.

Tying for fourth place a further second behind were Jason Pritchard and Phil Clark in a hired VW Polo GTI R5 with the Fiesta R5 of David Wright and Paula Swinscoe. Frank Bird and Jack Morton dropped around 15 seconds after spinning their Fiesta R5 and ending up broadside across a narrow road and finished the test 16th fastest.

Ingram extended his lead through SS2 Long Knots before the stage was stopped when the Skoda Fabia Proto of Paul Wedgbury and Neil Dashfield hit a tree and the car caught fire. Most crews were awarded a notional time as they were directed to SS3 Hawthornthwaite, a fast flowing stage over open moorland, where Ingram



extended his lead over MacKinnon to 23 seconds. Simpson recovered third place from Pritchard as Wright retained fifth maintaining his five second advantage over Mark Kelly and Neil Colman's similar car.

More Fiestas filled the remaining top 10 places with Steve Wood and Dale Bowen's WRC in seventh place, trailing Kelly by nine seconds but a second up on Neil Roskell and Andrew Roughead's R5. Simon Bowen and Richard Robinson's S2000T was two seconds behind while Bird, albeit a further nine seconds in arrears, was now 10th.

Next came Nicky Nook, a tight, twisty, undulating 4.69 mile test that was to upset the rankings. Pritchard, running

at car 2, had a heavy crash while a spin left Wright damage free but unable to regain the road. Some 15 cars were given notional times and the stage was restarted after a lengthy delay allowing the next 30 cars to tackle the test competitively. The Escort MkII of Chris Ford and Matty Daniels then crashed and organisers elected to call a halt to proceedings, awarding more notional times and re-directing all remaining crews to first service.

Arriving at Myerscough, the top three order of Ingram, MacKinnon and Simpson remained intact with Kelly and Wood promoted to fourth and fifth respectively. A high pressure fuel pump issue had forced Roskell to miss Nicky Nook, effectively ending his day though he did continue under super rally rules.



Bowen and Bird now took occupancy of sixth and seventh places while Tom Preston/Carl Williamson (Fiesta Rally2), Joe Cunningham/Josh Beer (Fiesta R5) and Darren Atkinson/Phil Sandham (Escort MkII) completed the top 10 places.

Leg 2 got underway with the 2.47 miles of Lewth where Simpson, Kelly and MacKinnon all got within a second of Ingram's fastest stage time. Wood slipped back falling between Bowen and Bird while David Henderson and Chris Lees, their Fiesta R5 sticking throttle problem now sorted, were up to eighth, a second ahead of the tying Cunningham and Preston.

Ingram was fastest over Beacon Fell 2 to move 42 seconds clear of MacKinnon, but a spin following a jump on Long Knots 2 ended with the Fabia coming to rest in a hedge and his lead was cut by 16 seconds. The leading pair then swapped times through Hawthornthwaite 2 and Nicky Nook 2 reaching second service separated by 28 seconds.

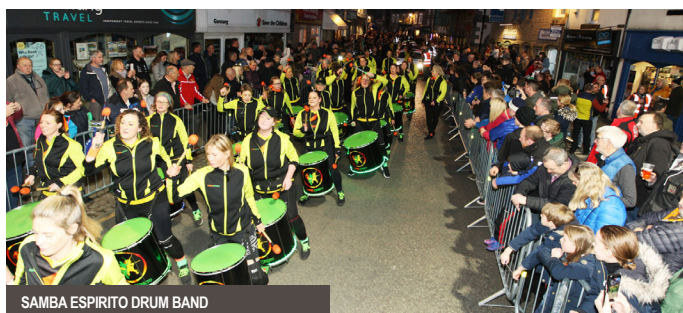
Simpson and Kelly held station though the Skoda pilot's nine second advantage had now been reduced to three as the Fiesta driver began to pile on the pressure. Bird now had the upper hand over Bowen while Wood was settled in seventh but more problems came Henderson's way as he had to stop and change a puncture

in Nicky Nook before ending his rally with a loss of fifth gear. Preston, Cunningham and Atkinson completed the top 10 rankings.

Lewth 2 was scheduled to start the final Leg but was cancelled to avoid a possible issue with road closure times and so third visits to Beacon Fell, Long Knots, Hawthornthwaite and Nicky Nook would now complete the rally.

*"Preston crashed out in Beacon Fell 3 while an off in Hawthornthwaite ended Atkinson's run."*

All of the top seven crews came through unscathed and in unchanged order but Preston crashed out in Beacon Fell 3 while an off in Hawthornthwaite ended Atkinson's run, enabling Cunningham to claim eighth. Despite having to complete the final leg with their VW Polo GTI R5 suffering a launch control problem, John Stone and Tom Woodburn finished ninth while Jonathan Mounsey and Richard Wardle completed the top 10 in their Fiesta Rally2.



### Top 25

- 1 Christopher Ingram/  
Craig Drew Skoda  
Fabia 51m27s
- 2 Paul MacKinnon/  
Paul Beaton Ford  
Fiesta Rally 2 52m19s
- 3 Mark Kelly/Neil  
Colman Ford Fiesta  
R5 52m35s
- 4 Neil Simpson/  
Michael Gibson Skoda  
Fabia Rally2 52m51s
- 5 Frank Bird/Jack  
Morton Ford Fiesta  
Rally2 53m28s
- 6 Simon Bowen/  
Richard Robinson  
Ford Fiesta S2000T  
53m45s
- 7 Steve Wood/Dale  
Bowen Ford Fiesta  
WRC 54m34s
- 8 Joe Cunningham/  
Josh Beer Ford Fiesta  
55m11s
- 9 John Stone/Tom  
Woodburn VW Polo  
GTI R5 55m15s
- 10 Jonathan Mounsey/  
Richard Wardle Ford  
Fiesta Rally 2 55m21s
- 11 Wayne Sisson/  
Peredur Davies  
Mitsubishi Evo X  
56m09s
- 12 Stephen Simpson/  
Patrick Walsh Ford  
Fiesta Rally2 56m25s
- 13 Mark Holmes/Craig  
Simkiss Ford Fiesta  
S2000 58m07s
- 14 Kyle Adam/Steven  
Brown Ford Escort  
Mk2 58m20s
- 15 Neil Wearden/Mark  
Fisher Hyundai i20 F2  
58m57s
- 16 Bradley Howlett/  
Nick Vandevenne  
Peugeot 208 R2  
58m59s
- 17 Joe McKeand/  
Charlotte McDowall  
Subaru Impreza  
59m08s
- 18 Nigel Worswick/  
Chris Williams Ford  
Fiesta S2000T  
59m08s
- 19 Paul Murro/Callum  
Cross Ford Fiesta R5  
59m10s
- 20 Gerry Fittelle/Mark  
Mason Ford Escort  
59m13s
- 21 Brad Cole/Jamie  
Vaughan Ford Escort  
59m34s
- 22 Mark Borthwick/  
Harrison Malin Ford  
Escort 59m51s
- 23 Graham Coffey/  
Sion Cunniff Ford  
Fiesta S2000 Turbo  
59m55s
- 24 Martin Hodgson/  
Tony Jones Ford  
Escort Mk2 1h00m16s
- 25 Nathan Evans/Rhys  
Williams Edwards  
Renault Clio Cup  
1h00m37s



### Results

- 26 Howard Price/  
Simon John Rogers  
Mitsubishi Evo 9  
1h00m44s
- 27 Phil Turner/Terry  
Martin Ford Escort RS  
1h00m45s
- 28 Fraser Anderson/  
Harry Marchbank  
Ford Fiesta Rally 4  
1h00m48s
- 29 Oliver Hunter/  
Jonathon Kennedy  
Ford Escort 1h01m04s
- 30 Steve Cotton/  
Martin Ogelsby Subaru  
Impreza RS 1h01m09s
- 31 Adrian Spencer/  
Lauren Hewitt Subaru  
Impreza 1h01m20s
- 32 Gordon  
Cunningham/  
Charley Sayer-Payne  
Mitsubishi Evo  
1h01m23s
- 33 Chris Melling/  
Andrew Peak  
Mitsubishi Evo IX  
1h01m34s
- 34 Ben Crumplin/  
Beaumont Ford Escort  
1h01m37s
- 35 Mike Simpson/Dale  
Gibbons Ford Escort  
Mk1 1h01m54s
- 36 Lee Vivian/Dave  
Robson Ford Fiesta  
Rally 2 1h02m04s
- 37 David Benson/  
Steven Benson Honda  
Civic EK4 1h02m20s
- 38 John Deegan/  
Pauline Merrills  
Subaru Justy  
1h02m24s
- 39 Mark Constantine/  
Andrew Constantine  
Vauxhall Corsa  
1h02m28s
- 40 Tommi Meadows/  
Liam Johnson Ford  
Fiesta R2 1h02m29s
- 41 Lewis Gatt/Callum  
Young Ford Mk2  
Escort 1h02m30s
- 42 Steve Kenyon/  
Jonathan Lee Cragg  
Mitsubishi Lancer Evo  
5 1h02m46s
- 43 Carl Tuer/Rob  
Tuer Renault Clio R3T  
1h03m19s
- 44 Rupert Flynn/Osian  
Owen Ford Fiesta  
1h03m22s
- 45 Geoff Roberts/Ian  
Jones Ford Escort  
RS1800 1h03m44s
- 46 Jim McDowall/  
Shona Hale Subaru  
Impreza 1h03m49s
- 47 George Merrills/  
Colin Blunt Honda  
Civic Type-R  
1h03m51s
- 48 Dave Thwaites/  
Tony Edwards Ford  
Escort Mk2 1h03m54s
- 49 Bervyn Evans/Ifan  
Devine Ford Escort  
1h04m11s
- 50 Mike East/Glyn  
Thomas Ford Fiesta  
R2 1h04m22s
- 51 Graham Muter/  
Steve Hallmark Ford  
Escort 1h04m25s