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# Garstang revs up for top rally

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The Legend Fires North West Stages Rally arrives in Garstang this weekend as the elite of British and Irish rally crews contest the opening round of the 2024 British Rally Championship.

The rally, staged in partnership with ND Civils and Kelmores, begins with a ceremonial start on Garstang's High Street on Friday evening around 6.30pm.

Saturday's action starts from rally headquarters at Myerscough College at 8.40am as competitors then head to the closed-road special stages.

These include the Nicky Nook Stage, to the east of Garstang, which gets underway at 11am and is repeated at 3.30pm.

Spectator parking is available on Ray Lane.

For the Long Knotts Stage, at 9.20am and 1.45pm, parking is provided at Chipping Show Ground.

Spectators are advised to arrive 30 minutes before all scheduled stage times.

Leading the field away as Car 1 is 2022 winner Chris Ingram from Cheshire and his American co-driver Alex Kihurani in a Volkswagen Polo GTi R5.



Neil Roskell (Ford Fiesta Rally2) and James Ford (Citroen C3 Rally2, inset) will compete in the NW Stages Rally Photo: [www.pro-rally.co.uk](http://www.pro-rally.co.uk)

They will be followed by Ireland's Keith Cronin and Mikie Galvin and Welsh duo Osian Pryce and Rhodri Evans, both crews competing in a Ford Fiesta Rally2.

Another to look out for is Max McRae. The Australian belongs to Scotland's most famous rally family.

Max is the son of Alister,

nephew of Colin and grandson of Jimmy, all former British rally champions.

Max is also competing in a Fiesta Rally2 and is seeded Car 21, just ahead of the Volkswagen Polo GTi R5 of Blackpool South Shore Motor Club member John Stone.

Garstang & Preston Motor Club drivers will be battling for

top-10 finishes, among them James Ford in his Citroen C3 Rally2 and Neil Roskell and Mark Kelly, who are both in Ford Fiestas.

The 130-car field includes more than 20 local drivers.

Saturday's champagne-spraying finish is scheduled to take place at Garstang's Cherestanc Square at 4pm.

The rally, which raises thousands of pounds for charities, is going ahead thanks to the co-operation of Wyre Council, Lancaster City Council, Preston City Council, Lancashire County Council, Ribbles Valley Borough Council, Garstang Town Council and Parish Councils throughout the route.

## Josh pair seals a big Ridge win

Longridge Town won 4-2 at Barnoldswick Town in the North West Counties Football League on Saturday, scoring twice in each half.

Goals by Luke Smith on 14 minutes and Malick Diakite Tanou two minutes later made it 2-0 at half-time in this Premier Division clash.

A second-half brace by Joshua Winder sealed victory, though Barlick's Gareth Hill twice reduced the Longridge lead to a single goal.

Leighton Hewitt and Jack Anderton returned to the Ridge side beaten by Isle of Man in their previous encounter.

Town took the lead when Smith reacted first to Jack Anderton's deflected shot, then Tanou cut in from the left to fire in off a post.

Hill pulled one back from the penalty spot on 56 minutes, after Sam Langford had been pulled back.

Substitute Winder tapped in a cross by Anderton to make it 3-1 on 69 minutes only for Hill to peg Ridge back again three minutes later.

The points were sealed two minutes from time, when Smith's volley from a free-kick was turned into the top corner by Winder.

Longridge remain 20th but are now 14 points clear of the relegation zone after two wins in three. They hope their visit to Prestwich Heys finally goes ahead this Tuesday.

They then host Charnock Richard on Saturday.

Garstang were without a game in First Division North last weekend and slipped into the bottom three after AFC Blackpool won at Steeton.

Garstang return to action this Saturday away to mid-table Ashton Athletic.

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