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## 2010 HRCR MOTOSCOPE Northern Historic Rally Championship

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After two rounds in the forests, the 2010 HRCR MOTOSCOPE Northern Historic Rally Championship moved to the closed tarmac roads surrounding the border town of Duns for the JIM CLARK Historic Rally.

The event, which joined the championship last year saw a superb battle between Steve Magson- Opel Ascona and Charlie Taylor- Ford Escort Mk 2 with Magson finally taking victory by 58 seconds.

12 championship crews had entered, but when the cars lined up at the first control outside Berwickshire High School, last years winner Steve Magson's Opel Ascona was missing. On the way from the Kelso service area the differential had broken and he and co-driver Geoff Atkinson were forced to retire without having even done a competitive mile.

It was left to current championship leaders Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby to lead the event away into the first of 9 special stages, a short 1.20mile blast through the streets of Duns. He got through the stage cleanly with no repeat of last years spin at the first corner to lie 2nd O/A, 0.5 seconds behind the non registered driver Darren Moon- Ford Escort Mk 2.

Stage 2 took the crews onto the longest stage of the rally, the 14.90miles of Abbey St Bathans. This stage starts at the furthest end of Berwickshire and winds its way over some of the most technical miles of the whole rally, narrow lanes, unseen crests and severe bumps are all a feature of this iconic test. The stage then runs up onto the moors before narrowing again before the finish.

Charlie Taylor was fastest of the championship crews but had lost time to overall leader Darren Moon who had caught and passed him in the stage.

The final stage of the opening leg was the 4.23 mile Polwarth stage which featured a mixture of fast stuff and technical bits and of course all being done in the dark.

Charlie Taylor redeemed himself after the previous stage and set 3rd fastest time as the crews returned to the overnight halt at Kelso Racecourse.

Robin Shuttleworth/Ronnie Roughead had been third away in their Ford Escort RS2000 and completed the first stage 7th fastest with a time of 1.36.6, but their rally would end half way through SS2: Abbey St Bathans. "We stopped in the stage with a gearbox problem and had very few tools in the car, we then put the clutch down and it jammed so couldn't put a new gearbox in without changing the clutch. Changed the clutch overnight but couldn't select any gears." Robin said

Having finished 5th of the championship crews on the 2009 event, husband and wife crew George/Jacqueline Bryson were back in their Ford Escort Twincam making a full weekend competing on both the championship round and the Reivers Rally being held on the Sunday. They led class C3 following the retirement of Robin Shuttleworth after SS2. The long Abbey St Bathans stage saw them slide on a patch of water and go off but with no damage they carried on to end the first leg 2nd of the championship crews.

On the second leg, George admitted he had not woken up but there were no problems to report and at the end of the historic rally they took their best result finishing 2nd of the championship crews (6th O/A) and winning Category 2. On the Reivers Rally they finished 71st O/A and 6th in Class.

David Thirlwell/Dean Grabham, who missed the second round, brought their usual 'Old Gold' replica Ford Escort Mk 1 and had a good opening leg with a few minor problems including the navigator losing his place in the notes and suffering half shaft problems. They were 5th at the end of the leg having found the conditions quite slippery and returned to Kelso with an extra passenger. David cleaned the headlights, discovering a moth in there. At the finish they were 5th O/A and also won their class.

David Marshall who had won Class C5 in the 2009 championship was back in his usual Ford Escort RS1600 but with a different navigator in Miles Cartwright as regular partner Chris Hudson was unavailable due to work commitments.

Miles who had guided Andrew Frost to victory in Class C2 in the 2009 championship was celebrating his 40th anniversary in the sport after doing his first rally in a Saab 96 in 1970. "Not many people have been around one sport for 40 years" he said. On the rally, the first leg they were away steadily and found conditions quite slippery but enjoyed the stages apart from the Polwarth test (SS3) as David said his eyesight was not as good as it used to be. Despite this they ended the first leg 6th O/A and leader of Class C5. On Leg 2 he was much happier in the daylight, but the day saw him run out of brakes at the end of the day and also a wire came off the starter, but 5th O/A and Class victory, plus another good points score made up for the problems suffered earlier in the day.

Hoping for a better in event than in 2009 when he put the car on its roof, Peter Humphrey with son Douglas on the notes in their Opel Kadett GTE started well with 6th fastest on the opening stage. They moved up to 3rd after SS2 having suffered no problems unlike others ending the opening leg 4th O/A. The second leg also went well with their only problem being a faulty fuel switch and instead of being upside down they finished the right way up, 3rd O/A and 1st in Class D3.

Another crew who were doing both the Championship round and the Reivers Rally were Tony Thompson/Paul Hudson in their Vauxhall Chevette HSR. Having gained good points scores on the opening two rounds and a class win last time out, they came to this round lying 5th in the championship. Tony was hoping to have his tarmac car ready for this event but stuck with the same car instead. The opening stage through Duns saw them 4th fastest with a time of 1.33.3. A big slide on the same patch of water that caught a few people out gave them a fright in SS2, and SS3 saw them 6th fastest reaching the overnight halt 8th O/A. "Enjoyed it so far but lost all the brakes!" Tony said. On the second leg they lost the brakes again and everything was fine until SS9 when they didn't appear at the finish having parked up with a

broken differential. As they were doing the Reivers on the following day, they took the car back to Morpeth to the workshop and repaired the car allowing them to complete the Reivers finishing 69th O/A and 6th in Class.

Having repaired his car after rolling on the opening round, Paul/Daniel May (below left) were back in their Ford Escort Mexico. The rally started well for them with 9th fastest on the opening stage but they would not see the finish after a peg broke on the distributor causing them to go no further.

Lying 10th in the championship standing, having taken 10th O/A and 1st in class on the previous round, the 'Tango TI' crew of Ian Coulson/Joe Jones (above right) started very well. Ian was slightly hampered driving with a broken finger from the Thursday before the rally but it didn't seem to affect his driving. "Loving it!!" he said at the end of the opening leg. "Don't want to stop tonight would love to carry on through the rest of the night."

The second leg saw them suffer gearbox/clutch problems and the car kept stalling, they missed a junction in one stage and struggled to get reverse costing about a minute, but apart from that they gained a finish with unfortunately a 10 second penalty for booking into the final regroup control 1 minute late.

Martin Knapp/Mike Robinson, who had been 14th away from the startline were much happier on the tarmac than in the forests. "This car was built for tarmac, forget the gravel, it's superb!" Martin said at the end of the opening leg where they were 12th O/A. The second leg saw them have no major problems and they spent the day catching the two Talbot Sunbeams. During the final stages they clipped a bale and put a dent in the navigators door and wiped off the rear wheel arch, but were very pleased after a superb weekend finishing 14th O/A and 2nd in Class D3.

The final car to leave the startline had been the red Talbot Sunbeam of Mike Kent/Shawn Leggott, who were hoping for a finish having retired on the opening round when the car expired. After a steady start on the opening stage they moved up a place by taking 8 seconds off the Triumph TR7 of Martin Knapp through the 14.90 miles of Abbey St Bathans to end the opening leg 15th O/A.

"Could not get into the event, driver not fast enough and not on song and lights are not very good." said Mike.

The second leg unfortunately only lasted two stages with the car stopping in Duns on the road section when it tried to set itself on fire when the engine was trying to be started and the crew called it a day.

## Results

**1** Charlie Taylor/Steve Bielby (Ford Escort Mk 2) 1.14.10 **2** George/Jacqueline Bryson (Ford Escort Twincam) 1.22.25 **3** Peter/Douglas Humphrey (Opel Kadett GTE) 1.23.34 **4** David Marshall/Miles Cartwright (Ford Escort RS1600) 1.24.57 **5** David Thirlwell/Dean Grabham (Ford Escort Mk 1) 1.24.59 **6** Ian Coulson/Joe Jones (Talbot Sunbeam TI) 1.29.21 **7** Martin Knapp/Mike Robinson (Triumph TR7 16V) 1.32.31

The championship crews now return to the forests for the legendary RSAC Scottish Historic Rally. Steve Magson took victory last year but after two retirements on the last two rounds he is taking a break until the TRACKROD (Rd 6). Championship leader Charlie Taylor is also missing the Scottish so who will be taking top points when the crews return to Dumfries after 6 stages through the Scottish forests?

Round 3 Results and overall Championship points

Drivers Championship

Charlie Taylor	135
Robin Shuttleworth	75
Roger Kilty	75
Ian Coulson	71
Barry Jordan	67

Co-Drivers Championship

Steve Bielby	135
Ronnie Roughead	75
Lynette Banks	75
Joe Jones	71
Jaime Gratton-Smith	67

Category Winners:

Category 1: no starters

Category 2: George/Jacqueline Bryson

Category 3: Taylor/Bielby

Class Winners:

Class C1: Thirlwell/Grabham

Class C3: Bryson/Bryson

Class D2: Coulson/Jones

Class D3: Humphrey/Humphrey

Class D4: no finishers

Class D5: Taylor/Bielby

Championship points, event pictures and information are available on the championship website [www.motoscope.co.uk/nhrc2010.htm](http://www.motoscope.co.uk/nhrc2010.htm)

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