**Deazley & Deazley storm to first win on new-format Safari**

Gareth Deazley navigated by father Raymond stormed to their first Safari win last Friday night. With no Ni Championship this year Clerk of the Course [CofC] Drew Wilson opted for a very competitor-friendly event, running only Classes 2, 3 and 4 i.e. Semi-Experts, Novices and Beginners. His formula reaped just rewards with 18 entries and 16 starters. While this may be in sharp contrast to the 100 entries of the early seventies, these are different times for Navigation Rallying and over the last five years The Erne Safari has consistently hosted the largest entry in N Ireland. This year’s rally, sponsored by Elite Tyres & Service, featured some veterans and previous champions on the entry list, including Malcolm McQueen and Ciaran Carey. Local husband and wife crew Aideen and Brian McGirr, who were Class 4 Champions in the N Ireland Championship last year, were back in their ever- reliable Toyota Avensis, this time upgraded to Class 3. Class 4 had many of the ten entries out ‘on Safari’ for the very first time. These included Glen and Philip Verner [Vauxhall Vectra], father and son Mark and 12-year Kyle Thompson [Hyundai Santa Fe], Bryan Gallagher/Gary McGlone [VW Passat] and Ian Thompson navigating for the first time with Drew Chambers [Peugeot 206] whilst 2014 EMC Champion Navigator Darren Flanagan was navigated by Emma Allen in the hot seat for her first rally [Subaru Impreza]. One other notable entry was Brian Hoy sitting with Peter Jennings in Peter’s EVO 10. Brian is normally to be found co-driving on International and National Tarmac and Forestry rallies and this was his first foray into night navigation rallying.

Veteran competitors John and Jonathan Henderson were the first car away at 9.01pm from MCAleer’s Filling Station on the Dromore Road Irvinestown and after 55 miles over the tight and twisty terrain of north and north-east Fermanagh all crews landed back safely to the finish in Mahon’s Hotel in Irvinestown. Dropping just one minute into Secret Check 6 the winning crew of Gareth and Raymond Deazley, in their Seat Leon, were declared the Overall Winners. [Class 4 were using a marked map for this Clubman event]. Second overall, four points behind, in their rapid little Nova were Ciaran Carey and James Woods whilst Third overall, a further 13 points back, were Peter Jennings and Brian Hoy in their immaculate Evo 10.

First in Class 2 went to the Nissan Micra crew of John and Jonathan Henderson. First in Class 3 went to Carey/Woods, second were McQueen/Campbell [Mazda MX5] while Aideen and Brian McGirr took third. Class 4 was clinched by the Deazleys with Jennings/Hoy in second and Glen and Philip Verner taking third. Young Kyle Thompson navigated Dad, Mark to fifth in Class 4 on the first navigation rally for both of them.

At the prize-giving Clerk of the Course, Wilson, gave credit to his organising team of Martin McGarrity [Deputy CofC], Wendy Blackledge [Event Secretary] and Jackie Elliott [Results Officer]. He also thanked sponsor Fabian McAleer of Elite Tyres & Service for his continued support and thanked all the competitors and officials for turning out on such a wet and windy night to pursue the grassroots sport of Night Navigation Rallying in Fermanagh.

For complete run-down of results see EMC’s website and Facebook page. The next navigation rally is Dungannon Motor Club’s event on Friday 11th March see: anicc.org.uk for details or DMC’s Facebook page.

Enniskillen Motor Club’s next event is The Erne Skip Hire and Recycling May Day Stages Rally on St Angelo Airfield on May 2nd.