

Resort duo succeed... just by finishing

NICKY Grist is widely regarded as one of Britain's, if not the world's, top rally co-drivers of all time having partnered such famous drivers as Juha Kankkunen, Colin McRae and Cumbria's Malcolm Wilson.

It comes as no surprise then that the rally bearing the Welshman's name, The Nicky Grist Stages, runs over some of the principality's most iconic stages that form part of Wales Rally GB, Britain's round of the World Rally Championship.

Last weekend's Builth Wells-based rally was made up of eight special stages that included Monument, Crychan, Halfway and the fast flowing Route 60 over the Epynt Ranges to provide competitors with a truly testing and challenging route.

It was a challenge a pair of Blackpool South Shore Motor Club



TRUE GRIST: Robert Kennedy and Steve Coombes tackle the Crychan stage of the Nicky Grist Stages in their Nissan Micra

PICTURE: www.pro-rally.co.uk

members couldn't resist and both proved up to the task by reaching the finish, a feat more than a third of the 124 car entry failed to manage.

St. Annes teenager Robert Kennedy

was contesting the smallest class in the rally in his 998cc Nissan Micra, with the experienced Steve Coombes from Preston alongside reading the notes. An overshoot on the second

test cost them 10 seconds, but they clawed it back and by the start of the eighth and final stage were on equal times with championship rivals Jon and John Steer from Warminster. Unfortunately the Steers Micra proved six seconds quicker leaving Kennedy and Coombes fourth in class and still waiting for that elusive podium finish in Class RF1.0.

James Ford, from Greenhalgh, took a break from his British Rally Championship Challenge campaign by swapping seats and co-driving Matthew Jackson in his more powerful Super 1000cc Nissan Micra. The pair enjoyed a trouble free run and ended the day as 1400C Class runners-up. Ford will be back behind the wheel of his Citroen C2R2 Max on the next BRC Challenge round, next month's Ulster Rally.

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