

win

A TRIP FOR TWO TO SOL RALLY BARBADOS 2011 & 12 DAYS OF SUN-SOAKED MOTOR SPORT ACTION



Thanks to the Barbados Rally Club, you can join the Caribbean's top rally drivers for a mix of sun, sea and special stages as they fight to retain bragging rights against an international invasion

The package includes:

- return economy flights on Virgin Atlantic from London Gatwick
- accommodation for 12 nights (26 May to 6 June 2011)
- rental car for your stay
- official Sol Rally Barbados souvenir magazines
- official Sol Rally Barbados polo shirts
- invitations to the Sol Rally Barbados Welcome Party
- tickets to the VIP Pavilion on Day 1 of Sol Rally Barbados

For more information, visit www.rallybarbados.bb



HOW TO WIN

To be in with a chance of winning this fantastic package, go to www.rallybarbados.bb/rtbrunwildmedia.com, access the online entry form and answer the questions. The closing date for entries is 31 March, 2011.

Terms and Conditions: the competition is open to UK residents aged 18 or over, and closes at 23:59 on 31 March 2011. Entries received thereafter will be discarded. The prize is non-transferable, must be taken on the published dates, and there is no cash alternative. The promoter reserves the right to withdraw or amend this promotion. Employees and directors of RunWild Media Group and the Barbados Rally Club, their subsidiaries and affiliates, agents, dealers and their immediate family or household members are not eligible to enter. By entering this competition you agree to your details being used by RunWild Media Group and the Barbados Rally Club for promotional purposes.

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WHITE SAND . . .

. . . and white knuckles go hand in hand, as rally crews tackle the Caribbean's biggest annual motor sport international. *Mark Wheeler* finds out more about Sol Rally Barbados

Asksed what sort of sporting activity you'd expect to find on the small Caribbean island of Barbados, it's a fair bet that most people would feel pretty confident going for diving, surfing, swimming, perhaps yachting . . . and cricket, of course.

Very few would tick the box marked 'motor sport', and even those that did would be surprised to find it is comfortably the most popular spectator sport in the island, and does remarkably well in the participation stakes too; last year, the island's governing body, the Barbados Motoring Federation, issued around 350 competition licences. Per head of the population, that represents almost double the 35,000 issued in Britain.

There have been cars on the island since the early 1900s and the Barbados Rally Club (BRC), which celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 2007, is the longest-established club devoted to a sport that does not involve a ball; in that time, the BRC has run race meetings, dexterity events, kart racing, navigational and stage rallies.

These days, its blue riband event is Sol Rally Barbados (4 and 5 June 2011). From small beginnings in 1990 as a one-day rally for 30 or so local crews, Rally Barbados - it

was renamed in 2003 - has grown into the Caribbean's biggest annual motor sport international; one of the region's strongest sporting brand names, particularly for European visitors, it is a major contributor to the island's foreign exchange earnings.

As 'conventional' tourism, a vital component of the island's economy, has been increasingly battered in the wake of the worldwide recession, niche-market tourism has grown, with sports tourism a key player. Sol Rally Barbados enjoys significant support from the Barbados Tourism Authority, the Barbados Hotel & Tourism Association and the Tourism Development Corporation, as well as corporate Barbados, thanks to its annual injection of around \$1.1 million US dollars to the island's economy at a traditionally slow time of year. There is also the extensive television air time it generates. Since Sol RB2010, Motors TV has broadcast 24 hours of coverage in six languages to more than 18 million households subscribing by satellite, cable and ADSL in 59 countries across Europe and the African sub-continent.

A two-day tarmac rally, with 24 special stages run under road closure orders, Sol Rally Barbados follows the previous weekend's Saturday Scrutineering and Sunday

Shell V-Power King of the Hill 'shakedown', a chance for overseas visitors to accustom themselves to the quirky qualities of local tarmac . . . and it ain't half slippery. There's even a rally stage in this tropical island (where nicknames are a part of everyday life) known as 'Iceland'!

Sol Rally Barbados 2010 marked the 20th Anniversary of the BRC's first International All-Stage Rally - it has hosted 235 overseas competitors from 19 countries over those two decades and helped put Barbados on the map in motor sport communities worldwide. Among entries already received on-line (www.rallybarbados.bb) are five first-timers from Europe, so passing the 250 mark looks like a given.

With its intricate road network of around 1,400 miles, Barbados lends itself to tarmac rallying, while the local fans make overseas competitors more than welcome, helping to sustain the island's long-standing tradition of repeat visitors. Of the 180 competitors from Europe who have rallied in Barbados in recent years, more than 20 have been at least four times, one has competed for ten consecutive years - testament, perhaps, to the quality of that welcome - or, perhaps, the quality of the local rum! ■