

## SOL RALLY BARBADOS COMPETITION WINNER

Pacenotes owner Simon Mooney celebrates with Mark Hughes (left) on the fantastic news!



# Mark Hughes Wins Trip Of A Lifetime!

*Congratulations to Armagh's Mark Hughes who has won the Pacenotes Competition for a trip for two to this year's Sol Rally Barbados!*

**Event organisers contacted** the Pacenotes office the day before we went to print to inform us that 23-year-old Mark was the winner. Out of more than 1000 entries, his name was randomly selected by the Barbados Rally Club, and he couldn't quite believe his luck.

However, Neil Barnard, the Public Relations Officer for Barbados Rally Club, had trouble getting in touch with the winner when his name was drawn. Neil had to resort to an email and a message on Facebook, leading the stunned Mark to believe it was a wind-up!

"I thought it was either someone having a joke or some sort of scam," Mark laughed. "So I phoned Pacenotes editor at

nearly 11pm, and he confirmed that it was true. I don't think it will sink in until I'm on the plane!"

Mark's VIP prize includes return air fares from London Gatwick on Virgin Atlantic, accommodation for 12 nights (26 May – 6 June) plus a rental car. And as the prize is for two people, Mark is going to take his brother Richard with him.

Mark is a true rally fan, having been interested in the sport from a young age. A stage of the Ulster Rally passed close to his home when he was a nipper, and since then, he has been hooked on the sport.

"I've managed to roll a car on that same stage!" Mark exclaimed. "I was driving a

Metro and the front brakes stopped working. I braked for a square right, and the tail swung out. It clipped a bank and rolled."

"I climbed out through the back window and pushed her back onto her wheels," he continued. "But road sloped slightly downwards...so then she rolled slowly down the slope and into a hedge!"

Mark is also known for the video clips which he uploads to YouTube under the guise of MRH-Motorsport. So hopefully we can all look forward to seeing some fantastic footage from this year's Sol Rally Barbados!

Congratulations Mark!



## Barbados Hits 100!

**Sol Rally Barbados**, which takes place on 4/5 June, has reached the new overall entry cap of 100 on Thursday, but Barbados Rally Club is urging those still keen to take part to go online and enter before Friday May 6.

"Our decision to increase the maximum start list to 100 was largely made to ensure that we could accommodate the continued regional and international interest," said Sol Rally Barbados Chairman Barry Gale.

"Of this year's overseas crews, nine are new to the event, and we have not experienced the level of withdrawals we saw in 2010. By this time last year, we had lost six of the early overseas entries, all through financial pressures. This year we have lost just two."

For the first time, there are entries from Australia and Germany - are heading for the island to take on what could be the biggest-ever local representation in the BRC's blue riband event.

Competitors on both sides of the Atlantic are hard at work preparing for the event. England's Rob Swann has been testing a Subaru Impreza WRC S12 for his step up to the Modified 8-WRC class from Group N, which he won in both Barbados and Rally Jamaica last year.

Although his day at the Llandow race circuit in South Wales was affected by rain, he was delighted with his progress.

"It was a wet test to start, but dried later in the day, giving a good all-round feel for the car in different conditions," Swann said. "After some slow runs to acclimatise, we did some launch starts and some fast runs of the circuit - the grip and balance of the car was amazing; compared with my N14, the biggest difference is in power delivery and braking."

Closer to the rally's home, Rally Trinidad (April 1-3) gave Bajan Sean Gill a second chance to weigh up some of the opposition in his Suzuki, albeit on the loose not tarmac. Having finished second to local ace Gary Gregg (Ford Focus WRC05) in Jamaica last December, he finished second in Trinidad to Gregg's fellow countryman Jeff Pantone (Focus WRC).

Trinidad-based Jamaican John Powell finished an impressive third overall with his Evo X, comfortably winning Group N from David Coelho (Evo IX) and Stuart Johnson (Impreza N12). All three are expected in Barbados, although Powell, who is yet to enter, should be back in his Impreza WRC S12.

This year's Sol Rally Barbados is the 22nd running of the Club's annual International All-Stage Rally, and marks the start of a second three-year term of title sponsorship by the Sol Group, the Caribbean's largest independent oil company.

