

As this issue of Pacenotes hits your High Street newsagent, the closing date for Sol Rally Barbados 2013 will be three months away, but Rally Chairman Barry Gale has already been urging potential entrants to go on to the official web site (www.rallybarbados.net) and get their entries in NOW... because the capped entry of 100 was nearly three-quarters full as we closed for press.

More than that, a County Mayo travel agent has organised the first-ever spectator package trip to the Caribbean's biggest annual motor sport international, reinforcing our own rally-mad island's link with another rally-mad island around 4,000 miles away.

Regular readers will know that Pacenotes has enjoyed a mutually beneficial partnership with the event in recent years, and there's exciting news to be confirmed in our March issue about our involvement for this year. We're proud to have played a part in the remarkable continuing growth in



Spectators follow Irish Crews to the Sun

Irish interest in the event, further details of which will also be revealed soon.

What we can confirm now is that the International crews new to the event for this year include 2012 Dunlop Irish National Tarmac Rally Championship class-winner Enda McCormack, also Tommy Doyle, who will drive Ford Escort MkII and Renault Clio R3 respectively, sponsored by McCormack Contracting Inc. The Escort has been built new for Sol RB13 by Philip Case Rallysport in County Donegal, where the Clio is currently undergoing a ground-up rebuild.

It will be only McCormack's second major rally in a two-wheel-

drive car and his co-driver will be Donegal's Kieran McElhinney. The Escort, which enjoyed a successful first test in November, is powered by a 292-horsepower, 2-litre Opel JRE racing engine, mated to a six-speed sequential gearbox.

Doyle and McCormack are close family friends and, as well as occasionally co-driving for McCormack, Doyle has also driven the Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX which McCormack rallies in the United States – he won Rally New York USA in 2011 and finished fourth in last year's Circuit of Munster Stages in Ireland; on both occasions, his co-driver was Millstreet's Liam Moynihan, who will be travelling with him to the

Caribbean.

Without revealing more secrets than the Barbados Rally Club (BRC) would like us to, more than 30 International entries had been received by our press time for this issue, with a healthy number of Irish crews, many of them new to the event.

From the BRC's point of view, however, motor sport plays an important part in the island's sport-tourism product, boosted this year by Flyaway Travel in County Mayo, which has created the first-ever trans-Atlantic package trip for Sol RB to carry the largest-ever non-competitor single group to the island, around 50 at the last count.

Flyaway's Ethna Rowland explained: "As a spectator myself, I always wanted to head to Barbados for the rally. After being put under pressure from friends who are also huge rally fans, most are members of the Galway Motor Club, I decided to look into it."

Barbados Rally Club PRO Neil Barnard is delighted: "This is amazing. Over the past two years, funded by the Tourism Development Corporation (TDC), we have vigorously promoted Sol Rally Barbados in Ireland, with significant growth in competitor numbers. Now, to have this surge of interest among spectators is just superb. With the help of the TDC, we were able to bring journalists to Barbados to publicise the event, also to offer a trip to Sol RB12 as a competition prize for marshals who worked at the Circuit of Ireland Rally, so this is a welcome endorsement of our marketing programme."

Anglias Double Up For Sol Rally Barbados...

Island rally fans who have been thrilled by the flamboyant antics of Scotland's Allan Mackay and his Ford Anglia WRC for the past three years will have twice the fun at Sol Rally Barbados 2013 (June 1/2), as his son Euan is entered to drive for the first time in what is dubbed the 'Anglia JWRC'.

Despite a combined age of more than 100, the two Anglia 105Es are among the most lively on the rally scene and promise more than enough sideways action to keep fans entertained. Euan says: "After my father competed in Barbados the first time, he came home and wouldn't shut up about

it, so I had to go see what the fuss was about!"

Mackay Snr won the hearts of the crowd on his first visit to the Caribbean's biggest annual motor sport International in 2010, despite retiring with bent steering. The former Scottish Tarmac Champion finished 29th overall in 2011, fourth in SuperModified 10, then 49th in Sol RB12, slipping a few places down the order in SM10. Once again, his co-driver will be Ireland's 'Mad Mo' Downey.

Owner of the Anglia WRC – the initials stand for Well-Run Car – since he was 14 years old, Allan gave another as a shell to his



Allan Mackay (left) and son Euan with the Ford Anglia WRC and Anglia JWRC at Rally Hebrides 2012, helping to raise funds for the Western Isles branch of Macmillan Cancer Support, some of whose nurses are with them

son one birthday. Euan explains: "I started navigating in the Anglia WRC for my Dad when I was 16, but soon got bored and wanted at the controls. I started doing sprints in the WRC, then got a Vauxhall Nova before me and my friends built my own Anglia and a Peugeot 106 Cup car from scratch."

Mackay Jnr's co-driver will

be fellow Scot Calum Macleod. He is happy on either side of the car, although his last experience driving, also on Mull, was less than successful: "I was competing there for the first time. While lying 40th overall, I slightly misjudged a wet corner on the sea front and ended up rolling into the sea in the middle of the night."