



21 February 2006

## **DERRY PUTS NORTH WEST CENTRE STAGE FOR THIS YEAR'S METEOR ELECTRICAL CIRCUIT OF IRELAND INTERNATIONAL RALLY**

The Meteor Electrical Circuit of Ireland International Rally, a well-known Easter tradition and Ireland's best-known rally, is to go ahead this year, despite rumours to the contrary.

Following months of speculation surrounding the event, the Rally is now under new management and has attracted significant funding from main sponsor Meteor Electrical, The Northern Ireland Events Company and Derry City Council (in association with North West Region Cross Border Group, through Destination North West's Cross Border Tourism Marketing Project between Derry, Donegal and Fermanagh, which is funded through the Interreg 3a Programme for Ireland / Northern Ireland). In a bold step, the UAC – which has organised the event for the last 75 years – has handed the management of the rally to Circuit of Ireland Ltd who will run the event for the next three years.

For the first time, the City of Londonderry will host one of the most colourful and exciting events on the Rally calendar.

Over the Easter weekend, in what many consider the 'ultimate' rally of its type, the cream of the Pirelli Irish Tarmac Rally Championship will set off from the Maiden City for a gruelling 400 miles of competition.

### **Circuit of Ireland Rally Ltd.**

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Revving up for a Ceremonial Start at the Guildhall Square on Good Friday (14 April), the rally stages take the cars to the Sperrins and Donegal before reaching the finish ramp back at the Guildhall Square in Derry on Easter Monday.

John Conway, MD of Meteor Electrical - Ireland's premier electrical wholesale suppliers and title sponsor said: **"Meteor is convinced that this year's Rally will set a new standard for motorsport in Ireland.**

**"Meteor Electrical's sponsorship means that top drivers will be pitting their skills in a bid to claim the title in this fantastic rally."**

Likewise, CEO Janice McAleese said: **"The Northern Ireland Events Company has supported the Circuit of Ireland for the past three years and believes it provides many benefits such as increased tourism and positive media interest."**

The Mayor of Derry City, Councillor Lynn Fleming, said: **"Derry City Council is delighted that the bid to host the rally has been successful. It is a welcome addition to the city's calendar and promises to be a great event for all the family over the Easter holidays. Several thousand rally fans are expected."**

Significantly, for the first time, this year sees the involvement of Fred Gallagher (Clerk of Course Wales Rally GB, Britain's round of the World Rally Championship). With such a high profile name returning to Northern Ireland to work alongside the Circuit's Clerk of Course, Neil Malcolm, the combined experience will guarantee the success of the 2006 Meteor Electrical Circuit of Ireland International Rally. Two more well-known names to be involved are Andrew Kellitt (Events Co-Ordinator for Wales Rally GB) and Bobby Willis (Rally Consultant).

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## Note To Editors:

- Outline Rally Programme

Fri 14 April                      The Ceremonial Start for the rally will be held at the Guildhall Square in Londonderry.

Sat 15 April  
& Sun 16 April                      Leaving from Derry, the rally travels to stages in the Sperrins area.

Mon 17 April                      There will be a major service area located in Derry, followed by the final stages in Donegal.

- The Meteor Electrical Circuit of Ireland International Rally organising committee comprises of the following:  
Meteor Electrical, Schism, Ulster Automobile Club, Donegal Motor Club, Maiden City Motor Club, Northern Ireland Events Company.
- Information for Competitors, application forms for Marshalls, and regulations are available from: Circuit of Ireland Ltd. 2 Atlantic Quay, River Front, Strand Road, Derry. Telephone: 028 7127 9387. [www.meteorcircuitofireland.com](http://www.meteorcircuitofireland.com)

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- Information is also available from the Ulster Automobile Club.  
[www.ulsterautomobileclub.co.uk](http://www.ulsterautomobileclub.co.uk)

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