



 motorsport uk

Welcome to
Stage Rallying

“Track drivers see the same corner thousands of times, rally drivers see a thousand corners one time.”



Contents

Introduction to rallying.....	4
Get started in 4 steps.....	6
What is BARS?.....	8
BARS course: What to expect.....	10
The co-driver.....	12
Safety.....	14
Join your local motor club.....	15
Other types of motorsport.....	16
Volunteering.....	18
Good luck.....	19

Congratulations on taking your first steps into stage rallying

Motorsport is one of the most exciting, diverse and enjoyable sporting activities on the planet.

You are one step closer to joining an exclusive community of 60,000 competitors who hold a Motorsport UK competition licence, including 6,400 stage rally drivers.

The beauty of this sport is that it offers something for everyone. Very few activities allow men and women to compete against each other on a level playing field, regardless of their age, background and physical abilities.

The sport itself is as diverse as its competitors; there are many types of motorsport, all with two things in common: four wheels and an engine. More information on these different 'disciplines' can be found on the Motorsport UK website.

You are also joining a sport that is rich in history. The world's oldest venue still in use, Shelsley Walsh in Worcestershire, ran its first events way back in 1905, and the first ever purpose-built venue, Brooklands in Surrey, opened in 1907.

As this suggests, the UK is widely considered not just to be the world leader in the sport but also its spiritual home. This extends all the way up to the World Rally Championship.

Colin McRae and Richard Burns became household names and remain legends of the sport, while UK-based firms like M-Sport and Prodrive have powered car manufacturers to numerous world championship titles.

Today, the UK has one leading World Rally Championship driver in Elfyn Evans plus many more co-drivers and competitors in feeder championships.

By joining the ranks of UK competitors you are becoming part of an incredible success story, not to mention a thrilling sport that will deliver fun for many years to come.

Welcome



Get started in 4 steps

This pack will guide you through the process to get you started in the sport, but if you have any questions, just give us a call and we can talk you through it.

01 Read up and watch the film

Finish reading the rest of this booklet, which covers a few things you should know about the sport you're about to get involved in. The more you know, the better your experience will be and the more you will be able to get out of our great sport.

Also included is a postcard containing a QR code with links to the National Competition Rules (NCRs), formerly known as the Blue Book. This details all the regulations governing the sport to ensure safety and fair play. Please familiarise yourself with its contents; the greater your knowledge of the regulations, the more you will be able to enjoy the sport.

On the QR code you will also find links to the Go Rallying film - a must watch for any newcomer - and Motorsport UK TV, a new platform from the governing body, containing video guides on your first event, buying equipment and more.

02 Choose your BARS school and book your test

Just as you need to pass a driving test before being issued with your driving licence, you must complete a course and pass a test before taking out a rally competition licence.

This is where the British Association of Rally Schools (BARS) comes in; more information about the BARS course and BARS schools can be found on the following pages.

03 Complete and return the licence application form

An application form for a competition licence is provided with this pack. Once completed, post the form back to the Motorsport UK Membership Services Team in the envelope provided. We will normally process this in three working days, meaning you should receive your licence within a week, but we advise that you make your application as soon as possible. Don't wait until the week before your first event!

04 Get your licence

Once you hold a Motorsport UK competition licence, you are eligible to compete in the relevant Inter Club level events or championships of your choice. As you gain experience you will acquire upgrade signatures that will allow you to take out an RS National-Stage Rally licence, opening up more events and championships to you. Further information on licence upgrades can be found in Chapter 6 of the NCRs.

As of 2025, all new stage rally drivers are limited to competing in vehicles in Classes 4 to 16 and H1(a) to H14 for a minimum of four events. For more information on all class structures, please see Chapter 13, Appendix 24 of the National Competition Rules.

On completion of four events, you can provide evidence to your BARS instructor who will then advise Motorsport UK if you are able to compete in a more powerful vehicle in Classes 1 to 3, H15 and H16. Evidence is considered to be a signature from the Clerk of the Course or results from your four completed events.

If your BARS instructor feels you need more experience, they may advise you to complete further events.

If you have previous competitive experience within a different motorsport discipline, or experience in rallying that is deemed acceptable by the BARS instructor, you may be granted permission to compete in all classes, at the time of undertaking your BARS test.



What is BARS?

BARS stands for the British Association of Rally Schools. It is a Motorsport UK-recognised collective of rally schools that train and test prospective competitors to ensure their suitability for holding a Motorsport UK competition licence.

Member schools run the BARS course and test. More information about the course and what to expect can be found overleaf.

Opposite is a list of Motorsport UK-registered BARS schools. You can do the course at whichever school you want, so just pick the one that's best for you and get in touch using the contact details provided to make your booking. For further information and for the latest list of venues, please visit www.rallyschools-bars.co.uk

10
Registered
BARS schools



01 **Cotswolds Driving Experiences**
Cirencester Rd, Down Ampney,
Cirencester GL7 5QF
T: 01793 752281
E: info@cotswolddrivingexperiences.co.uk
cotswolddrivingexperiences.co.uk

02 **Chris Birkbeck International Rally School**
Manx Lodge, Low Farm, Brotton, Saltburn,
North Yorkshire TS12 2QX
T: 01287 677 512
E: mail@gorallyschool.co.uk
www.gorallyschool.co.uk

03 **Knockhill Rally School**
Knockhill Circuit, By Dumfermline,
Fife KY12 9TF
T: 01383 723 337
E: enquiries@knockhill.co.uk
www.knockhill.co.uk

04 **London Rally School**
Pool Farm, Stratton Audley,
Nr Bicester, Oxfordshire OX27 9AJ
T: 01869 278 199
E: info@rally-school.com
www.rally-school.com

05 **Motorsport Vision Brands Hatch**
Brands Hatch Circuit,
Fawkham Longfield, Kent DA3 8NG
T: 0344 225 4424
E: bars@msv.com
www.msvtrackdays.com

06 **MotorSport Vision Oulton Park**
Oulton Park Circuit, Little Budworth,
Tarpurley, Cheshire CW6 9BW
T: 0344 225 4424
E: bars@msv.com
www.msvtrackdays.com

07 **Phil Price Rally School**
Unit 1, Knucklas Road, Knighton,
Powys, LD7 1UP
T: 01547 550 300
E: info@philprice.co.uk
www.philprice.co.uk

08 **Silverstone Rally School**
Silverstone Rally School Ltd, Silverstone
Park, Silverstone, Northamptonshire NN12 8TJ
T: 01327 857 413
E: office@silverstonerally.co.uk
www.silverstonerally.co.uk

09 **Superdrive Motorsports Centre**
Bishops Court, Ballyhornan,
Northern Ireland BT30 7PR
T: 07778 288 108
E: safron@superdriveni.com
www.superdriveni.com

10 **Euro M-Sport**
5a Mullydoo Road, Omagh BT79 8HB
T: 028 8076 0775
E: info@eurom-sport.com
www.eurom-sport.com



The BARS course: What to expect

The exact format of the BARS course can vary slightly from school to school, but a typical day involves several key stages:



01 Welcome briefing

The BARS examiners will kick off by welcoming you and your fellow candidates to the school and briefing you on how the day will proceed. This will also include some guidance on what to expect at your first event once you have completed the BARS course.



02 Safety

There are video links enclosed within this starter pack that are accessible via the QR code provided. Make sure to watch these before heading to your local BARS school. However, safety is always the over-riding consideration in motorsport, so expect a good deal of time to be spent covering this vital topic on the day, so that it is fresh in your mind before you go any further.



03 Written test

You will need to sit a written test in a classroom environment. This test will cover the relevant section of the Motorsport UK NCRs: Chapter 13, Rally. You will not need to know all of the regulations inside-out at this stage but the safety elements are important.



04 Stage test

In addition to the written test, you will head out onto a test course with a BARS examiner who will evaluate your ability to handle a rally car in a safe and controlled manner. Remember, this is not a test of your speed and skill; it is a test of your competency, so there is no need to try and show off!



05 Debrief

The final step is to debrief with your BARS examiner, who, providing that you complete the course successfully will be able to sign your competition licence application form which you can then complete and return to Motorsport UK to receive your first competition licence!

The co-driver

In rallying, the driver is just one half of a two-person crew.

‘Co-driver’ is the most commonly used term for a rally car’s other occupant, having been coined in days gone by when his or her job would include driving the car between stages to allow the driver to rest.

However, the term ‘navigator’ offers a more accurate description of the role, particularly in UK rallying.

The co-driver or navigator is every bit as vital to a crew’s success as the driver, with the role encompassing an array of key responsibilities:

Secretariat

The co-driver looks after the crew’s administrative affairs, often from overseeing the event entry and signing on with the correct paperwork to booking accommodation and making sure that the driver is always in the right place at the right time.

Notes

A route note is a description of the road ahead, forewarning the driver of potential hazards such as a sharp bend beyond a crest. It is the co-driver’s job to read these pre-supplied route notes to the driver during competition. A pace note, by contrast, is a description of how quickly the road ahead can be driven. Pace notes are subjective and unique to every crew but they are not used until certain national level events, so you do not need to worry about them – yet!

Timing

The co-driver is responsible for ensuring that the car arrives at each time control on schedule – not too early or late – and that the marshal enters accurate information on the crew’s time card and marshal’s check sheet. At the end of a rally, the co-driver should also check the provisional results to ensure that no mistakes have been made in the results office.

Experience

Recruiting an experienced co-driver is a great way for a new driver to learn the ropes and ensure that their early experiences of rallying are as enjoyable and hassle-free as possible. The need for a co-driver also presents a great opportunity to share out the costs of competing, and most crews have their own arrangements for this.



6,400

Motorsport UK-licensed rally drivers

Safety

Wherever you go in the world of motorsport, you will come across the warning triangle time and again.

As the triangle says, motorsport can be dangerous. It is therefore vital that you accept responsibility for your personal safety and take all reasonable steps to minimise the risks to yourself and others.

Personal Protective Equipment (PPE)

Picture a rally driver and you will most likely visualise a helmet and overalls, both of which are requisite items for rallying. However, not just any helmet or overalls will do; they must bear the correct 'standard' label, indicating that their design has been tested and approved for use in motorsport. They must also be in good condition; for example a cracked helmet will not be acceptable, whether or not it bears the correct standard label.

Frontal Head Restraints (FHRs), often referred to as HANS devices, are mandatory across stage rallying. FHRs are designed to restrain the driver's torso

during frontal and angled-frontal impacts, thereby reducing the loads to the head and neck.

The National Competition Rules – plus any event or championship supplementary regulations (SRs) – detail the 'standards' required for these various items of PPE.

The general advice is always to buy the best safety equipment you can afford and take care of it – why would you scrimp on something that is designed to protect you and possibly save your life?

Car

Just as your PPE has to meet certain standards, so does your car. Again, the National Competition Rules and the supplementary regulations of the championship or event will detail all minimum requirements for competing vehicles, covering areas such as – but not limited to – roll over protection systems, seats, harnesses and fire extinguishers.

Scrutineering

Attempting to cut corners with PPE and cars is not only ill-advised from a safety point of view, but it is also likely to land you in varying degrees of hot water with event officials. All events have scrutineers on hand to check that competitors' PPE and cars comply with all the relevant regulations before they hit the stages, and some events also run post-event eligibility scrutineering.

If a scrutineer finds a safety-related problem with your PPE or car, such as a helmet with the wrong standard label or a fire extinguisher that is not

connected properly, he or she may allow you to rectify it and present the item again for further scrutineering, as you will not be allowed on the stages until it has passed.

If an eligibility issue is uncovered, such as an engine with greater capacity than the regulations allow for, the scrutineer will submit a report to the Clerk of the Course, who will then decide what action to take. In more serious cases, this could be exclusion from the event.

Please remember that scrutineering is not something to 'get through' – the process involves a brief inspection of your car and PPE to ensure compliance with the regulations.

It does not certify that everything is 'safe'; it is the responsibility of every competitor to take all necessary precautions to keep themselves and their fellow competitors as safe as possible.



Join your local club

There are around 700 Motorsport UK-registered motor clubs across the country, organising most of the events that take place throughout the year. These clubs form the bedrock of the sport in this country, with an active grassroots membership of around 100,000 people.

If you haven't already, you must join your local club before you can compete, and ideally you should sign up before you apply for your competition licence so as to benefit from club members' wealth of experience and advice. Remember that as well as being event organisers, motor clubs are groups of like-minded people with a passion for cars and motorsport. Joining your local club is therefore a great way of meeting people who not only share your love of the sport but who can also offer invaluable help as you get started.

You can find your local club on the www.motorsportuk.org website. Why not get involved in between your rallying commitments? You will always be assured of a warm welcome.



IT STARTS WITH YOU.
RALLY. RESPECT. REPEAT.



www.motorsportuk.org/racewithrespect

Other types of motorsport

One of the great things about UK motorsport is its diversity.

With your Stage Rally Licence you'll be eligible to enter all of the following event types.

Road Rallying

Road Rallying as a discipline covers a broad range of variations on a common theme - for a crew of two to complete a route usually whilst maintaining a time schedule.

There are several different types of Road Rallies, many of which take place on the public road, from disciplines where the emphasis is towards maintaining a time schedule to those based on challenging your navigation abilities. A normal road car is eligible for all types of Road Rallies within a few basic limitations which can be found in the NCRs. Some Road Rallies, for example, Targa Road Rallies and Historic Road Rallies, contain Special Tests on private land.

When starting out on your journey into Stage Rallying, Road Rallies offer affordable competitive seat time for you and your navigator to hone your skills and get used to working together as a team, with even small '12 car' events being a great way to practice the timing aspect of rallying.

It is perfectly practical to prepare a Stage Rally Car that remains eligible for both Road and Stage rallies, and then Road Rallies can be used as an opportunity to test new components.

Autotest

Autotest is a timed test of handling skill and low-speed manoeuvrability, often involving the use of the hand brake and reverse gear. Drivers compete on courses marked out by plastic pylons or cones, and penalties are incurred for hitting cones, failing to stop on a line, or for taking the wrong route. Some events can be entered by drivers from 14 years of age.

Hill Climb

The aim of a hill climb is to complete a narrow, winding, uphill, point-to-point course as quickly as possible. Competitors are given practice runs and two competitive 'run-offs' with their best times counting in the final results.

Rallycross

Rallycross combines circuit racing and rallying; up to eight cars at a time go wheel-to-wheel on a part-asphalt, part-gravel circuit. The races are usually short, lasting for around three minutes and there are many classes catering for everything from buggies to the powerful 'supercars'.

Sprint

Sprint is a high-speed discipline in which drivers set a time around a lap of a race circuit or a point-to-point course, with the fastest times determining the results. Competitors are given practice runs and usually get two runs against the clock. Like hill climb, sprint is a very diverse discipline, with vehicles ranging from near-standard road cars to F1-style single-seaters.



Never Miss A Moment

Head over to Motorsport UK TV and check out our new series on preparing for your first rally event.

Fronted by the iconic voice of the World Rally Championship, Jon Desborough, the series breaks down your first competitive stage rally and offers insider tips to those new to the sport.



Scan here to watch now

www.motorsportuk.tv



#MotorsportUK



When you're not driving, volunteer!

The wheels of UK motorsport would simply stop turning without the efforts of 14,000 volunteer marshals and officials, who give their time freely to ensure that events run safely, fairly and effectively.

Volunteering offers the opportunity to become more involved in the sport and join a like-minded community. However, volunteering can also be a great way for competitors to give something back to the sport while gaining a deeper understanding of their work. There are several volunteering roles you can try, but you should be aware of them all as you will rely on them at any event you compete in.

Marshals

Marshals make sure that events are run safely and effectively, and Motorsport UK runs an extensive training programme that ensures that UK marshals are among the best in the world. There are a wide variety of duties to cover depending on the type of event; scoring, calling in penalties, displaying flag signals, running a start or finish line, and clearing incident debris. Marshalling is the most accessible volunteer role and for Road Rallies, Trials, Autotests, AutoSOLOs and Cross Country; you simply need to contact the organising club and

they will deploy you based upon your experience and event requirements, usually together with an experienced marshal.

For Stage Rallies, if you aren't an Accredited Marshal, you will always be buddied up with a more experienced marshal. However, the Accreditation process is a simple 30-minute online training module that will also improve your understanding of the sport.

Scrutineers

Scrutineers check that competitor's PPE and cars comply with the technical regulations to ensure safety and fair play. While experience in engineering is usually an advantage, it is not essential. Volunteering to assist an experienced scrutineer will help you better prepare for your own events as a competitor.

Timekeepers

Timekeepers record competitor's times and positions in order to determine the results, and tools range from hand-held stopwatches to electronic timing systems. For some events you'll need to be a trained and registered marshal, but for most Clubsport events, the ability to simply record the times are all that is necessary.

There are many other official roles but some of these require experience or specialised training.

Safety Car Crews

Before the first competitors run on any special stage, at least one safety car will drive through the stage to make sure that it is safe for the competitors, marshals and spectators. Road Rallies

normally run with one or two Course Cars who make sure the controls and passage boards are located correctly and the marshals are ready for the first car. Course Closers follow the last competition car, accounting for any stragglers and standing down the marshals.

Event Officials

Once you've gained some experience in one or more of the above roles, you may consider becoming a Steward, Secretary of the Meeting or Clerk of the Course, who are collectively responsible for ensuring that events are run in accordance with the sporting regulations.

Rescue and recovery crews

Rescue personnel provide immediate medical and extrication facilities at the scene of an incident, while recovery personnel retrieve the stricken cars. These two complementary roles on Stage Rallies are highly specialised and require specific equipment and regular training.

It's not 'them and us'

Volunteering should not be seen as the poor relation of motorsport participation. In fact, in most areas of the sport, people spread their time between organising and competing. Remember, if there were nobody to organise, you'd have nowhere to compete! Please always remember to thank the marshals and officials every time you compete.

Good luck and enjoy motorsport

So, you have read through this booklet and familiarised yourself with the NCRs, watched the safety film, completed the BARS course, taken out your licence and hopefully joined your local motor club. You are now ready to enjoy the sport for many years to come.

Motorsport UK and its event-organising member clubs do their utmost to minimise motorsport's inherent risk, but ultimately only you are responsible for your personal safety.

Motorsport volunteers are just that – volunteers. They are there because they love the sport and their only job is to help you to enjoy it in a safe and fair environment, so please treat them with the respect that they deserve.

Always respect your fellow competitor, who shares your love of motorsport and is likely to have invested just as much time, effort and resource as you have.

Now there is just one thing left to do:

Go rallying!





We are the national membership organisation and governing body for four-wheel motorsport in the UK, representing competitors, volunteers, clubs and fans.

Motorsport UK is a not-for-profit organisation (limited by guarantee) that exists to service and grow the sport. We are a member of the world governing body, the Fédération Internationale de l'Automobile (FIA).

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