

Corinium Stages Rally 2016

Organisers: Cirencester Car Club. Date: April 30. Where: Down Ampney airfield, Wiltshire.

Championships: Hamilton Classics ACSMC; Subaru WRC Spares ASWMC Sealed Surface; CMSG. Starters: 51. Stages: eight.

An early day tyre gamble proved key for Gary Le Coadou and co-driver Carl Sorenson (Toyota Corolla WRC) as they took a third consecutive Corinium Stages win, following a close battle with Martyn / Dawn England (Ford Fiesta R5). Exactly as in 2015 the result was in doubt until the final test, when England lost time with a spin that ultimately cost victory.

Le Coadou chanced his arm in selecting 'supersoft' tyres to start the day: but the gamble worked and he took the lead, extending it to nine seconds after four stages. England, still getting used to his new left-hand drive machine chased the Toyota hard and opened a 24s gap over third-placed Chris Simmons / Andy Moss (Darrian T9 GTR). Tim Self/Nick Vigors (Subaru Impreza S14), Dave Parnell/Pete Bold (Ford Escort Mk1) and Chris / Megan Dodridge (Impreza WRC) hotly disputed fourth.

Down Ampney's abrasive surface eventually destroyed Le Coadou's tyres but with harder compound covers fitted he held top spot, helped when England lost time after colliding with debris from a wrecked chicane on stage five. A heavy downpour of sleet on the final stage made the surface treacherous but Le Coadou set fastest time to clinch a 48s victory, while England's spin and stall proved costly.

Self took third on stage six when Simmons retired with a broken diff. and Dodridge dropped out of the top ten with mechanical problems. Parnell claimed fourth, holding off the Imprezas of James Harvey/Paul Price and Peter Self/Mike Grey by three and six seconds respectively.

Results: 1 Gary le Coadou/Carl Sorenson (Toyota Corolla WRC) 55m 14s; 2 Martyn England/Dawn England (Ford Fiesta R5+) +48s; 3 Tim Self/Nick Vigors (Subaru Impreza S14); 4 Dave Parnell/Pete bold (Ford Escort Mk1); 5 James Harvey/Paul Price (Impreza); 6 Peter Self/Mike Grey (Impreza); 7 Simon Thomas/Andrew Richards (Peugeot 306 S2000); 8 Ben Parker/Alf Chanter (Honda Civic Type R); 9 Neil Cotillard/Helier Lucas (Impreza); 10 Peter Hedges/Marcus Stickland (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 6).

Class winners: **A:** Edward Lambert/Gareth Drayton (Peugeot 106 Rallye); **B:** Charlie Robinson/Marcus Morphew (Citroen C2); **C:** Parnell/Bold; **D:** Roger Titley/Chris Page (Mazda 323); **E:** England/England.

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