

SPORT

MOTORSPORT

By Andrew Murphy

IT LOOKED like the Jim Walsh forestry rally was in danger of being cancelled two weeks ago when Cork MC had only received 17 entries for the event. Clerk of the course John Quill was so concerned that he wrote to all involved in the championship asking them to enter without delay.

His request worked and the club has attracted almost 80 entries, including 19 juniors, for the one-day event on Saturday. England-based Corkman Michael O'Brien tops the entry list in his Focus WRC with James O'Brien in the co-driver's seat. James has co-driven some of the leading drivers in the past, including Andrew Nesbitt.

Meanwhile, Trevor J Harding will be looking to wrap up the championship title this weekend, but with only six points separating him from Pat O'Connell, he will have to fight all the way. John Reid and John McGaffin could also have a big say in the final outcome.

► While the focus will be on the leading quartet, plenty of action is assured throughout the field as various classes will be decided. Killian Duffy, Enda McNulty, Christy Carey and Patsy Keenan will be battling hammer and tongs for class eight honours, while a single point separates Gerard Lucey (Celica) and Mark Murphy (Subaru) in class six.

Brian Lawlor and Frank Kelly are separated by a single point in class five, but while they fight among themselves for top spot they will also have to keep an eye on Seamus O'Connell and Adrian Hetherington - both capable of overshadowing the class contenders.

► The club has attracted a record entry for the junior championship with Craig Breen and Vincent McAree heading the 19-strong entry. Breen is hoping to give the Fiesta R2 its forestry debut, but he faces Vincent McAree, Jonathan Cunningham and John Byrnes for class honours.

► Rally HQ is the Commons Inn Hotel, New Mallow Road. The first car will leave the starting ramp at 8.15 to cover nine stages in the Mallow area. Centralised servicing will be at Quaterstown Industrial Estate, Mallow.

► Patrick Elliott edged closer to retaining the Dunlop championship when he beat his main rival Niall Maguire into second place on the Tipperary Stonethrowers last Sunday. The Cavanman needs second-place finishes in the final two rounds to retain his title.

No late entries as Duffy 10 Mile hit

ATHLETICS

By Frank Greally

A BUMPER entry of 6,000 will turn out for Saturday's Lifestyle Sports adidas Frank Duffy 10 Mile Road Race in the Phoenix Park - the second race in the 2009 Life-style Sports adidas Race Series.

Online entries are now closed for the event and the planned late registration at the Lifestyle Sports store in Blanchardstown has had to be scrapped.

"We had planned on offering late registration facilities at the

Lifestyle Sports store in Blanchardstown like we had done for the Irish Runner 5 Mile - the first race in the Series," race series director Jim Aughney said.

"However, we had a huge surge in entries last week and we had to close all entries once we reached the 6,000 mark. This is purely for health and safety, and logistical reasons, and we are sorry that some intending entrants are going to be disappointed."

Aughney also sounded an early warning for runners hoping to take part in the Lifestyle Sports adidas Dublin Half-Marathon on September 26. "We have already received more than 5,000 entries for this event and we, again, have a cut-off entry level of 6,000 that could be reached in just a couple more days," he said. "The message is to register now online at www.dublin-marathon.ie as there will be no late registration service now for the race."

Clonliffe Harriers runner Josphat Boit will be hoping to notch up his second victory in this year's Race Series and the Kenyan native will be favourite to lead home a field that includes Gerry Ryan (Loughrea AC) and Brian Maher

FIESTA MAGIC: Craig Breen, who leads the Irish and British Fiesta championships and is second in the international series, hopes to give the Fiesta R2 its Irish forestry debut in Cork on Saturday.



FOREST RALLY BACK ON TRACK

Several drivers used the event as a shakedown for the Ulster rally with Dave Weston Junior emerging best in fifth place. A broken driveshaft forced Marty McCormack to retire his Citroen C2R2 on the sixth stage. Top seed Matthew Wilson crashed his Fiesta R2 out of eighth place on the final stage.

► As he heads into the second half of the British Formula Ford season, Patrick McKenna received a boost when he was selected as Dunlop Driver of the Month for his performances at Knockhill in June. He has since added podium finishes at Snetterton and Donington Park.

The reigning All-Ireland and Northern Ireland Formula Ford champion endured a difficult start to his campaign when he broke his thumb in a pre-season testing accident. He then sustained further damage to his thumb in an on-track altercation in the third round. However, the 21-year-old