

60th Anniversary of Circuit of Munster Rally set to bring in excess of €3million to the Limerick economy

Motoring enthusiasts around the country and beyond are gearing up for one of the main event of the Irish motorsport calendar – the annual Circuit of Munster Rally in County Limerick.

The Circuit is part of the 5th round of the National Championship and the 3rd round of the West Coast Championships, and 2012 marks the 60th anniversary of the prestigious event.

“Have no doubt about it – this year’s Circuit of Munster is set to be the biggest one yet,” promised Donie O’Connor, the PRO for the Limerick Motor Club who run the event.

“Every year the rally brings drivers, navigators, their support team and families, marshals and rally enthusiasts from around the country to Limerick. This results in massive upsurge for local products and services including restaurants, accommodation, bars and shops over the June Bank Holiday weekend.”

He estimated that an additional €3million plus would be spent in the local economy as a direct result of the rally.

“Everyone recognizes the tough times we are in at the moment, so it is vitally important that events such as the Circuit of Munster can contribute to the local economy and make good use out of the power of networking and supporting each other.”

The official launch of the rally took place in the Woodlands House Hotel, one of the main sponsors of the event, on Wednesday May 2.

Guests included a large number of Limerick Motor Club members; Peter Byrne, Chairman of the Chamber of Commerce in Newcastle West; and Jack Kingston, the founder of the Irish Festival of Speed, which was held in Adare Manor in July 2012. The launch was also attended by Irish racing legend Rosemary Smyth, who blazed a trail for women in motorsport throughout the 1960s and ‘70s. Ms Smyth drove for prestigious global teams in the likes of the Monte Carlo Rally, the London to Mexico Rally, the London to Sydney Rally and other World Rally Championship events in the US, Africa, Europe and New Zealand.

Ms Smyth spoke about the hard work of the event behind the scenes, from the organizers to the marshals, and said she would love to see more lady drivers participating in motor sport. She runs a driving school for young people at Goffs in Co. Kildare.

This year the rally will be held in the West Limerick area and Clerk of the Course Kieran Ambrose extended his thanks to local residents and urged rally enthusiasts to “keep the race in its place”.

“Anyone who has been involved in organizing such a large-scale event will appreciate the amount of time and effort it takes to get it off the ground. The Circuit of Munster is organized by people who volunteer their time and as always we are grateful to those supporting us as we organize the 60th running of the Circuit of Munster Rally.

“Thank you to all the local residents who give their support for the day and allow us to bring this event to their locality.

“I would like to reiterate to drivers and fans – keep the race in its place. Speeding or driving on the routes prior to the day of the event will not be tolerated. It is difficult to

get insurance and the go-ahead for days like this so respect the organisers and the locals and stay off it please!”

Long-time member of the Limerick Motor Club, Denis Hogan and spoke of how long the Limerick Motor Club are associated with not just car racing but also with motor cycle racing.

He stated that the origin of the race goes back to 1907 when the first president Lord Dunraven oversaw over the proceedings. Again in 1948 the next Lord Dunraven opened proceedings for the official start of the Limerick Motor Club and the Circuit of Munster car rally. Limerick Motor Club was the first club in Ireland to be affiliated to the F.A.I.

The club also runs hill climbs, forestry and mini trials. Mr Hogan was one of the organizers of the successful Festival of Speed in the grounds of Adare Manor which brought major revenue to both Limerick City and County.

He also acknowledged Martin Bourke of Limerick Classic cars and Jack Kingston of the Festival of Speed.

Peter Byrne chairperson of Newcastle West Chamber of Commerce welcomed this event and promised to do everything in the Chamber’s power together with the people of Newcastle West and surrounding area to make this 60th event a success.

Conor Fitzgerald who represented the Woodlands House Hotel referred to the long relationship with the club and praised the level of revenue generated by the club’s events not alone to Adare but the Mid-West region as a whole.

Club PRO Donie O’Connor promised plenty of surprise announcements in the run up to the June 3rd event. Fans can go to www.limerickmc.ie/ or <https://www.facebook.com/pages/Limerick-Motor-Club/113158232044509> for more information.

End of press release.

For more information, contact Donie O’Connor on 089-4694944.