



Media Information  
30 September

## MINI WRC driver Kris Meeke in profile.

**Paris.** After leaving Queen's University in Belfast with an honours degree in mechanical engineering, Kris Meeke spent his first three years working as a designer for a leading rally-preparation business. But it was the draw of active competition that saw him make his first move into becoming a professional rally driver after winning a competition for new rally drivers in 2000. The prize was a fully supported drive in a national rally in Wales. The following year, while competing in the Peugeot 106 Super Cup, he took his first category win at the Swansea Bay Festival National Rally. The same year, he drove a 300 bhp Group A Subaru Impreza in the Galloway Hills Rally. It was his first time in a four-wheel drive car and he clinched his first outright rally win.

In 2002, Meeke secured a contract with McRae Motorsport and drove a Super 1600 Ford Puma in the British Junior Championship. Under his mentor, Colin McRae, he managed to secure victory in the series at his first attempt, and in only his second year in rallying.

With the backing of Colin McRae, Meeke graduated to the JWRC (Junior World Rally Championship) in 2003, driving an Opel Corsa run by Team Palmer and continued to compete in the UK, winning both the British Junior and Super 1600 titles. 2004 saw him record ten fastest stages on JWRC events and take second place in the Rally of Spain.

In 2005, Meeke joined Citroen for the JWRC driving a factory supported C2 Super 1600. He set 36 fastest stage times during the year winning the first event of the season in Monte Carlo and finishing third overall in the championship. At the end of the year, Meeke competed in a Prodrive-prepared Subaru Impreza World Rally Car on Wales Rally GB. He made an impressive debut in this car, finishing tenth overall and only 11 seconds behind his mentor, Colin McRae.

Meeke continued to compete for Citroen in the JWRC during 2006, setting more fastest stage times than anyone else, but was unable to challenge for the title due to a number of mechanical failures. Recognising his testing ability, Citroen also asked Meeke to help in the development of the Xsara WRC and the new C4 WRC, working alongside Sebastien Loeb.

In 2007 Meeke continued to build up his World Rally Car experience, competing in a Prodrive-prepared Subaru Impreza in the Irish Tarmac Championship, winning three events from four starts. Meeke also competed in the inaugural WRC round of Rally Ireland and held sixth place after the first day.

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The following year, Meeke continued to compete in Ireland, but this time in a Renault Clio Super 1600. Despite giving away significant performance, he still managed to set fastest stage times against a 20 strong field of World Rally Cars. This pace led to events with Renault Sport in Russia in the Intercontinental Rally Challenge (IRC), as well as in Spain and Germany in the WRC.

2009 saw Meeke return to Peugeot to compete in the IRC in the 207 Super 2000 car. With co-driver Paul Nagle, he took outright wins in Brazil, Portugal, Belgium and San Remo helping him clinch the IRC title. In 2010 he resigned for the team and early in the season won in Brazil and later took second place in the Azores.

#### **Fast facts:**

Lives: Northern Ireland, UK  
Date of Birth: 2 July 1979  
Qualifications: BSc Mechanical Engineering – Queen’s University, Belfast  
Interests: Moto-X, Mountain biking, Squash

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