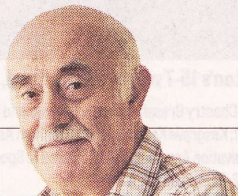


Kasia's a class act with championship success

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RALLYING

The 2013 Ward Construction AEMC Stage Rally Championship reached its conclusion at Rockingham Motor Speedway last weekend and it did so in fine style for teenage star Kasia Nicklin when, along with co-driver Emma Morrison, she contested the two-day event organised by Thame Motorsport Club and Middlesex County AC.

Driving her usual 1400cc Nissan Micra, Nicklin made good use of the cold and damp

conditions to secure a result that would see her emerge from the rally as the new champion in the up to 1400cc class.

It capped what has been a somewhat short involvement during 2013, as the local schoolgirl concentrated on her exams before returning to the cut and thrust of the top regional rally championship.

The Rockingham Stages offered 12 special stages over the two days, with two of them during darkness on Saturday.

For Nicklin, it was going to be a battle with the Vauxhall Nova of the current class champion Ian Barnard.

Seeded at 54 by the end of the first day, Nicklin and Morrison had moved up the leader board to secure 23rd overall, second in class.

As day two dawned, so the opening stages provided slippery conditions.

"That was ideal for me, I love those conditions, it makes me more competitive against more powerful cars," said Kasia.

It certainly did, and while those conditions were in play, she moved up to 21st overall only to fall back to 23rd as the surface dried out, taking fastest time in class on the first test.

The overall position was retained throughout the remainder of Sunday, and with a second in class on the day, the class championship was hers, together with the best lady driver award.

Her team are considering their options for 2014, which could see her move to a national championship.

Whatever the choice, we are going to hear a lot more of this talented teenager.

The MSA, in conjunction with the Racing Steps Foundation, promote the MSA Young Driver of the Year awards.

Nicklin was among those at Silverstone recently, when she made it into the top five from finalists from all over the UK.

It is all part of a development programme to help young competitors further their skills in motorsport.



As predicted, Chelmsford MC provided competition on their Preston Road Rally with a tough challenge last weekend.

The many unsurfaced roads took their toll with 26 crews making it to the finish at Elveden, while 24 retired with

an assortment of troubles, the Kings Forest claiming at least five of them.

The soil in that part of Suffolk is very light and can cut up quite badly, which can hurt late runners.

Perhaps this is why, seeded at number one, 2012 winners Owen Turner and Andrew Dadswell were again victorious in their MG ZR.

The Rover 25 of Mark Baham/Jonathan Stimpson finished second, with Andy Smith/Sam Spencer third in a Peugeot 306.

The rally once again raised funds for the East Anglian Air Ambulance.

The Chelmsford club now concentrate on their MGJ Engineering Stages Rally, held at Brands Hatch on January 12, which will open the 2014 Jelf Motorsport/Ward Construction AEMC Championship.

DIARY DATES

Short Circuit. Mildenhall Raceway, Sunday, 1.30pm. Ministox; Bangers. Wimbledon, Sunday, 5.30pm. Stock Rods; Historic Stockcars; Ministox; Bangers.