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New Ford Fiesta Group R rally car launched at Rally d'Italia Sardegna

An all-new Ford Fiesta R2 rally car, based on the top-selling Ford Fiesta road car launched last year, was unveiled at the **Rally d'Italia Sardegna** this evening. Designed to replace the hugely successful Fiesta ST rally car, the new vehicle is targeted at competitors in the Fiesta Sport**Trophy** series around the globe, as well as in regional rally championships.

The Fiesta R2 will conform to the latest FIA regulations and satisfy strong customer demand for an exciting yet affordable point of entry into rallying. While the car will not compete in Sardinia, it will be driven as a course safety car ahead of the main entry by FST International Shootout winner Matthias Boon (BEL) and co-driver Massimiliano Bosi (ITA).

The development bodyshell for the R2 project was revealed by M-Sport at the Autosport International Show in the UK in January 2009. As one of Europe's biggest motorsport shows, the project generated great interest and excitement from potential competitors and the public alike. Work on the base design of the car, the result of successful engineering co-operation between M-Sport and Ford, is now almost complete and engineers are undertaking a comprehensive test programme in readiness for a proposed homologation date of 1 July 2009.

The five-speed Fiesta R2 rally car is based on the Ford Fiesta *Sport* (Zetec S in the UK and Ireland) using the 1.6L Ti-Vct 120PS (1598cc) base engine as in regular production. It is built from a standard conversion kit developed by M-Sport.

The kit to convert the car to rally specification includes engine parts to increase the engine performance including pistons, conrods, camshafts, valve springs, injectors, airbox, air filter, spark plugs and a sump baffle kit. The gearbox has been replaced for a sequential shift unit with a limited slip differential, along with upgraded brakes and Reiger suspension. Beyond these specific items, the intention is for the car to use many standard components from the Ford Fiesta and other Ford road vehicles to reduce costs for the competitor. Standard conversion kits will be available from M-Sport or an appointed national sales outlet.

The knowledge gained from the world-title winning Ford Focus RS WRC has been transferred to the creation of the Fiesta R2 under the leadership of M-Sport's Principal Engineer Chris Williams, who was also responsible for the success of the Fiesta ST, which sold in 27 different countries.

Last month M-Sport announced the development of a Super 2000 Fiesta for competition at the sport's highest level. These two vehicles, the Super 2000 and the R2, will create a complete ladder of opportunity for rally competitors to graduate from grass roots level to WRC using Ford vehicles.



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M-Sport Managing Director Malcolm Wilson said:

"The development of this car has created a lot of excitement over the past few months and I'm delighted that we have now been able to unveil the Fiesta here in Sardinia. There's no doubting that the R2 has large boots to fill: the GpN Fiesta ST is still achieving frequent class wins around the world and has finished as high as 25th overall in the WRC, an amazing feat for a small car. The experience and knowledge that our engineers have gained with the ST has been key in developing the R2 into a more 'sophisticated' car, whilst it has inherited the basic strength and reliability that made the ST so popular – and all at a lower cost than other competing manufacturers."

Ford of Europe Motorsport Director Mark Deans said:

*"The continued commitment of M-Sport to its Fiesta Sport**Trophy** series is great news and we are eager to see the new Fiesta in rallying. The road car has deservedly received huge acclaim since its launch last autumn and will provide the perfect base vehicle. I'm confident the R2 will play a key role as the ideal entry-level car. The development of this car is a product of enthusiastic collaboration between Ford and M-Sport and, allied with the recently-announced Super 2000 Fiesta, offers a complete ladder of opportunity to guide ambitious and talented drivers from the sport's base level through to the very top in Ford vehicles. While Ford of Europe's principle motorsport activity remains the FIA World Rally Championship, we will do everything we can at a local level to support the Fiesta Sport**Trophy** in individual markets and we wish M-Sport every success with their new Fiesta projects."*

Further information regarding the Fiesta R2 can be found on the new website www.FiestaR2.com from Friday 22 May 2009.



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Fiesta R2 Specification

Donor vehicle:	Ford Fiesta 1.6 Sport / Zetec S. Model dated from September 2008 for purchase from any source. Promotional price available from M-Sport.
Engine:	1.6 Zetec 16V – 1598cc – Ti-VCT; 4 cylinders in line; DOHC; 16 valves; alloy cylinder head and block; variable cam timing.
Power:	163 PS @ 7,500 rpm
Torque:	182 Nm @ 5,700 rpm
Transmission:	Five speed sequential gearbox developed by Sadev with plated limited slip differential and uprated driveshafts. ECU developed by Pi with flat shift feature with full throttle closed loop control shift.
Suspension:	Reiger adjustable dampers with Eibach springs, spherical jointed top mounts front and rear. Front dampers adjustable for bump and rebound. Standard rear beam with uprated mounts. 2-bolt clamped front upright. Adaptor pin mounted in uprights with spherical bearing connecting the lower arm. Five stud hub.
Brakes:	Gravel (front): 285 mm AP ventilated discs with four piston competition calipers. Asphalt (front): 310 mm AP ventilated discs with four piston competition calipers. Rear: 280 mm AP ventilated discs with single piston calipers. Hydraulic handbrake.
Steering:	Electric power-assisted steering.
Wheels:	Gravel: OZ 6"x15" Gravel Asphalt: OZ 6.5"x16" Asphalt
Bodyshell:	Welded T45 steel multipoint rollcage. Optimised seat position and integrated dash bar. Jacking points optional and seam welding is permitted.
Electronics:	Bespoke instrument cluster by Visteon in the same style as the standard series cluster.
Dimensions:	Length: 3953mm. Width: 1722mm. Height: 1481mm. Wheelbase: 2490mm. Weight: 1030kg.

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