

Malcolm Wilson OBE, M-Sport Managing Director Personal Profile

Introduction

Malcolm Wilson is one of British motorsport's most successful names and has more than 30 years experience in rallying, over 20 of those years working with Ford Motor Company. In 1979 he established Malcolm Wilson Motorsport, which was later to become M-Sport.

In doing so has set up a thriving business based just outside the Cumbrian town of Cockermouth and taken Ford to consecutive World Rally Champion victories.

Malcolm Wilson the competitor

Wilson was hooked on cars from an early age spurred on by the rally drivers who used to visit his parents' breakers yard and tyre distribution business to buy spare parts for their cars. He developed his mechanical skills on an Anglia 105E - a car that he eventually wrote off while competing in a road rally driving on 'L' plates - and lifelong love of rallying was born.

As a driver he rose to fame in the 1970s taking two national rally titles in Ford Escorts and claimed victories and awards right from the early days of his career, including twice being awarded the title of 'Ford Rallyman of the month' firstly in 1975 and again in 1976.

He won the Castrol Autosport National Championship in 1978, the youngest winner at only 22 years of age, and again in 1979, the same year that he established Malcolm Wilson Motorsport. He drove for three factory teams in the world championship and spent several years as Ford's chief test driver, developing new rally cars.



In 1988 he became the first British driver in history to finish the WRC's Swedish round inside the top ten driving a Vauxhall Astra GTE. In 1994, with Ford, he eventually won the British Rally Championship crown and it is with Ford that he has gone on to enjoy even greater success as a team principal.

Malcolm Wilson the team principal



As Wilson's professional driving career came to an end in the mid 1990s, Malcolm Wilson Motorsport was appointed by Ford to run its official factory World Rally Championship programme.

Up to this point, the company had operated from premises next to Wilson's home but, as the growth of the business accelerated, Wilson set about building a state of the art facility from which to run the team. Malcolm Wilson Motorsport was rebranded as M-Sport and the number of staff employed locally by the company rose from 18 to 96.

Despite pressure to move his business closer to the south of England, Wilson was determined to maintain a presence in Cumbria and found a derelict former mental institution in Dovenby, just outside Cockermouth that was suitable for restoration and capable of housing the growing business. The team moved to Dovenby Hall in May 2000.

Today M-Sport's multi-million pound premises at Dovenby Hall on the edge of the Lake District have set a benchmark in rallying. Few teams can boast a home set in 47 hectares (115 acres) of lush parkland, the modern technology and engineering facilities found in the new workshops contrasting with the beautiful Cumbria countryside and the restored splendour of Dovenby Hall itself, a listed building of special historic interest.



In 1996 Ford Motor Company appointed M-Sport to run its world rally championship programme. They won two rounds of the championship in the first season, 1997, and Ford finished runner-up that year in the Manufacturer Championship.

Under Wilson's leadership the Ford team has since finished runner up in the manufacturer series on six occasions but the highlight came in 2006 when the record-breaking Ford Focus RS WRC, developed at M-Sport, won the FIA World Rally Championship for the first time in 27 years and then went on to retain the Championship title in 2007.

Since being awarded the Ford contract the team has 38 rally victories to its credit, 111 other podium finishes and have scored points on every one of the last 113 World Rally Championship events - a record in itself.

Today M-Sport runs cars for the Stobart VK M-Sport Ford team and the Munchi's Ford team alongside the Ford factory cars in the WRC and over 200 staff are employed at the company's Dovenby Hall base. The turnover of the company has increased from £8million in 1999 to £46million in 2008.

Malcolm Wilson the family man

Throughout his career Malcolm Wilson has been supported by his wife Elaine, also a director of M-Sport. They are proud parents of Matthew who, after following in his father's footsteps to become a rally driver, is one of Britain's brightest motorsport prospects aiming to become the first British driver to win the World Rally Championship since the late Richard Burns.

Matthew drives for the Cumbrian-based Stobart VK M-Sport Ford rally team, of which his father is the team principal, and has already entered the record books - becoming the youngest ever driver to win a world rally championship stage.



Malcolm Wilson Biography & Achievements

- Born: February 17 1956

In addition to the World Rally Championship Manufacturer's titles in 2006 and 2007, Wilson and M-Sport have received numerous awards over the years, to name a few:

- Wilson won the Castrol Autosport National Championship as a driver in 1978 & 1979.
- Wilson won the British Rally Championship as a driver in 1994.
- Wilson was made an Ambassador to Cumbria in 1995.
- M-Sport's facilities were awarded a Civic Trust Award for the renovation project at Dovenby Hall in 2001.
- M-Sport won the Motorsport Industry Association (MIA) Business Excellence Award for Rally Business of the Year in years 2002/04/06 & 07.
- Wilson was the first person to receive a Special Citizen Award in Cockermouth in 2007.
- Wilson was awarded a Lifetime Contribution to Cumbria Award at the 2007 Cumbria Business Awards.
- M-Sport were awarded the 2007 Rally Car of the Year at the Autosport Awards.
- M-Sport have been awarded a 'Recognition of Achievement' Award at the 2007 Ford World Excellence Awards in Detroit.
- Wilson was awarded 'Cumbrian Director of the Year' at the 2008 Institute of Directors North West Awards.

Contact Details

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