

RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP DRIVE DMACK FIESTA TROPHY RISING STARS

THE RISING STAR OF GUS GREENSMITH

"I don't want to be a 'good' driver, I want to be a great driver" - Greensmith

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All photos: @World / Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy

19-year-old **Gus Greensmith** started rallying two years ago but has already made his mark on the rallying world; 2014 saw him win five out of six rallies securing the **Junior British Rally Championship** and **BRC3** titles in the process.

This feat meant he was the youngest British Junior Champion in history; In 2015 he made the step up to the **Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy**, *"Arguably the hardest, most competitive and toughest championship for junior drivers in the world."* Greensmith tells **The Checkered Flag**.

"In my first year, despite lots of issues, I became the youngest ever Drive DMACK Rookie Champion whilst being 5 years younger than any other DDFT entrant." he adds.

Like many drivers in motor sport Greensmith started out in Karting, we asked him how he ended up in rallying, *"It was the natural choice for me, from the moment I got into karting in 2008 and leaving karting in 2012 after doing the CIK-FIA U18 World Championships, Rallying was the only motor sport I wanted to do."*

"It has the best drivers and it also offers the thrill of skimming past trees at over 160kph. No other motorsport comes close, and so that is why it was easy for me to get into rallying."

"Financially, I have always been supported by my family. They have always been incredibly supportive and have given me the means to be able to compete. For that, I am forever grateful." he adds.

Everyone has their heroes and drivers that influence them and drive them to succeed, Greensmith's is the nine-time World Rally Champion Sebastien Loeb. *"I've always looked up to him because of his mentality, speed, commitment, attitude and leaving his talking for the stages."*



The DDFT competitors in Germany

As mentioned previously, Greensmith made the jump from the world stage with DDFT last season, *"The 2015 season was an incredibly steep learning curve for myself,"* he admits. *"We had lots of mechanical issues, and I was learning as much as I possibly could."*

"The overall standings didn't show how positive my pace was, but I gained lots of experience thanks to the Drive DMACK team, numerous members of M-Sport and from other drivers and co-drivers. My plan was always to gain experience then move onto my second season with wins and the title as my aim. I know I have the speed, so we'll see how that plans out next year..."

For Greensmith the season gets underway on home turf as he takes on the opening round of the reinvigorated **MSA British Rally Championship**, *"I am competing in the season opener to stake my claim on a win. Whether that will happen or not, is unsure but I know I can win; However, anything can happen in this sport."*

"From then on 100% of my focus will be on the DDFT for the remainder on the year. It's what I need to win to progress in my career quickly. I have no doubt however that the new Junior BRC platform is extremely exciting and will offer great competition."

"I am friendly with a driver (Meirion Evans) who is competing in the BRC Junior class, and I know he is a fast driver. That proves the Junior BRC class is attracting the right people. So although I would love to defend my title, it is not what I will be doing in 2016."



Greensmith in action on Rally Portugal

With the opening BRC round and the DDFT season planned Greensmith is looking to fill his calendar with other opportunities that will help him develop, and will be taking part in the recce on Monte-Carlo, Sweden, Italy and France.

"As I have so little experience in rallying, my pacenotes are my main weakness. So I have to dedicate almost every breath to perfecting my notes, that's why I was so adamant that I needed [co-driver] Alex Gelsomino. He and hard work can take me to that next level where I need to be to shine on the world stage."

Alex Gelsomino comes with a seal of approval as **Ken Block's** regular co-driver, "I don't think I've ever met someone so committed, hard-working and enthusiastic about what he does," says Greensmith who took part in Wales Rally GB with the Italian, "But it doesn't matter how good a person is if you don't have a bond with them, you could never work as a team.

"Rallying is a team sport so that bond is vital and it was a great feeling when we finally got in the car together and that the 100% trust and for me; respect was there instantly. We bonded well and so I'm sure 2016 will be a year where I make 'leaps and bounds' forward in improvements. I will continue to push myself and work harder so I can get the result we both deserve."



RallyRACC Catalunya Spain

While 2016 will be a development year for Greensmith, he has one clear goal in his site, *“My hope for the 2016 season is to win the Drive-DMACK Fiesta Trophy. Competition will be extremely tough and the pace will be unrelenting. But, the preparation, time away rallying or doing reccing and the hard work will shine through.*

“Even if we don’t win, I know my pace will be right at the very front. If it’s not, then something is wrong and I need to re-think what is going wrong. Thankfully I am blessed with the extra few years on my side so I have a little more time to improve.

Although he has time on his side he has a strong ambition and is confident that he can achieve his goals, *“I don’t think I’ll need them and I also don’t want to be a ‘good’ driver, I want to be a great driver so I need to achieve these goals at a much younger age than everyone else. I won’t achieve them by turning up so I’ll be putting in the effort away from the stages.”*

The MSA British Rally Championship starts the 2016 with the **Mid Wales Stages** on 5/6 March and the Drive DMACK Fiesta Trophy gets underway at **Vodafone Rally de Portugal** from 19 May.

Keep up to date with the latest news from Gus Greensmith via his twitter [@GreensmithGus](#)