

PACENOTES

THE JORDAN RALLY NEWSLETTER

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Our Dead Sea-cret is out



As Jordan prepares to unveil one of the world's first rallies that has been totally tailor-made to meet FIA World Rally Championship regulations, one of its best kept secrets has been let out of the bag.

For Millenniums, the mystical powers of the Dead Sea, earth's lowest point, have been well publicized through such diverse publications as the Bible to modern day cosmetics magazines.

Rich in minerals, the Dead Sea has become world-famous for its healing powers and for producing skin and beauty products, but it is currently playing a role few could imagine.

As well as relocating its headquarters, press centre and service park to the banks of the Dead Sea this year, the new stages currently being created for the new-

look Jordan Rally from May 25-27 are being soaked in Dead Sea water to provide a magic finishing touch.

Jordan Rally clerk of the course, Ziad Louza, explains why: "On one of our fact finding trips to Finland last year, we learned that their stages are perfect because for much of the



year the tracks are under salt because of the snow. It helps to compact the surface making them ideal for rallying.

"The Dead Sea is the most salty body of water on earth so as each stage is completed we have been treating it with water to make them rock solid for rallying."

All of the stages for the 2006 Jordan Rally are located within 60 kms of the rally headquarters which will be housed within the multi-million dollar Al Hussein International Convention Centre.

In a massive boost for the event, Jordan Motorsport signed a memo of understanding (MoU) with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works who are carrying out all of the work free of charge. The deal is expected to exceed two million dollars.

Government backs Jordan Rally

Overhauling a major international event takes a massive team effort, but Jordan's bid to become an FIA WRC round is a national initiative that has just received substantial government backing.

Jordan Motorsport has signed an MoU with the Ministry of Housing and Public Works to carry out all of the work on the new stages currently taking shape within a stone's throw of the Dead Sea.

It will also ensure that the Jordan Rally is one of the most compact and centralized rallies in the world with all the action taking place within 60 kms of the Dead Sea rally headquarters.



The Ministry is currently working round the clock with officials from Jordan Motorsport to ensure that the Jordan Rally presents a fresh face to the rally world.

"It is a privilege to be able to support a national initiative like the FIA WRC bid," said H.E. Hussni Abu Ghaida Minister for Housing and Public Works. "Such an event brings long lasting benefits for the Kingdom so it was important for us to play a role in ensuring that the rally is tailor made to world-class standards."

The new-look Jordan Rally will unveil over 50 per cent of new stages with most of the remaining stages re-worked and renovated. Jordan's unique selling point will be the fact that most of the rally will be held under sea level.

Season in full swing

HRH Prince Feisal Al Hussein, Chairman of Jordan Motorsport, was on hand to present the trophies at the season's opening speed test and karting events in March.

Taking up where he left off last season was 2005 speed king Ayman Najjar who clinched the first speed test of the season in 2.04:42 minutes. In second and third came newcomers to the scene last season Ala'a Khalifa and Othman Nasif respectively.



There was a batch of young newcomers too at the season's first karting event which was won by Tareq Sukhtiyah followed by Ayman Al-Raseekh and Hamza Abdul Hadi.

Local scene goes 'regional'

The FIA Motor Sport Council rubber stamped a proposal to create a new 'West' Middle East Zone for National Championships.

The new zone will consist of Cyprus, Lebanon, Syria and Jordan and will allow citizens of those countries to compete in each other's national championships.

The decision was warmly received by Jordanian drivers who can now look forward to more competition within their own National Championship as well as being able to gain valuable experience by competing more often outside of Jordan.