**A Guide on how to get involved in Motorsport**

The best first step you can take is join your local motor club. This will allow to you see what types of motorsport are out there. There are 6 main motor Clubs in North Wales

Harlech & District Motor Club (Harlech and Surround Area) Carenarfon & Anglesey Car Club (North West Corner of North Wales in Anglesey) North Wales Car Club (Llandudno and surround area) Rhyl & District Motor Club ( Guess) Clwyd Vale Motor Club ( Denbigh and surround area) Broughton-Bretton Motor Club (Wrexham/Mold area) Welsh Border Car Club (Oswestry Area).

All clubs have strong involvement in clubman and national motorsport in particular rallying, auto testing and trials.

My first piece of advice to you is JOIN your local motor club as this is the first step you need to take to become involved. Once you have joined your local club, don't be afraid to ask questions to the clubs members, whether it be what car they run, how long have they been doing it, or what's the best brake pads to use on a gravel stage rally. They will always be someone to help you with your query.

If its experience you’re after then the easiest and cheapest way to gain it is though marshalling. Whether you want to have ago at stage rallying or autotest. The best way to see if the type motorsport you fancy doing is for you, is go marshalling. This will give you an insight into how the sport works and what it involves plus it gives you insight into how the crews tackle the sport. As well as giving access to areas in which spectators don't get access to.

**What are the different types of motor sport available?**

**Stage Rallying:**

Special Stage rallying can be a rally though the gravel forest to a tarmac stage round a race circuit. If you fancy yourself as a bit of Colin Mcrae or seb loeb then this is for you. This is the mostly costly of the 4 sports I'm going to tell you about. Once you have kitted you car out with the following safety gear, roll cage, tank and sump guard, fire extinguishers, power cut off switch, bucket seats, 3 inch 4 point harnesses along with a few other necessary pieces of kit. You need to get yourself kitted out which means a 2 layer nomex face suit and a crash helmet that meets certain MSA (motorsport association) regulations minimum. Along with tyres and fuel and some performance mods and you’re ready.

The idea of a stage rally is to drive a specific section of road of circuit layout in the quickest time possible, whilst keep your car in one piece.  Stage rally classes are based on engine size.  IF you want to drive on a stage rally you need to do a BARS test, which cost approx. £250 and entitles you to a Stage Rally Driver National B. IF you just want to co-drive you can apply for the co-driving license (non-Race National B) right away - Approx. £40

Multi venue Forest rallies can have a route of anywhere 75 miles to 250miles with about 25 - 150 competitive stage miles. A basic entry fee for a forest rally can cost anywhere from £250 to £1250 depending on the event. i.e. Cambrian Forest rally that runs through Clocaneog Forest cost aboit £400 to enter alone and has 45 competitive miles.  You also need to have your car Tax and insured

Single Venue Tarmac Rallies can have a route of 25-75 competitive miles and because it all on private land you only have to have an MOT (if your trailering your car there) A basic entry fee for single venue car vary from £130 to £250 event depending. (ie an single venue rally at Angelsey Race Circuit which has 50 competitive miles cost approx £220.

**Road Rallying:**

Is a lot cheaper compared to a stage rally especially when it comes to entry fees. A road rally can have a route anywhere between 75-175 miles and can cost approx. £60-£90 per event. Plus, you can pretty much do an event in totally road standard car, but most people choose to install a roll cage, bucket seats, spot lights, sump and tank guard and harnesses. The idea of a road rally is to plot a set route using maps and various navigation skills such as 6 figure grid references to plot your route, then drive the route whilst visiting controls along the route. This isn't about speed as you are timed at 30mph average speed. Penalties are applied for early arrival ie if you arrive 2 minutes early at a control you are given a 4 minute penalty. If you arrive 1 minute late you are given a 1 min penalty. If you arrive on your scheduled time then you incur no penalties.  There are some slightly different rules for road rallying compare to stage rallying:

You can only use 4 cylinder vehicles, no turbos are allowed. A maximum of 4 forward facing beams, and no graphics are allowed on the car. You also have to keep the cars interior in the car so carpet, rear seats and headline lings needs to retained. Classes are based on experience, Master, Expert, Semi Expert, Novice,  Beginner. You need a non-race national B license from the MSA to driver or navigate on road rallies - Approx. £40 from the MSA

There are various formats of road rallying as well:

12 Car Rally - like a mini road rally but for a maximum of 12 cars

 Scatter Rally - Similar to a treasure hunt

Historic Road Rally - Run as a road rally but the section can be timed at various speeds and usually include special tests

Road Rallies are usually run on country lanes and small track along with the odd field, farmyard, private land or forestry thrown in for good measure.

Whereas most stage rallies are running during the day, a road rally is run at night and usually starts at about 11pm and finish at 6am.

Some key pieces of navigation equipment you will need for a road rally as well as map, pens, pencils, clipboard, clock, eraser and a Potti and a Romer. No a Potti isn't in case you need the Loo during the event, it allows to read the map clear in the dark and low light levels.. It is a magnifying glass with a light on so the map can be seen clearly whilst traveling.  A Romer is a small piece of plastic that allows you to plot a 6 figure grid reference with accuracy.

**Autotesting**

Autotesting is an even cheaper way to get into Motorsport and is perfect for improving and learning you driving skills. All an autotest is, a race against a clock around a course made up of markers/cones and last about 2 minutes. The course could involve maneuvers such as hand brake turns, 360 spins, reverse spins and a host of other driving skills. Events can be held in car parks, to fields and cost anywhere from £5-£30 to enter. Anything from a standard road car can be used to a custom built mini special ( mini chassis with no roof) for Autotesting. Penalities are incurred for performing the wrong test and clipping markers and line faults.

Autotest : Is where you have a set course and it’s just you, your car and the clock.

Autosolo is the same as an autotest but just included forward motion, no reverse

Production Car Autotest: Same as a normal autotest, but you are allowed a passenger with you and all cars must be standard production, so no special built jobs.

**Trials:**

Another cheap form of Motorsport is trials, where you have a set course , but this time it could be up a hill in a field though a particular muddy section of a forest. The aim here again is the get though the course make sure you go in between the markers in the correct sequence in the quickest of time, whilst not getting stuck or failing to get up the hill

**Hill Climbing/Sprints**

This were you have circuit or section of road up the hill and you are timed how long it takes to go up or around the section. Classes are bases on Engine size and experience.

All the events above are run in accordance the MSA rules and regulations which can be found in the competitor’s year book. All officially organised events are covered under the MSA event insurance for 3rd party damage. Any event that is not run to these rules and regulation is not covered by the MSA insurance. For each event insurance has to be a paid up front.