

**2005 FIA Middle East Rally Championship
Round 7 – Cyprus Troodos Rally (7th-9th October 2005)**

EXCITEMENT BUILDS AHEAD OF ‘NEW’ CYPRUS TROODOS RALLY

The holiday island of Cyprus is set to once again welcome many of the world’s top drivers, who will be battling for victory in the Mediterranean sunshine.

The annual Troodos Rally, the penultimate round in the 2005 FIA Middle East Rally Championship (MERC), is just weeks away and the organizers are hard at work to ensure that this is the greatest event yet.

Organised by the Cyprus Automobile Association (CAA) with sponsorship from Chevrolet and Valvoline, the 2005 Troodos Rally is set for 7th-9th October, and promises a weekend packed full of action. Offering a change of venue for 2005, the Rally will this year be based around the coastal resort of Larnaca.

Entries close for the event on the 8th September, but a strong field of international drivers is already lined up. The ceremonial start will take place on Larnaca’s palm tree-lined seafront promenade (known as Phinikoudes) on the evening of Friday 7th October, while the finish and prize-giving will take place at the same place on Sunday 9th October. Scrutineering will take place ahead of the event at the Peugeot Service Facility in Aradhippou village, while the Service Park will be located at Larnaca’s Zinonas Stadium.

As well as a new base, the rally will also feature a host of new stages, based in the countryside between Larnaca and Limassol. The competing crews will cover a total of 787.53km over the weekend, including 230km of special stage action. There will be 24 special stages in total. The special stages promise to be fast and exciting, providing plenty of easily-accessible thrills for spectators to enjoy.

Media coverage is expected to be considerable. As well as the major sports broadcasters from the Middle East, Sky Sports will cover the event with three 30-minute TV spots – ensuring that the action is broadcast into countless homes.

Speaking ahead of the event, Clerk of the Course Demetris Ioannou said: “We are all looking forward to this year’s event, which promises to be an all-new Troodos Rally. There have been some exceptional rounds in this year’s Middle East Rally Championship, and we’re going to ensure that our event is right up there among the best. For 2005, we’ve got new facilities, new routes, and some fast, fast action to keep the fans and the competitors on their toes. This will be an event we can all be proud of.”

ENDS

6th September 2005

Troodos Rally Press Office