

CASE STUDY



M-Sport
races ahead
with new brushless
range from SPAL



M-Sport, one of the world's leading private rally racing teams with a string of international titles and rally wins to its credit, has been one of the first to adopt SPAL Automotive's new generation brushless 500W fans.

The new fans are completely sealed, designed for high performance and, crucially for motor racing, they are light in weight.

In the world of motor sport, logos are printed rather than embroidered and pockets are removed from overalls in the drive to save weight. That's why the saving of 1.74 kilos delivered by SPAL's latest brushless fan, represents a huge step forward, according to M-Sport's Managing Director, Malcolm Wilson.

"The brushless fans are more efficient, the fact that they save weight is the Holy Grail for us on competition cars. The fan sits high up in the engine bay so by reducing the weight the centre of gravity is improved."



"To save 30% on the weight of the fan is very valuable and creates a real competitive edge for our 2017 Fiesta World Rally Car, which will be introduced at the Monte Carlo Rally early next year. We're still testing at the moment, but the potential benefit to the team is clear." As a winner of two British national titles in the 70s and victor of the British international rally series in 1994, former rally driver turned business man Malcolm knows a thing or two about competition cars. Since securing the Ford contract in 1997, he has steered M-Sport towards R&D, so that in addition to developing and manufacturing its own cars, the company has gained a reputation for improving cars, focusing on increased efficiency and optimal performance.

SPAL is immensely proud to have been a preferred supplier from the early days. As Malcolm Wilson confirms, **every rally car from M-Sport since 1997 has had a SPAL fan fitted, including its world rally cars.**

"We place great importance on the longstanding relationships we have with suppliers like SPAL," he says.

"Back in the beginning we had just 2 cars, so volumes were very small – now we have 1000 customer rally cars worldwide and many of those same companies are still suppliers."

Malcolm explains that **there is no better test for performance than a world rally**, with temperatures reaching extremes of -30°C to +30°C.

"We mix and match according to each event, but the fact that SPAL fans are sealed and waterproof is very important to us. **There's no question, we wouldn't be using SPAL fans if they didn't provide an advantage,**" he says.





Much of the development and evolution of SPAL fans has been based on feedback or requests over the years from customers like Mark Aitken, Head of Electrical Development at M-Sport, who has played a central role in the testing of the new 2017 Fiesta World Rally Car.

“M-Sport is an independent company up against competitors with significant resources – including some of the biggest OEMs in the world,” Mark says. “So every minute of experience and expertise counts in getting a car competition ready. Our job is to optimise every element to gain competitive edge, updating and innovating wherever possible. In first generation tests, we reduced the SPAL fan weight by 640g, saving 10%, now we have reduced it by 1740g, achieving more flow, increased efficiency and improved the overall performance of the car by a huge margin!”

He adds,



“At the end of day, it’s all about efficiency – from a design point of view, it’s about better cooling, less weight and more power – from a production point of view, we’re looking for fuel economy and reduced emissions. If we carry less fuel, we carry less weight.”



Managing Director of SPAL Automotive UK, Matthew Morris comments, “SPAL Group in Italy has a long and distinguished association with Motor Racing over the decades and is proud of the investment and innovation it has taken to stay at the forefront of this most demanding industry. That we have been able to work closely in the UK with a company of the calibre of M-Sport over the last twenty years, grow with them and ultimately contribute to the success of their teams is a great privilege and a true accolade for SPAL.”

M-Sport is growing rapidly as the company moves into new areas, such as GT Racing with Bentley Motorsport, and currently it is making major investment into their M-Sport Evaluation Centre.

The new project will increase manufacturing capability, enabling M-Sport to produce as much as possible in-house, doubling capacity and facilitating extension into new markets outside of motorsport. It also includes plans for the first private prototype testing track in the UK, all of which is great news for M-Sport and great news for SPAL Automotive!



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