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News release

Loudon joins world-beating team for WRC return

Glasgow rally star Stuart Loudon will return to the World Rally Championship later this month, joining the prestigious, world rally-winning Abu Dhabi Racing Team for the legendary Tour de Corse.

The Scottish co-driver joins rising UAE star Mohamed Al Mutawaa aboard an Abu Dhabi Racing Team DS 3 R3T on the September 29-October 2 event. Ahead of the Bastia-based world championship qualifier, Stuart and Mohamed will meet for a test in Lyon, France on Friday September 23.

The Tour de Corse will be Loudon's first outing in the Junior WRC, the feeder series for the main world championship field, and his first time competing in Corsica.

"I'm really excited about the chance to co-drive Mohamed in Corsica," said Loudon. "Everybody in the sport knows about the challenge this island provides – it's not known as the rally of 10,000 corners for nothing!

"Mohamed's shown plenty of pace in what is a very competitive Junior WRC field this season. He's clearly a talent for the future and is coming from a region where rallying's really popular. Abu Dhabi is synonymous with success in the world championship thanks to Sheikh Khalid Al-Qassimi and, of course Kris and Paul winning in Portugal and Finland earlier this season.

"The chance to join a team of the standing and professionalism of Abu Dhabi Racing is a fantastic opportunity for me and one I intend to make the most of. I'm fortunate that one of my closest friends in the sport – Scott Martin – works for the team co-driving Craig Breen. Scott's already given me some guidance about what to expect from Corsica.

"The event will also be my very first time competing in a DS 3 R3T, it's always nice to get more experience of another car."

Mohamed admitted he was looking forward to welcoming Stuart aboard the Abu Dhabi car. He added: "This is a great opportunity for me. I look forward to working with Stuart and to learn from his experience. I think we will have good chemistry on the stages in France."

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Stuart Loudon Q&A on his World Rally Championship return

How did this opportunity come about?

SL: "I got a telephone call from the Abu Dhabi Racing Team to ask if I would be available to co-drive for Mohamed [Al Mutawaa] in Corsica. The answer was an immediate yes!"

What do you expect from Corsica?

SL: "It's a very technical rally and possibly not the easiest to join a new team and new driver in a new car. There's an element of being in at the deep end here, but I'm really relishing the challenge. Everybody knows about the challenge this event poses, it's corner, corner, corner all the time, so the pace notes have to be absolutely perfect."

The test ahead of the event will be important for you to get used to Mohamed's notes?

SL: "It will. I understand Chris Patterson [Sheikh Khalid Al-Qassimi's co-driver] will be at the test to work with Mohamed and give him an insight into what's needed from pace notes at the highest level. This is a fantastic chance for me to work with a guy like Chris as well – he's one of the best and most experienced co-drivers in the World Rally Championship."

This is a busy time for you at the moment...

SL: "All of my life I've worked towards the becoming a professional co-driver in the World Rally Championship. The chance to work with Abu Dhabi Racing Team is brilliant and another vital step towards achieving my goal."

Abu Dhabi Racing Team

Based out of the world-leading Yas Marina Formula 1 circuit, the Abu Dhabi Racing Team is led by World Rally Championship star Sheikh Khalid Al-Qassimi.

As well as sporting success, this Abu Dhabi-based company's aim is to further the emirate's presence in global motorsport.

Along with the Sheikh and co-driver Chris Patterson, the Abu Dhabi Total WRT's 2016 challenge is led by Kris Meeke/Paul Nagle, Craig Breen/Scott Martin and Stephane Lefebvre/Gabin Moreau. Those four crews are driving DS 3 WRCs on selected rounds of this year's World Rally Championship.

Meeke/Nagle and Breen/Martin achieved the team's best result of the season so far, finishing first and third on the world's fastest rally: Rally Finland.

In addition to those elite World Rally Car crews, Abu Dhabi Racing Team is also running a development programme for junior drivers, offering burgeoning stars such as UAE's Mohamed Al Mutawaa a programme and a platform to launch and cement their careers at rallying's highest level.

DS 3 R3T

Engine: 1598cc turbo, EP6 CDT, four-cylinder, direct-injection
Power: 243bhp @ 4750rpm

Torque: 430Nm @ 3000rpm
Transmission: Front-wheel drive, self-locking ZF differential
Gearbox: 6-speed sequential with paddle shift
Suspension: McPherson type; BOS three-way adjustable shock absorbers
Brakes: 330x34mm 4-piston calipers
Wheels: 7x17-inch
Tyres: Michelin 19/63-17
Weight: 1230kg

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