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News release

Stuart brings up the 100 in fine style

Glasgow's Stuart Loudon celebrated a centenary of rally starts at the Pirelli International Rally in Carlisle today – and he did so with an exceptional finish on the opening round of this year's British Rally Championship (BRC).

Co-driving Lawrence Whyte on his first ever BRC outing, the Ford Fiesta R5 pair thundered through the Kielder forests close to the Scottish border to finish seventh.

"Before the start, we thought a result around 10th would be really positive," said Stuart, "so to come home seventh, we're really chuffed with that. This has been another step forward for Lawrence – he'd never done a recce before and now that's another aspect of the sport he understands much more.

"I'm impressed with how he's built on the speed and shown genuine progression since we started working at the start of the season. That last stage was really strong for us. OK, there'd been some niggles with the handbrake not working perfectly earlier in the day, but it all came right in what was a fast and flowing final stage."

Now, the talk about the big 100.

Stuart's competitive career began on the Mull Forest Rally in 2006 and has taken him right around the world in the last 12 years. He is, of course, the third generation of motorsport fan and competitor in the family, following grandfather Boyd Tunnock and father Fergus Loudon into the sport.

Asked about his achievement in reaching the landmark 100th event, Stuart said: "To be honest, I can't believe it's come around so quickly. It feels like no time since I was starting out on that first event.

"There have been some real highs in those 100 starts and some real emotion. At times it's been a rollercoaster... I remember a three-week period in 2016 when I crashed off the road at high speed in Corsica; then retired from the third stage of RallyLegend with Alister McRae in a Subaru Legacy RS that Colin [McRae] had driven and finally went on to win the Mull Rally for the second time with John MacCrone. Incredible.

"But what's probably more important than anything is the career progression I've managed and am so determined to continue.

"I've been fortunate enough to work quite closely with reigning World Rally Champion co-driver Julien Ingrassia during my time as a co-ordinator with M-Sport World Rally Team and that's given me an insight into what's required at the highest, elite level of co-driving. That's what I started out striving for 12 years ago and it's what I continue to push for today.

"My goal remains the World Rally Championship. Here's to the next 100 rallies."

Stuart's top three co-driving memories...

1 Mull Rally, 2013

Winning the Mull Rally for the first time was very, very special. I've always loved the island and that rally and winning with John [MacCrone] was fantastic. And to do it in the Ford Fiesta S2400, a real weapon of a car that sounded absolutely incredible, was even better.

2 Rallye Monte-Carlo, 2014

The Monte is probably the world's most famous rally, so to finish second of the regular WRC2 runners with Rob Barrable in a car liveried like a Tunnock's Teacake was brilliant.

3 Beijing Huairou Rally, 2015

That first event with Alister McRae in China turned out to be a real baptism of fire. The car wasn't the best, but Alister drove brilliantly and we were pretty pleased with a podium first time out. Al's pacenote system was new to me, so I had to get used to that while learning a bit of pigeon Chinese pretty quickly as well!

Stuart's co-driving timeline...

2006 starts rally number one, the Mull Forest Rally. Retired from the lead alongside John Gray in a Ford Escort Mk1

2011 international rally debut – class win on Britain's round of the World Rally Championship

2012 competes in the World Rally Championship Academy

2013 first overall victory on the prestigious Mull Rally

2014 scores a podium for third place in WRC2 on the Monte Carlo Rally... then makes his television debut co-driving England cricketer Graeme Swann on Wales Rally GB

2015 joins Scottish rallying royalty to co-drive Alister McRae in the Chinese Rally Championship

2016 second on the opening British Rally Championship round of the season alongside British WRC star Matthew Wilson

2017 rally #96 is with the M-Sport World Rally Team, co-driving Matthew Wilson on Britain's round of the World Rally Championship – Wales Rally GB

2018 working with rising Scottish star Lawrence Whyte, Stuart hits the centenary on the Pirelli International Rally

Just before we go... we shouldn't forget Stuart's not a bad driver either. Competing on rallies with the steering wheel rather than a pacenote book or map in his hand, he managed a third in class on the 2013 Jim Clark Rally driving a Mitsubishi Lancer Evo IX.

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Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started **100** rallies, 20 of which are rounds of the World Rally Championship and one of which was with an Ashes-winning English cricketer. He makes biscuits in the family business when he's not working towards his dream of becoming a factory co-driver in the WRC.

Stuart Loudon and Words PR work their socks off to make sure every last dot and detail of the document is 100 per cent accurate – but we can't be responsible for any changes to the itinerary or stage distances.