

News release – event preview  
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### **Loudon and Gray, reunited for McRae**

A decade ago, Scotland lost its greatest sporting personality and the world lost its fastest and most spectacular motorsport hero when Colin McRae died on September 15, 2007.

To mark the passing of Britain's first ever World Rally Champion a decade on, the Coltness Car Club – the club to which Colin himself belonged – will run the McRae Gravel Challenge in Craigvinean Forest, Perthshire on Saturday September 23.

McRae's fellow Lanarkshire lad Stuart Loudon will compete on the day, but his entry comes with a very special driver that will reunite a Loudon co-driver with John Gray.

Stuart's father was a Scottish Rally Championship frontrunner and West of Scotland Champion with Gray, when the pair competed together for almost 20 years. Now, it's Loudon Jr's turn to guide Gray through the woods.

"I actually did my first rally alongside John," said Stuart. "We did a forest rally together on Mull in 2006 and we were leading after the first three stages before we had to retire with a cracked sump. Leading my first ever rally was fantastic and, at the time, I probably thought: "Och, there's nothing to this co-driving business..." Turns out there's plenty to it!

"I love co-driving as much today as I did the day I started, or the days I watched Dad competing with John. And that's the reason why I'm still pushing so hard to become a professional co-driver. It's my dream and I'm determined to make it a reality.

"Co-driving for John again will be great – and a real blast from the past. And Craigvinean's one of those iconic forests, so many stories lurk between the trees and I'm sure there will be a few more by the time we've finished for the day."

The day is all about Colin McRae though and Stuart admits it will be an emotional experience.

"I still can't believe it's 10 years," he said. "I've been so fortunate in that our families have been friends and I've co-driven for Alister on plenty of occasions.

"But, like everybody else in our world, Colin was the absolute hero for me. I remember staying up all hours to hear him competing on the other side of the world. I own a Subaru road car and it's in *that* blue with *those* [gold] wheels

– and it's like that because of Colin McRae. There are thousands of folk around the world just like me and that's the thing about Colin, he became this massive global superstar. But, at the same time, he kept his feet on the ground and remained a typical Lanarkshire lad.

"I'm incredibly proud when I tell people I'm from Lanarkshire because, in the world of rallying, that place is remembered for one reason and one family: the McRaes. Colin was unique. He was a real boy's own hero and I'm not sure we'll see that again – which makes it all the important that we remember just how important he was to Scotland and to motorsport."

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**Stuart Loudon** is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 93 rallies, 19 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.