

News release
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Stuart enjoys sweet World Rally Championship return

Glasgow co-driver Stuart Loudon returned to World Rally Championship action alongside rising British star Gus Greensmith for ADAC Rallye Deutschland this week.

Stepping in at the last minute after Greensmith's regular co-driver Craig Parry was injured in a testing crash, Stuart worked into the night ahead of the event to ensure his preparations were perfect.

Unfortunately for Stuart, the event was cut short following a series of freak circumstances earlier in the rally. He and Gus retired the M-Sport World Rally Team-run Ford Fiesta R5 at the end of day two on Saturday night.

"It's been fantastic to be back in the car again," said Stuart, "and fantastic to compete alongside Gus. As I said before the event, our thoughts are best wishes are with Craig; nobody wants to step in under these sort of circumstances, but there was a job to be done and I'm really pleased I was in a position to help Gus.

"I have to say, I was very impressed with the speed he showed and the ability really shone through in some very, very tricky conditions in the rain on Friday.

"It's not easy for a driver to have a different voice reading their pacenotes back to them, but Gus acclimatised really quickly. From my side, there was a bit of work to do before the rally; like all co-drivers, I'm a bit of a perfectionist and I wanted to re-write all the notes so I could read them from my own handwriting.

"To be running in the top five on our first morning together was a great start to the event for us."

It wasn't to last. A broken driveshaft on the day's penultimate test left the four-wheel drive Fiesta with power only to the rear wheels. To keep the car in the rally, roadside repairs had to be made and in completing those, Gus fractured his thumb. He drove through Saturday morning, but the pair were caught out in one of the season's most tricky stages: Panzerplatte.

The 24-mile (38.57km) Panzerplatte stage has to be seen to be believed. It takes the crews away from the vineyards and the Mosel valley and into the 12,000-hectare Baumholder military area. Home to 4000 American soldiers who use these same roads to test their 60-tonne tanks, the troops were stood down for the day as the rally came through.

The Fiesta suffered radiator damage in the stage and fearing engine damage, the decision was made to switch the car off and call it a day.

“That was such a shame,” said Stuart. “Panzerplatte is one of Gus’s favourite stages of the season and, even with his fractured thumb, his pace through there was superb.

“Naturally, it’s disappointing not to finish. But to be co-driving alongside one of the world’s rising stars like Gus and to be back working with a world champion team like M-Sport and has just served to confirm my determination to make it to the top in the co-drivers’ seat.”

ADAC Rallye Deutschland in detail

FIA World Rally Championship round 9/13

Date: Thursday August 16 – Sunday August 19

Based: Bostalsee

Service: Bostalsee

Stages: 18

Competitive distance: 325.76km (202.42 miles)

Liaison distance: 896.13km (556.85 miles)

Total distance: 1221.89km (759.28miles)

Shortest stage: SS1 St. Wendel 2.04km (1.26 miles)

Longest stage: SS9/13 Panzerplatte 38.57km (23.96 miles)

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Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 103 rallies, 21 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.