

News release
28.10.17

Double Rally GB puncture forces early bath for Loudon

What happened?

The second full day of Wales Rally GB was running well for Stuart as he and Matthew Wilson maintained their position on the fringes of the top 10 WRC2 cars. Their day would end prematurely, however, when the Tunnock's-backed Ford Fiesta R5 suffered two punctures on the second run through Dyfi. With only one spare tyre, the pair were forced to call it a day – but they will return for the final day tomorrow (Sunday).

What else happened?

Stuart's M-Sport team-mates Elfyn Evans and Dan Barritt remain firmly in control of Wales Rally GB. The final two stages of the day did, however, shake up the order with Ott Tänak slipping down to sixth in the fog, while Sébastien Ogier moved back up the order into second place. The Frenchman's drive even more impressive given that he tackled SS16 with only three brakes after damaging a wheel when he slipped off the road in the fog on Aberhirnant.

What was the weather like?

Yesterday's blue skies and sunshine couldn't last, could they...? This morning dawned mistier and considerably murkier. There was fog and drizzle around early on, but it cleared up for the afternoon and evening.

Tell us something about Saturday...

Saturday contained, by some margin, the longest loop of the rally the crews had to compete on using the same set of tyres. From the first service at Deeside (0610) and returning to the teams at 1655

What did Stuart say?

"Retiring from any rally is a disappointment, but today *really* is. We'd had a bit of a mixed morning with quite a bit of fog around and some more inconsistent conditions, but the times and the confidence for Matthew were really coming.

"Everything was working well in the car and Matt and I were really enjoying it when we got the first puncture on the second run through Dyfi. We stopped and changed the wheel, but then we had a second puncture on the road section towards the Cholmondeley stage, when the tyre just let go. We had more than 100 kilometres (62 miles) to go, it simply wasn't possible to carry on.

"For the first puncture, the roads were a little bit more rutted on the second run through and that's what we think has happened: the tyre's been knocked off the rim. Equally, there had been some pretty big rocks pulled out, so it

could have been one of those that inflicted some damage for the second puncture. The result is the same, we're out for the rest of today.

"Today was the longest day of the event and a real test of stamina and endurance. And the final part of that was the two stages in the dark through Aberhirnant and Dyfnant; Matt and I were both really so disappointed to miss out on them. There's something special about competing at night, but let's put that behind us now and focus on tomorrow."

Tell us a Tunnock's tale:

From 1.5 tonnes of caramel per hour yesterday to 25 tonnes of coconut per month today... that's how much Tunnock's import to sprinkle on top of those delicious snowballs.

Today was...

SS8 Aberhirnant 1 13.91km (8.64 miles) 0755
SS9 Dyfnant 1 17.91km (11.12 miles) 0847
SS10 Gartheiniog 1 12.61km (7.83miles) 0959
SS11 Dyfi 1 25.86km (16.06 miles) 1028
SS12 Gartheiniog 2 12.61km (7.83miles) 1208
SS13 Dyfi 2 25.86km (16.06 miles) 1237
SS14 Cholmondeley Castle 1.80km (1.11 miles) 1548
Service Deeside 1637
**SS15 Aberhirnant 2 13.91km (8.64 miles) 1855*
SS16 Dyfnant 2 17.91km (11.12 miles) 1947
Parc Fermé 2213

Tomorrow is... Sunday October 29

SS17 Alwen 1 10.41km (6.46 miles) 0834
SS18 Brenig 1 6.43km (3.99 miles) 0908
SS19 Gwydir 7.49km (4.65 miles) 1006
SS20 Alwen 2 10.41km (6.46 miles) 1109
SS21 Brenig 2 6.43km (3.99 miles) 1218
Parc Fermé 1335

**Stuart and Matthew retired before the last two stages*

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Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 95 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.

