

News release – event review
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From Teacakes to the Top 10, Stuart's whirlwind week

Lanarkshire rally co-driver Stuart Loudon was walking through the door for a Friday night out when his telephone rang. Could he come to Carlisle? Like...*now*.

Carlisle meant the start of the Pirelli International Rally, a rally won in the past by such superstars as Colin McRae, Richard Burns, Ari Vatanen and Malcolm Wilson. A rally Stuart finished second on last year with Matthew Wilson.

The call came from rising star of British rallying Alex Laffey.

The answer was, of course, yes.

Stuart explains how one phone call led to another. He said: "Just over a week ago, I was called by M-Sport to ask if I would go down to Jedburgh for a test with Alex. I was competing in Elgin [on the Speyside Stages with Dale Robertson] the next day, but, not having been in a rally car for a while, driving most of the way through Scotland on a Friday night was no drama.

"The test went well with Alex and I thought no more about it. I was working away at Tunnock's through the week, getting ready to keep a close eye on what was going on with the M-Sport World Rally Team in Argentina when Alex called and asked if I was available to co-drive on the Pirelli."

The timing was tight, but Stuart made Carlisle and signed on for the second round of the British Rally Championship just 10 minutes before the documentation centre closed.

"I was literally walking through the door when Alex called," said Stuart, "and I have to say I'm really sorry for my friends – I definitely left them in the lurch a bit. But it was worth it. Alex showed some real promise through the day, picking the pace up and driving well to set a couple of times in the top 10 late in the day. I'm really pleased for him and, of course, I was delighted to spend the day in an M-Sport Fiesta!"

After a fairly quiet period, Stuart admitted the last 10 days have been pretty hectic.

"It's been a bit of a whirlwind week, to be honest," he said. "After no competition for six months, I've done two rallies in eight days, made a few Teacakes and kept an eye on the M-Sport World Rally Team's progress in Argentina. That's my kind of week!"

Stuart's next outing will be in Portugal, where he will be back working on weather crew co-ordination with M-Sport on the next round of the World Rally Championship.

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Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 91 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.