

News release – event review
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Loudon back on the podium again

Lanarkshire co-driver Stuart Loudon stormed back to the forefront of British national rallying with a stunning third place finish on today's (Saturday) Trackrod Rally Yorkshire.

Co-driving Tom Preston's Skoda Fabia R5 car, Loudon guided the pair through some of the country's fastest stages, with speeds regularly topping 100mph between the trees. The only two cars to finish ahead of Uddingston's fastest biscuit baker were state-of-the art, more powerful World Rally Cars.

Stuart's third place was his second podium in as many months after he scored a similar result alongside Paul Bird in a Ford Focus RS WRC on the Grampian Stages in Aberdeenshire.

Understandably, Loudon was delighted with the result of his trip south to Filey this weekend.

"Places like Dalby forest are so well known in the world of rallying," said Stuart. "Back in the day, these places were right at the heart of Britain's round of the world championship – the RAC Rally – and the challenge they provided the crews back then absolutely remains today. We were lucky with the weather, it was dry and sunny, but the roads were still so slippery in places.

"Yorkshire's known for its high-speed roads and today reminded me why: the stages have big, long straights and even when you're coming out of quite tight corners, these cars pick up so quickly, you're on the limiter in top gear in no time – and you stay there watching the trees fly by!"

Stuart and Tom enjoyed a predictably trouble-free day in the Fabia run by expert Carlisle firm CA1 Sport.

Stuart continued: "Because of the work I'm doing with M-Sport in the World Rally Championship and being so busy making biscuits, I haven't done as much rallying as I would have liked this season. Events like the Trackrod are fantastic for reminding you just how important and how strong the sport is domestically and just what a great level it's at.

"I have to say, like I said about the McRae Gravel Challenge last Saturday, the organisation on the Trackrod was phenomenal. We started absolutely bang on time this morning and finished on the precise minute we were scheduled to finish this afternoon – that's brilliant organisation.

“But the best thing about the day for me is just being back in the car. There’s nothing like co-driving and days like today really remind me of that. Last weekend was fantastic with John [Gray] in the old [Opel] Manta, but jumping into a latest-specification Fabia R5 car today is great. The buzz is amazing and it keeps me sharp and determined to get to the top of this sport.”

Stuart now turns his attentions back to the World Rally Championship and his job helping co-ordinate M-Sport World Rally Team’s attack on Rally Spain, which starts in Salou on Thursday October 5.

Stuart’s usual Loudon-clear guide to round 11 of this year’s World Rally Championship will be issued on Monday October 2.

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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.