

The Loudon-clear guide to... Pirelli Carlisle Rally

You have no idea how good it is to be writing about a rally I'm actually competing on! I write these guides because I do all of the event research and statistics anyway, so it's a good way of sharing the information around.

But this time, I'll be following the itinerary listed below with Matthew Wilson in a Ford Fiesta R5 Evo. That is, providing it makes the final part of its journey from Argentina in one piece! As we work on this guide, the car is six miles high, somewhere over the Atlantic. It's kind of crazy to think it will have come off the legendary El Condor stage on Sunday and start The Shanks, 6,500 miles east and on a different continent, six days later.

Elfyn and Craig Parry were 21 seconds faster than anybody on their last Rally Argentina stage in the car, be nice if Matthew and I could do the same on the Pirelli Carlisle Rally opener!

I've been in Kielder a few times and it can be pretty fearsome. On a miserable day, it can be a dark and very fast place. I can't wait!

It's a genuine honour to sit alongside Matthew, a driver who was a regular points-scorer in the World Rally Championship for five years. On top of that, it's fantastic to be co-driving in a car run by Matthew's family firm, two-time world champions, M-Sport. And finally, it's epic to be out on a round of the fantastic British Rally Championship. Everybody's worked so hard to re-launch this series, so to be looking at it from the inside will be fascinating.

Have a great weekend. I know I will!

The rally ahead...

MSA British Rally Championship round 3/7

Date: April 30/May 1

Based: Carlisle

Service: Hawkhirst/Carlisle

Stages: 7

Competitive distance: 73.80 miles (118.08km)

Liaison distance: 141.12 miles (225.79km)

Total distance: 214.92 miles (343.87km)

Longest stage: SS7 Chirdonhead 16.15 miles (25.84km)

Shortest stage: SS5 Shepherdshield 6.51 miles (10.41km)

Sunrise: 0534

Sunset: 2046

Itinerary

Saturday April 30

Ceremonial start – Pirelli factory, Carlisle 1230

SS1 The Shanks 8.73 miles (13.96km) 1351

SS2 The Forks 15.33 miles (24.52km) 1416

Remote service Hawkhirst 1456

SS3 Roughside 7.16 miles (11.45km) 1600
SS4 Pundershaw 13.09 miles (20.94km) 1623
Service Carlisle 1758

Sunday May 1
Service Carlisle 0800
SS5 Shepherdshield 6.51 miles (10.41km) 0918
SS6 Blackaburn 6.83 miles (10.92km) 0942
SS7 Chirdonhead 16.15 miles (25.84km) 0959
Finish – Exhibition Hall, Carlisle 1142

Top 10 entries

- 1 Elfyn Evans/Craig Parry Ford Fiesta R5
- 2 Fredrik Åhlin/Morten Abrahamsen Ford Fiesta R5
- 3 David Bogie/Kevin Rae Škoda Fabia R5
- 4 Tom Cave/James Morgan Ford Fiesta R5
- 5 Matthew Wilson/Stuart Loudon Ford Fiesta R5
- 6 Marty McCormack/David Moynihan Škoda Fabia S2000
- 7 Euan Thorburn/Paul Beaton Peugeot 208T16
- 8 Desi Henry/Liam Moynihan Škoda Fabia R5
- 9 Jonny Greer/Kirsty Riddick DS3 R5
- 10 Neil Simpson/Elliott Edmondson Škoda Fabia R5

Stuart Loudon's key stage:

SS4 Pundershaw 13.09 miles (20.94km)

This might not be the longest of stages, but I think everybody knows about Pundershaw's punishing reputation. Courtesy of William Woollard, the ditches on this one seem just that bit deeper in this corner of 'killer Kielder'. And, don't forget, this stage comes at the end of Saturday, an afternoon without full service.

Stuart will be watching... David Bogie/Kevin Rae #3 Škoda Fabia R5

These boys have not had the easiest of starts to the season, but with the championship inching its way towards the Scottish border, David and Kevin could come into their own here. They're former winners of this event, know the roads reasonably well and will be well up for a fight.

Weather with you:

If you're faced with a choice of sunglasses and factor 15 or an umbrella and waterproof trousers, maybe bin the sunnies. Rain is featuring quite heavily on the weather radar. The good news? Saturday's warmer than Friday. The bad news is? Friday's pretty chilly. Friday 6 degrees; Saturday 12 degrees; Sunday 10 degrees. Friday, Saturday and Sunday precipitation central.

Media details:

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Friday April 29: 1100-2300
Saturday April 30: 0900-2200
Sunday May 1: 0800-1600

Pre-event press conference: Saturday April 30, 1000, media office
Rob Duggan, Gus Greensmith, Nabila Tajpar, Josh Cornwell
Matthew Wilson, Neil Simpson, Ollie Mellors, Rhys Yates

Post-event press conference: Sunday May 1, 1245, media office
Top three BRC and Junior BRC crews.

Stuart's restaurant recommendation:

The Thin White Duke, Devonshire Street, Carlisle (01228 402334
www.thinwhiteduke.info)

Recent winners:

2006: Ryan Champion/Craig Thorley (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9)
2007: Guy Wilks/Phil Pugh (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9)
2008: Guy Wilks/Phil Pugh (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9)
2009: Keith Cronin/Greg Shinnors (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9)
2010: Gwyndaf Evans/Chris Patterson (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo X)
2011: David Bogie/Kevin Rae (Mitsubishi Lancer Evo 9)
2012: Keith Cronin/Marshall Clarke (DS 3 R3T)
2013: Jukka Korhonen/Marko Salminen (DS3 R3T)
2014: Osian Pryce/Dale Furniss (DS 3 R3T)
2015: Peter Taylor/Andrew Roughead (Ford Fiesta S2400)

MSA British Rally Championship stat centre

Rounds run: 2

Mid Wales Stages (March 5), winners: Evans/Parry; Circuit of Ireland Rally (April 7-9), winners: Josh Moffett/John Rowan.

Stages completed: 20

Accumulated winning time: 3m04m10.5s

Accumulated competitive distance completed: 198.23 miles (319.02km)

Accumulated liaison distance completed: 396.07 miles (637.39km)

Accumulated total distance completed: 594.30 miles (956.41km)

Longest stage of the season so far: Circuit of Ireland, SS3 The Glens 19.39 miles (31.21km)

Shortest stage of the season so far: Circuit of Ireland, SS6 Newtownards TT 1.42 miles (2.30km)

BRC fastest stage times (after round 2/7)

- 1 Elfyn Evans GBR/Craig Parry GBR (Ford Fiesta R5) 9
 - 2 Fredrik Åhlin SWE/Morton Abrahamsen NOR (Ford Fiesta R5) 5
 - 3 David Bogie GBR/Kevin Rae GBR (Škoda Fabia R5) 2
- = Josh Moffett IRL/John Rowan IRL (Ford Fiesta R5) 2

BRC stages led (after round 2/7)

- 1 Evans/Parry 7
- 2 J. Moffett/Rowan 6
- 3 Marty McCormack GBR/David Moynihan IRL (Škoda Fabia S2000) 4

Junior BRC fastest stage times (after round 2/7)

- 1 Rob Duggan IRL/Gerard Conway IRL (Vauxhall Adam R2) 9
- 2 Mattias Adielsson SWE/Andreas Johansson SWE (Vauxhall Adam R2) 6
- 3 Gus Greensmith GBR/Alex Gelsomino ITA (Ford Fiesta R2T) 3

Junior BRC stages led (after round 2/7)

- 1 Duggan/Conway 14
- 2 Greensmith/Gelsomino 5
- 3 Sindre Furuseth NOR/Goril Undebakke NOR (Renault Twingo R2) 1

Standings

MSA British Rally Championship standings (after round 2/7)

- 1 Elfyn Evans 50
 - 2 J. Moffett 30
 - 3 Jonny Greer 18
- = Cave 18
= Bogie 18

Junior MSA British Rally Championship standings (after round 2/7)

- 1 Duggan 31
 - 2 Furuseth 30
 - 3 Greensmith 25
- = Adielsson 25

Stuart Loudon is a semi-professional co-driver who has started 60 rallies, 18 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.