

Colin McRae Forest Stages Rally abandoned after Girvan tragedy

THE sport of rallying has been stunned after driver Jimmy Girvan was fatally injured in an accident during the Colin McRae Forest Stages Rally in Perthshire last weekend.

On the second stage of this year's Scottish Championship finale a Subaru Impreza driven by Inverness' Girvan and co-driver Mike Ramsay from Findhorn left the road and collided with trees.

Immediately after the incident well-prepared emergency procedures were activated by members of the organising Coltness Car Club.

The on-site rescue services team was dispatched to the scene, followed by a second team, but Mr Girvan was fatally injured and pronounced dead at

the scene. No other car or person was involved.

Co-driver Mike Ramsay was taken to Ninewells Hospital in Dundee and treated for his injuries, which were not serious.

Saturday's race is an annual event run by the Lanarkshire club in memory of Colin McRae, one of their members and the UK's first world rally champion.

A stunned Coltness Car Club spokesman said: "Jimmy Girvan was a double Scottish Rally Champion and had enjoyed a successful rallying career over the past 27 years.

"He was an extremely popular, well-liked and respected motor sports personality, and this tragedy has left fel-

low competitors and rally fans across Britain shocked at this unexpected loss.

"We are extremely saddened and shocked at this tragedy and wish to extend our heartfelt sympathy to Jimmy's wife, family and wide circle of friends.

"Jimmy was an ebullient and popular member of this close-knit sport and was regarded as a superb ambassador for motor sport. We'll all miss him terribly."

The rally was abandoned as a mark of respect, a move that was universally endorsed by fellow competitors at the event.

The section of road where the collision took place was closed off, al-

lowing Tayside Police crash investigators to examine the scene and safely remove the car.

As with all sudden deaths a report will be submitted to the Procurator Fiscal and the Health and Safety Executive has also been informed.

Final results were declared at the time of the accident, which saw Bothwell's Alick Kerr in third place.

Nigel Feeney, also from Bothwell, was 19th and Hamilton's Alastair McSkimming was 23rd.

Going into the McRae Stages Kerr was set to have finished second, third or fourth in the Scottish Championship – organisers have yet to announce final placings following the weekend's tragedy.