

mentioned earlier in the report just yet, but starting his third season of rallying the 24-year-old has seemingly learned the lesson that pushing too hard doesn't let you finish many rallies. A measured drive with the experience of Williamson meant the duo can go back to Derbyshire with plenty of confidence as Yates improves his pace rally-by-rally, this was his best result on gravel, and in the BRC, to date.

Matt Edwards will feel aggrieved he didn't finish higher on his debut on gravel in his Fiesta R5. The car was acting strangely on Saturday morning and they couldn't identify the issue, with more work to be done.

Sixth was a strong debut for Edwards on gravel and with Hankook's new R5 tyres, which Edwards is developing this year on his Swift Rally Team car. Edwards duly rewarded the faith put in him by Swift Caravans boss Peter Smith in bringing the car home safely in tricky circumstances.

Joining Bogie and McCormack on the list of retirements was Desi Henry, who put his Fabia off on the slippery gravel on the penultimate stage. The Northern Irishman was a constant threat for podiums last year and was running fifth before the off.

Jonny Greer survived a trip down a bank in the dark on Friday to finish

seventh, as he looks to develop the upgraded Citroen DS3 R5 on gravel. He headed an out-of-sorts Jamie Anderson (CA1 Fiesta R5), Euan Thorburn and his new Ford Fiesta R5 and the Prestone Motorsport News Junior BRC winner Oscar Solberg rounded out the top 10 despite completing a whole stage with no brakes (*see box above*).

The order of the day was seat time. Ahlin and Cave both fought at the front in R5 cars in the BRC last year. Pryce and Cronin hadn't, and it showed.

But that's not to say the pairing, along with Bogie and McCormack, won't be winning events later in the year. It's close at the top.

As the bagpipes played underneath Jedburgh Abbey at the end of the event, Ahlin left a worrying message for his opponents: "We followed the plan we made before the event to go at our pace, not pushing too hard with everything new [car and co-driver], and the guys we were fighting with couldn't follow that. There's still more to come from us in this car, it looks good."

If he gets any better, we'll be back to 1983 when the last Swede to win the BRC, Stig Blomqvist, took the honours in a car with four-wheel-drive technology developed by Ahlin's grandad, Freddy Kottulinsky. Can anyone stop the Swedish takeover?



David Bogie (r) was favourite for the win while Tom Cave (c) and Fredrik Ahlin (l) duelled hard



Despite hitting the same rock as Bogie and McCormack, Pryce survived to take tricky podium



Raftery fought back

STAGE WINNERS

- SS1 Craik 1 (6.12 miles)** David Bogie/
Kevin Rae (Skoda Fabia R5) 5m47.8s
SS2 Craik 2 (6.12 miles) Keith Cronin/
Mikie Galvin (Ford Fiesta R5) 5m43.7s
SS3 Wauchope (8.26 miles) Fredrik Ahlin/Torstein
Eriksen (Fabia R5) 7m38.5s
SS4 Hyndlee (6.66 miles) Tom Cave/
James Morgan (Fiesta R5) 6m12.7s
SS5 Elibank (8.31 miles) Marty McCormack/
David Moynihan (Fabia R5) 7m50.2s
SS6 Yair 1 (4.99 miles)
Ahlin/Eriksen 4m34s
SS7 Cardrona (4.62 miles) Ahlin/Eriksen 4m19.2s
SS8 Elibank 2 (6.85 miles) Osian Pryce/Dale Furniss
(Fiesta R5) 6m08.9s
SS9 Yair 2 (4.99 miles)
Ahlin/Eriksen 4m30.5s