**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 20 April 2024
Day: 3
FlashN°: 14
Special stage: SS15 Vinski Vrh – Duga Resa 2
Distance: 8.78 km km
Weather: Overcast
Road conditions: Dry
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**Car #13. GRÉGOIRE MUNSTER/LOUIS LOUKA (FORD PUMA RALLY1)**

First car through, Munster is clearly looking forward to a well-earned rest this evening after his labours. “It was okay, the temperature is a bit low but the road is completely dry – it’s just this slippery Tarmac. It’s not easy to get the grip from the hard tyre but we had a clean stage.”

**Car #9. ANDREAS MIKKELSEN/TORSTEIN ERIKSEN (HYUNDAI I20 N RALLY1)**

The Norwegian ends the stage 1.2s off Munster’s time. “It was a bit more gravel but very dry so I did some changes to my pacenotes after the first loop where I can go faster and I try to adjust but still there’s places where you can push more but anyway a clean stage.”

**Car #18. TAKAMOTO KATSUTA/AARON JOHNSTON (TOYOTA GR YARIS RALLY1)**

Fastest time for the Japanese driver by a considerable margin. “For sure it is of course more dirty than this morning so need to respect this and obviously we have a quite good tyre choice as well and driving quite okay. Still need to improve but step-by-step it’s coming so it’s good.”

**Car #16. ADRIEN FOURMAUX/ALEXANDRE CORIA (FORD PUMA RALLY1)**

Compared to this morning, Fourmaux remains downbeat as his chances of reaching a third successive podium finish on performance alone appear to be wilting. “Very nice stage to drive to be honest, there was not so much dirt on the road so it was nice compared to the two others, just the weather is playing a game with us. It’s really, really difficult sometimes we see some (rain) drops and then stop. And apparently we get through.”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA (HYUNDAI I20 N RALLY1)**

A solid run through by Tänak but he doesn’t unseat Katsuta from the provisional fastest time. “I don’t know, it’s important to get through now so obviously we are not fighting for anything so… just focusing one step ahead.”

**Car #17. SÉBASTIEN OGIER/VINCENT LANDAIS (TOYOTA GR YARIS RALLY1)**

Predictably, Ogier sets the new benchmark with a clean run through the stage that caught him out on the morning loop. “The last stage can still (be affected by rain)… I mean we were waiting for rain the whole day it can still happen on the last one we will see. It was much cleaner this time, I was obviously a bit cautious at this place (where the incident happened on SS11), still don’t understand why it happened like this this morning but we are there.”

**Car #33. ELFYN EVANS/SCOTT MARTIN (TOYOTA GR YARIS RALLY1)**

A clean run from Evans but not as fast as Ogier, going second on the timesheet. “Of course we’re doing what we can, it’s part of the game so there’s not much more we can do. It was a good run but missed a couple of little key areas so maybe gave away a little bit more than we would have liked to, but generally okay. A couple of exits of chicanes and that type of thing but generally it was good.”

**Car #11. THIERRY NEUVILLE/MARTIJN WYDAEGHE (HYUNDAI I20 N RALLY1)**

Against the run of play for the Hyundais and those with more hard compound tyres, Neuville ends the stage 3.9s ahead of Ogier, 4.3s up on Evans. “I don’t know – I’m enjoying it but it’s on the edge. It’s fun but one more stage to go (today) and, yeah, we need to take those points from the day and try to keep the lead. Anyhow the fight is on and it’s going to continue so no mistakes and just a clean run through.”

**Car #34. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV (CITROËN C3 RALLY2)**

The WRC2 rally leader does a good job of damage limitation to maintain the gap to his team-mate. “Unfortunately it is how it is so we just need to focus on the next stage and after do the job tomorrow because the first two stages we didn’t do this job.”

**Car #20. YOHAN ROSSEL/ARNAUD DUNAND (CITROËN C3 RALLY2)**

The Frenchman is philosophical about his strong charge back towards Gryazin being delayed on this stage. “The strategy it’s to don’t have the same tyres as (Gryazin) on these stages for sure I lose a little bit of time (on this stage) but on the last (one) it’s perfect!”