**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 19 April 2024
Day: 2
FlashN°: 6
Special stage: SS7 Jaškovo – Mali Modruš Potok 2
Distance: 9.48 km
Weather: Sunny but cool
Road conditions: Dry
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**Car #11. THIERRY NEUVILLE/MARTIJN WYDAEGHE (HYUNDAI I20 N RALLY1)**

After the drama of the previous stage, dropping 10 seconds to a puncture, Neuville was still unhappy despite completing the penultimate test of the day cleanly. “To be honest really disappointed because it is something which could have been avoided but it is what it is. I was struggling a little bit to find the motivation after the long road section and the time lost in the previous stage. I have the feeling, like, some corners I know I can go faster but I just don’t trust, and if I don’t trust I have to slow down. I don’t want to make a mistake and that’s costing us time.”

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

Beats Neuville’s time by 1.7s to pass Neuville for the lead of the rally, taking a 1.6s advantage. “All fine.”

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

“To be fair I’m just fighting with the car in some places. I can’t push everywhere. I had a good stage to be fair. The conditions are also really crazy I think the first stage was like Christmas with the snow, the second one was like Easter with all the ‘eggs’ on the road. This one is better but not everywhere. It’s a challenging day with no service etc. and I’m happy we now have to do the really long stage which was really nice to drive this morning so we’ll see.”

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

The Estonian’s pace has grown throughout the day as he adjusts the car to his liking, and ends up 0.3s faster than team-mate Neuville. “For that previous stage we managed to get it a bit more consistent but there’s still some things which we are not able to fix and obviously tomorrow is very different, the weather, so another rally still coming but at least for tomorrow there’s a bit more variation.”

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

The Japanese driver makes it through another stage without incident but is struggling for confidence. “Jumps are quite okay. Still I have a lot of hesitation myself. I’m not so happy myself. Just driving.”

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

A scintillating performance from the French maestro to take the stage win despite his road position. “Enjoyable – some more grip, consistent conditions.”

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

A steady run for the Norwegian hands back 5.5s to the pursuing Munster. “I’m just missing experience in that stage. From that stage I haven’t done it in years… a lot of crests and positioning all the time. I’m pushing and have small moments all the time so I’m just missing where to place the car because it goes so quick it’s hard to do it the first time. You learn something all the time. You just have to continue on driving and we’ll get there.”

**Car #13. GRÉGOIRE MUNSTER/LOUIS LOUKA (FORD PUMA RALLY1)**

The strongest stage of the loop so far for Munster, making gains on Mikkelsen in their battle to avoid the wooden spoon. “For sure this one is much dryer and the conditions are a bit equal to everyone so the road position is not playing a role and you directly see the time difference. So I am enjoying with this car in such stages. This morning (the closing stage of the loop Krašić – Sošice) was basically hell with all the cuts and the dirt so hopefully it dried out a bit – like I said maybe the conditions will be a bit more equal.”