**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 24 April 2021**

**Day: 3 Flash N°: 13**

**Special stage: SS12 Vinski Vrh - Duga Resa 1 Distance: 8.78 km**

**Weather: Bright blue skies, 18 degrees**

**Road conditions: Dry, largely clean but gravel dragged onto road in some sections**

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**Car #18. TAKAMOTO KATSUTA/DANIEL BARRITT**

“I felt the feeling of calm and changed a bit my driving style and it looks like it works well. Of course, I am the first car on the road but it’s good if you are fastest on some stages. Some stages are tricky like this and I didn’t take any risks in this stage. I want to bring the car to service because in the afternoon it will be more tricky conditions.”

**Car #7. PIERRE-LOUIS LOUBET/VINCENT LANDAIS**

“It’s very nice, very enjoyable with the car even in the last part it’s really slippery so I was very careful. But there is still a long way to go this afternoon and it will be nice I think.”

**Car #44. GUS GREENSMITH/CHRIS PATTERSON**

“Not good, we can improve but a lot of work.”

**Car #16. ADRIEN FOURMAUX/RENAUD JAMOUL**

“I was really surprised this morning. Okay, I know I was driving really well and I was really happy with my job but to do the second fastest time I was just completely happy, just crazy. After, [I needed] to be a bit more careful for the rest of the loop. The pace was really good in the first one and I need to continue to drive. That one was maybe the worst stage I did this morning so we will see the time but I’m enjoying.”

**Car #42. CRAIG BREEN/PAUL NAGLE**

“It was enjoyable [in here] but still, obviously, we made a mistake with the tyre choice this morning. We should have been on a much harder option, but we try to make the best of it and just try to make our way through.”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA**

“[The choice of tyres] was so and so. I would say the first stage was probably the worst but after it’s not been not so bad. Not really on the pace but that’s how it is.”

**Car #33. ELFYN EVANS/SCOTT MARTIN**

“He’s had a strong morning and he’s not easy to beat. This afternoon now could be quite tricky. This morning was already a bit dirty than what I expected actually. I was hoping today would be a bit cleaner. Obviously, it’s drier but that means there’s a lot of loose gravel and in some paces that’s even more slippery than the mud, so it’s not been easy out there.”

**Car #1. SÉBASTIEN OGIER/JULIEN INGRASSIA**

“Honestly I was quite confident our choice is the best one but you know we are still learning with this tyre so I couldn’t say we were 100 per cent sure. But I was seriously thinking we should have the best choice. [The tyre choice this afternoon] should be an even easier choice.”

**Car #11. THIERRY NEUVILLE/MARTIJN WYDAEGHE**

“For sure [it’s been a frustrating morning]. Now in this stage I lost completely the brake pedal and I had no handbrake so it was really tricky this stage and on the gravel I had to be very careful and I had to reduce the speed. I am lucky we are here. We are going to see [how big a push we do this afternoon]. Obviously, everything needs to be perfect and we didn’t do [that] this morning. A stall, the issue now and as well the tyre choice so we need to get it right for this afternoon.”

**Car #24. MADS ØSTBERG/TORSTEIN ERIKSEN**

“We tried to adjust a little bit. It’s been a little bit difficult morning. I’ve been struggling a bit with my pacenotes and I haven’t had the rhythm so I expected to lose more to be honest because the feeling has been very bad. But we have done like a recce now so hopefully we have adjusted enough to be better on the second pass.”

**Car #21. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV**

“It was cold tyres because we were waiting too long at the start. There’s nothing I can do there so let’s see what it can be on the second loop.”

**Car #25. TEMMU SUNINEN/MIKO MARKKULA**

No quote available.

**Car #22. MARCO BULACIA/MARCELO OHANNESIAN**

No quote available.

**Car #23. ENRICO BRAZZOLI/MAURIZIO BARONE**

No quote available.

**Car #26. TOM KRISTENSSON/DAVID ARHUSIANDER**

Crashed on SS9.

**Car #20. ANDREAS MIKKELSEN/OLA FLØENE**

No quote available.

**COMMENTS**

Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia have extended their lead of the Croatia Rally to 7.0s after winning the final stage of Saturday’s opening loop. They outpaced Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja by 2.1s for their second stage win of the day to complete a Toyota lockout of fastest stage times this morning. Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe lost time with a handbrake issue. Having started leg two leading by 7.7s, the Hyundai-powered Belgians are now 19.6s behind Ogier/Ingrassia in the overall classification in third position. Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin, who were third quickest, are second overall. Nikolay Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov demoted Mads Østberg/Torstein Eriksen for the WRC2 lead on SS11 but dropped back to second on SS12 by 2.3s after being forced to wait on the start line for several minutes due to a stage delay.