**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 22 April 2022**

**Day: 2 Flash N°: 5**

**Special stage: SS4, Pećurkovo Brdo – Distance: 11.32 km**

**Mrežnički Novaki 1**

**Weather: Overcast, then heavy rain, 7 degrees**

**Road conditions: road damp, with mud and gravel in places**

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**Car #69. KALLE ROVANPERÄ/JONNE HALTTUNEN**

A couple of slides, but completes the stage in 5m11.2s. “I think I was quite comfortable in the car in these tricky conditions and for sure, our starting position has been good. We have been quite a bit faster than the guys behind us, so maybe it's not just the starting position that is helping us.”

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

Just 0.7s down on Rovanperä’s mark, overall gap to leader now 12.5s. Some light damage to rear bumper. “I had a good stage and the feeling was good, but the road is getting more and more dirty. Compared to Monte-Carlo we have already improved our pace.”

**Car #44. GUS GREENSMITH/JONAS ANDERSSON**

Finishes the morning loop in fifth overall. “It’s nice to get through the morning and understand how the conditions are. They are by far the slippiest conditions I have driven in, but it’s good learning. A bit up and down, but we’re happy to be here.”

**Car #18. TAKAMOTO KATSUTA/AARON JOHNSTON**

“I need to work on my driving and I have really no confidence in any stages. I need to do something for myself, and we can also try something on the car set-up as well.”

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

Still kicking himself on overshoot on SS2, but remains fourth overall. “It’s the first time I’ve driven the car in conditions like this, so I’m happy to make it around.”

**Car #2. OLIVER SOLBERG/ELLIOTT EDMONDSON**

Loses time as rain begins to intensify. “We are driving clean and just trying to improve my notes and get better. We are lacking a lot of grip and it's very easy to go off the road, so we need to be careful. A lot can happen.”

**Car #8. OTT TANAK/MARTIN JARVEOJA**

Drops 6.1s to Breen to leave them separated overall by just 1.9s. “It’s been tricky and we have got some really bad rain now as well. It's challenging, but we are here.”

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

Frustrated to pick up his second front-left puncture of the day, loses 16.8s. “I felt nothing again. It’s a bit of a mystery. With these cuts you have no choice – it’s so dirty, you have to go in. But I felt nothing.”

**Car #20. STÉPHANE LEFEBVRE/ANDY MALFOY**

“I’m finding it tricky, to be honest and I don’t find the reason. I’ve lost time to Yohan Rossel, so we need to learn the rally and to be more confident for the second loop.”

**Car #21. YOHAN ROSSEL/VALENTIN SARREAUD**

“No problem. The stages are very tricky and if you want to go fast you take a lot of risk and on these stages it’s not important. We need to focus on this afternoon. But yes of course, I’m happy with the morning. It’s so long.”

**Car #22. ERIC CAMILLI/THIBAUT DE LA HAYE**

“We didn’t have a good morning, we were too hard on set-up on the first stage and lost a lot of time. We are getting better on times, but not enough. We need to try and get back into position so we need to push.”

**Car #23. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV**

No comment available.

**Car #24. KAJETAN KAJETANOWICZ/MACIEJ SZCZEPANIAK**

No comment available.

**Car #25. ERIK CAIS/PETR TĚŠÍNSKY**

No comment available.

**COMMENTS**

Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen complete the morning loop with a third stage win out of four. Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe are just 0.7s down to leave them with a gap of 12.5sec overall. Intensifying rain costs Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja time, but remain 1.9s ahead of Craig Breen/Paul Nagle. Gus Greensmith/Jonas Andersson hold fifth overall, ahead of Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson. Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin pick up second front-left puncture of the morning and remain eighth overall. Yohan Rossel/Valentin Sarreaud lose time in the stage, but remain in the lead of WRC2.

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

Marko Šivak, press@rally-croatia.com

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