**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 22 April 2023**

**Day: 3 Flash N°: 15**

**Special stage: Vinski Vrh - Duga Resa 2 Distance: 8.78 km**

**Weather: Dry and sunny, 18°**

**Road conditions: Dry with some gravel patches**

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**Car #69. KALLE ROVANPERÄ/JONNE HALTTUNEN (TOYOTA GR YARIS RALLY1)**

Rovanperä makes it through the stage in 4m33.1s. “For sure it’s quite tricky now with all the gravel. It’s also really dusty the Tarmac so even when there is no gravel on the road it’s really slippy all the time. This one is a fast and intense stage and you have to be flat out all the time.”

**Car #7. PIERRE-LOUIS LOUBET/NICOLAS GILSOUL (FORD PUMA RALLY1)**

Loubet’s time is a 4m37.5s. “The rear of the car was moving all around, it was very tricky but okay, we are through.”

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

Katsuta completes in 4m37.0s. “I tried to enjoy and push but it didn’t feel so good, even less good feeling than this morning. Bit struggling, not so easy, a lot of pollution from the cutting.”

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

Ogier takes 4m34.3s to make it through the stage. With Rovanperä going 1.2s quicker, Ogier’s advantage over his Toyota team-mate is now 3.7s. “It was surprisingly slippery in some corners that I didn’t expect but all okay. So far, so good [with the car]. I hope I can have once a trouble-free loop, let’s see, two stages to go.”

**Car #4. ESAPEKKA LAPPI/JANNE FERM (HYUNDAI I20 N RALLY1)**

Lappi’s time is a 4m35.9s. “It’s quite fast, the first six or seven kilometres are really fast with a lot of commitment needed. The last kilometre is just really slippery, the surface is changing and the last corners… you just slide on top of the surface.”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA (FORD PUMA RALLY1)**

Tänak clocks a 4m32.2s in his pursuit of leader Evans. “The stealth mode has been activated since the first stage, no question. But these last two stages the car has been working well so it’s been a good rhythm. On the limit, definitely on the limit.”

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

Evans is 3.4s slower than Tänak with a 4m35.6s, which means his lead over the Estonian is now 12.5s. “I can believe he is [on the limit] with that time. It was a good effort from him. For me it was a clean run to be honest. I’m a bit surprised to lose so much but obviously he’s going well. I have a better feeling but the time doesn’t look so good.”

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

Crashed out of the lead on a right-hand corner 5.2 kilometres from the stage start. Both Neuville and Wydaeghe were uninjured but their car is too badly damaged to continue after the left rear strikes a large boulder when the car slides wide on loose gravel.

**Car #21. YOHAN ROSSEL/ARNAUD DUNAND (CITROËN C3 RALLY2)**

“Honestly I push, I don’t know why it is a little bit better on this stage. The plan is to do no mistakes, we see my colleague Nicolas [Ciamin] and for the championship we need to take a lot of points. For the moment all is easy and in control.”

**Car #24. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV (ŠKODA FABIA RS RALLY2)**

“In the beginning it was interesting. In the end… I go with the hard tyres and in the last part there was too much sliding, more than the first pass. I was expecting it would be hot enough but, it’s okay, there is no drama, we need to drive and do our job.”

**Car #30. NICOLAS CIAMIN/YANNICK ROCHE (VOLKSWAGEN POLO GTI R5)**

Crashed out 16.8 kilometres from the start of SS13.

**Car #20. OLIVER SOLBERG/ELLIOTT EDMONDSON (ŠKODA FABIA RS RALLY2)**

“It’s so difficult to drive, I really struggled. It’s consistently slow the whole weekend. The car is not connecting at all, it’s all over the place, very, very difficult, especially when it’s so slippery. I can’t make any changes, I have to use what I have. It’s just difficult.”

**Car #36. ALEJANDRO CACHÓN/ALEJANDRO LÓPEZ (CITROËN C3 RALLY2)**

Stopped 4.2 kilometres from the start of SS9. The Spaniard, who is making his Croatia Rally debut this year, had been in fourth position in WRC2.

**Car #26. SAMI PAJARI/ENNI MÄLKÖNEN (ŠKODA FABIA RS RALLY2)**

“I am a bit surprised, I was still sliding on the last corner so I didn’t think it was the quickest. I was enjoying a lot, for sure.”

**Car #22. EMIL LINDHOLM/REETA HÄMÄLÄINEN (ŠKODA FABIA RS RALLY2)**

“I took it easy, we didn’t go flat out. P3 is quite okay. Better watch out for the tyres.”

**Car #25. ADRIEN FOURMAUX/ALEXANDRE CORIA (FORD FIESTA RALLY2)**

“I’m really happy, I was not really too careful but there were one or two corners where I was a little too cautious maybe because it was really slippery at the end. I did a really good stage, honestly I’m really happy. I was flat out everywhere, honestly I cannot do me and we are there so it’s okay.”

**Car #23. GUS GREENSMITH/JONAS ANDERSSON (ŠKODA FABIA RS RALLY2)**

“Not so nice to be in no-man’s land. It’s quite disappointing because I wouldn’t really say I’m pushing. The car feels great, I’m happy. The performance is good, just where we are is not great.”

**COMMENTS**

Tänak takes his first stage win of the afternoon and closes to within 12.5s of leader Evans. Rovanperä moves into sixth at Loubet’s expense and is now 3.7s behind Ogier in fourth.

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

Marko Šivak, press@rally-croatia.com

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