**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 21 April 2023**

**Day: 2 Flash N°: 4**

**Special stage: Krašić - Vrškovac 1 Distance: 11.11 km**

**Weather: Dry but overcast, 14°**

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

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

Ogier hits back from his SS2 delay with a 5m30.8s. It’s the stage-winning time and means he cuts the gap to leader Neuville to 1m29.2s.

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

Neuville is through but he’s 0.8s slower than Ogier and not entirely happy: “We are more or less able to follow the times but I feel like if we would have a better car on Tarmac we would be much faster. I could go so much faster but the car doesn’t let me.”

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

After clocking a 5m38.9s, which proves to be the slowest of the Rally1 runners, Rovanperä says: “It was okay, definitely more slippy and dirty than I was expecting already in the first pass. I’m struggling with the car a lot on the cuts, especially. I think I am losing there the most time so it’s not so easy.”

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

It’s a 5m34.6s for the Estonian: “The stage is very smooth so for sure it’s easier, not fun but it’s easier. Little bit struggle is already enough but we will get back.”

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

Evans reaches the stage finish with his front-right tyre visibly down on pressure. “Just near the end there so I don’t think it cost too much, I was quite lucky with that,” he says after setting a 5m34.1s effort.

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

Lappi’s time is a 5m38.1s. “The last two stages have been a bit better. The first one was really horrible and it will be really horrible on the second pass.”

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

Katsuta completes in 5m35.3s. “Of course a little bit less cutting so it makes it more easy for us to guess what can happen. The last two stages were really horrible with a lot of mud coming from the inside, not easy. This one was quite okay but the Tarmac is very slippy.”

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

After taking 5m38.5s to complete the stage, Loubet says: “Honestly conditions are so difficult to let the speed, sometimes you have grip, sometimes not, so I don’t want to do any bit mistake. It’s quite tricky.

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

“It was enjoyable. Car is not so good when it’s so dry. I was hoping for more shit and little bit more tricky conditions. I can’t say I’m very happy with the car, I’m losing a lot of time.”

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

“The car worked very well, I don’t push on the limit compared to Monte and the car improved a lot because I think my driving is the same.”

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

“We only had one gear [on SS2], just the linkage to the gearbox was missing a bolt and we were stuck in third gear. But it was not too bad. Obviously, the top speed isn’t so great. We took the [repair] easy, found a nice spot with a view and fixed the car and here we are.”

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

“Apart from the puncture [on SS2] it feels okay, nothing special but okay.”

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

“It’s quite good, we had a moment on the last stage, the previous one. We did not have a puncture but we spin and damaged the rims so we decide to use the spare tyres for these two stages and I am not sure if the tyres are in a proper choice I would say. It’s possible to drive, still on the game but we just need to keep on the island. It’s really tricky with too much dirt on the place and you don’t expect to have it in some place, like the whole road has a lot of small stones or mud and you need to manage it. It’s not easy, it’s not like a gravel race but you need to know how to drive in these gravel sections so we will see.”

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

In the first stage we had some electronic issue so the car was just shutting down and I couldn’t move the car. So we fixed it on the road section and now it’s working. We had a good run [through there] very clean but we definitely made a big mistake with tyres today.”

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

“Not too bad but it’s tricky. I’m still learning about reading the grip and it’s changing quite a lot so it’s not so easy.”

**COMMENTS**

Ogier strikes back from his delay on SS2 to take his second stage win. He beats Neuville by 0.8s but his damaged tyre on the previous stage means 1m29.2s off the Belgian’s overall lead. The high-speed nature of SS3 means less gravel on the road for the early runners but the stage surface conditions still remain challenging, particularly for the Rally2 crews.

**ENDS**

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