**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 23 April 2022**

**Day: 3 Flash N°: 17**

**Special stage: SS16, Vinski Vrh - Duga Resa 2 Distance: 8.78 km**

**Weather: Sunny, 15 degrees**

**Road conditions: Dry and clean, lengthening evening shadows**

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**Car #4. ESAPEKKA LAPPI/JANNE FERM**

Sets a clean and tidy benchmark of 4m39.4s – and no spin at the hairpin this time. “I would say it’s been pretty good. A few spins in the morning loop, but I think the pace was still good. Okay, we had an advantage with the road position, but considering we didn’t do much yesterday I am really satisfied.”

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

A good run, just 1.8s slower than Lappi. “I tried in this one, but I think in two tight corners it was not clean enough to get the speed for the long straight. For my first proper day in the car I am really happy.”

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

Comes in 3.6s off Lappi. “It felt good at the start, but for sure I was losing time towards the end. It was a much better afternoon anyway.”

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

Solid end to a solid day, 4.6s off the benchmark. Still running one rain tyre after earlier puncture. “Finally, the weather is very nice, so hopefully tomorrow we can have another good day.”

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

Just off Loubet’s mark, 1.9s down on Lappi. “It’s been okay. It was a pretty good morning, but the afternoon was more difficult in places. I was on the careful side where it got extremely muddy, but at least we can see the time. We just need to secure the points really.”

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

Second fastest to Lappi, just 0.3s down as he chases a podium finish. “I think we deserve it [a podium], so we should fight for it and get it. But it won't be easy.”

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

Just 1.3s down on Lappi, which means he loses a second to Neuville in their fight for third. “That was nice, I enjoyed it. I just needed to have a little reset and I tried to enjoy the driving. We're ready for tomorrow.”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA**

A big slide through a left-hander. Fourth on the stage ahead of Rovanperä’s run, 1.7s down.

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

Fantastic effort from the rally leader to end leg two with his first stage win of the day – an impressive 3.7s quicker than team-mate Lappi. His lead over Tänak overnight is 19.9s.
“This is my reply. Full send.”

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

“It’s a great day, I think. With the slick on the car I push on the limit a little bit more easily. I was a little bit cautious on the second loop, but it’s OK.”

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

“Honestly I don’t know where we are standing now. I’ve told the co-driver not to tell me, so we can focus just on the driving. Tomorrow after the last stage…”

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

“We were trying to manage the third place, we were happy with that for the first time here. But unfortunately we got the puncture in the long stage, I don’t know where. That’s life. This is not a good start to the season after the Monte. But let’s go on.”

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

Fastest in WRC2 by 0.8s. “Yes, but to be serious it’s disappointing because the previous stage was cancelled and we have a cross on tyres, two wet tyres, so we were ready for the previous one. We were pushing like hell and it’s nice… it’s nice!”

**Car #26. EMIL LINDHOLM/REETA HÄMÄLÄINEN**

Running on three slicks and one rain tyre. “It was the best compromise, until we got the news that the stage before was cancelled. Obviously it’s moving around quite a lot on dry Tarmac.”

**COMMENTS**

Rally leaders Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen take their first stage win of the day at the close of leg two, eclipsing the time set by Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm by 3.7s. Their lead over Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja is now 19.9s. The Hyundai pair are only fifth fastest here, behind Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe and Craig Breen/Paul Nagle.

**ENDS**

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