**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 24 April 2022**

**Day: 4 Flash N°: 18**

**Special stage: SS17, Trakošćan - Vrbno 1 Distance: 13.15 km**

**Weather: Dry**

**Road conditions: Gravel/mud dragged onto road in places**

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

Sets a benchmark on the first stage of Sunday morning at 7m05.8s. No comment available.

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

Completes the stage 11.9s slower than Lappi. “We took it too carefully in the last part. It was a tricky stage and I was not feeling very comfortable with the hard tyre in the wet parts.”

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

Comes in 7.3s off Lappi’s time. “We're saving the tyres! All fine – it’s dry and quite abrasive, so I think the softs would be hard to maintain in that stage. It’s all cutting up at the end.”

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

Decent run, just 4s slower than Lappi. “It has been a very bad past two days, so I am just trying to get the feeling. Now it’s dry conditions and I am trying to push more. The main aim is to finish the rally with a good feeling.”

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

Equals Greensmith’s time, 7.3s down on the pacesetter. “We just need to get cleanly through. It’s getting really quite loose in there with all the gravel coming out, but it’s okay.”

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

Goes second fastest so far, 2.7s off Lappi. “I had an okay stage. We have a different tyre choice [to Breen] and I have a second spare wheel as well, but we are going to keep pushing.”

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

Loses just 0.4s to Neuville, leaving him 4.5s ahead in their battle for third place. “I left a good bit of time in there. I was a bit too cautious in places and didn’t let it flow in some of the wider places. The race is still on!”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA**

Gambles on four soft tyres – and he’s slowest so far. “The tyres aren’t working. It’s quite dry. We were scared quite a lot with the possible rain and now it’s quite sunny, but we had to take the gamble.”

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

Storms through just 0.8s off stage winner Lappi – but crucially adds 11.2s to his advantage over Tänak. His lead is now 31.1s. “It was a good start. The feeling is a bit more comfortable. We know the pace is there and everything is working. Let’s just continue like this.”

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

No comment available.

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

No comment available.

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

No comment available.

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

No comment available.

**Car #29. CHRIS INGRAM/CRAIG DREW**

No comment available.

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

No comment available.

**COMMENTS**

As Esapekka Lappi/Janne Ferm take another stage win, rally leaders Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen stretch their advantage over Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja to 31.1s. Rovanperä is second fastest on the stage. Tänak’s gamble on soft tyres all round doesn’t work.

**ENDS**

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