**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 24 April 2022**

**Day: 4 Flash N°: 20**

**Special stage: SS19, Trakošćan - Vrbno 2 Distance: 13.15 km**

**Weather: Heavy rain, 17 degrees**

**Road conditions: Wet and slippery, standing water**

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

Sets a benchmark in really difficult conditions, three minutes slower than this morning: 10m17.9s. “A bit like in Monte – the grip level is so low. We have full hard tyres and you cannot make them warm! It was a little bit like recce speed. If you take the car out of the grip then you cannot control it anymore.”

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

No grip on very slippery surface, 1.7s quicker than Lappi. “I was just trying to get through the stage. Honestly, it’s dangerous.”

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

Has a half-spin at a hairpin. Logs a time 18.7s down on Loubet. “That was boring. I was just cruising through, because to score points on the Power Stage you have to be there! We made it.”

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

Fastest through so far, 4.2s quicker than Loubet. “We just survived! It’s quite crazy and I was very careful. Nothing happened, so it’s fine.”

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

Running on three soft tyres, way faster than anyone before – 24.4 faster than Katsuta. “The hybrid is not needed in there, that’s for sure. I was worried that I was getting caught to be honest, it felt really that bad.”

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

Hard tyres on front, softs on rear. Far quicker than everyone so far – by 1m12s. “I had a good stage. I tried to keep my rhythm, but the balance of the car with the hard tyre on the front left was understeering a bit. Even if Ott and Kalle have wet tyres, it will be very tricky for them also.”

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

Falls way back from Neuville, by 1m34s. “I just tried to survive it. I was trying to not make any mistakes but unfortunately I had a spin in there.”

**Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA**

Two soft tyres, two wet-weather tyres. He’s 19.8s quicker than Neuville. “Kalle is a good driver and he is pushing a lot. In there it was more dirty, so let's see. At least we are safely through.”

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

Two hard tyres, two wet-weather tyres. Losing so much time, and crosses the finish 29.8s slower than Tänak. The lead of the rally has changed – Tänak is now 1.4s ahead with just the Wolf Power Stage to run. “I didn’t know where this weather came from. We had no idea there was going to be rain, and we cannot match him with these tyres. The hard is not working at all and there is not much more we can do.”

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

Fifth fastest in stage. No comment available.

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

Sixth fastest in stage. No comment available.

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

Sixth fastest in stage. No comment available.

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

Second fastest overall in stage. No comment available.

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

Third fastest overall in stage. No comment available.

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

No comment available.

**COMMENTS**

Big drama as heavy rain turns the story upside-down. Tyre choice works for Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja as he takes 29.8s out of Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen to take the lead of the Croatia Rally – by 1.4s with just the Wolf Power Stage to run. Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe now 1m42.4s ahead of Craig Breen/Paul Nagle in third place. Rain also changes the order in WRC2. Yohan Rossel/Valentin Sarreaud still lead, but now from Kajetan   
Kajetanowicz/Maciej Szczepaniak and Emil Lindholm/Reeta Hämäläinen, with Nikolay   
Gryazin/Konstantin Aleksandrov dropping from second to fourth.

**ENDS**

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