**STAGE FLASH**

**Date: 22 April 2022**

**Day: 2 Flash N°: 9**

**Special stage: SS8, Pećurkovo Brdo – Distance: 11.32 km**

**Mrežnički Novaki 2**

**Weather: Overcast but dry, 6 degrees**

**Road conditions: Dry but damp in places, gravel/mud dragged onto road**

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

Completes the final stage of the day without drama in 5m30.7s. Halttunen reports it has been “a good day”.

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

The Belgian crew end a challenging day by finally beating Rovanperä over a stage, by 2.8s. “This stage was okay – a nice clean run. After the mistake there was no reason for us to push hard and we needed to keep in the rhythm. It's a shame – I don’t know what to say to be honest."

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

Picks up a front-left puncture, and the left-rear looks soft too. “I think it’s a driveshaft as well.”

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

Front-left tyre also off the rim. “I don’t where I got it. It’s been a very tough day for me, and at the end it’s been getting better and better. Tomorrow is a new day and the puncture will be changed, so I try to focus on that.”

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

“That’s the worst I’ve ever seen, honestly. It’s incredibly tricky. We’re here and we’re close to the podium positions, so we have to be happy.”

**Car #2. OLIVER SOLBERG/ELLIOTT EDMONDSON**

Still carrying that damage to the front of his Hyundai, but only 4.6s down on quickest time. “It’s been an encouraging afternoon, it’s just a shame what happened on the stage before. This morning we just tried to get through and implement improvements for the afternoon, and the pace was better and better.”

**Car #8. OTT TANAK/MARTIN JARVEOJA**

Drops some time to Neuville to end the day 19.3s behind his team-mate, following a puncture on SS7. “I had a puncture [in the previous stage] and I had a hybrid issue here, but otherwise I think it’s not so bad. We have had an okay day. It’s unfortunate for the puncture, but this was the maximum we could do.”

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

Ends the day frustrated in sixth position. “It’s not been ideal at all. I haven’t felt fully at one with everything. The car has been working well, but I struggled for that last bit of confidence. We’ve still been able to do some good times, but obviously the punctures this morning were very damaging.”

**Car #20. STÉPHANE LEFEBVRE/ANDY MALFOY**

“It was a tricky day for us with the puncture on the first one of the second loop, we lost almost two minutes. It’s a shame but, it was a tricky day. We try to continue to have a good rhythm tomorrow, but it’s difficult to find the extra push.”

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

No comment available.

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

“I’m not happy, but we are here which is most important. Tomorrow we try to push and have more confidence.”

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

“It’s quite good for the first day. Our target was to finish the first day and now we must continue like this because people are making mistakes and we try to avoid it. But this stage is so slippery. It’s dry but the mud is completely all over the world. It’s kind of gravel driving. We are OK, we need to improve with our driving style, but it’s a good feeling after the first day.”

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

No comment available.

**Car #25. ERIK CAIS/PETR TĚŠÍNSKY**

No comment available.

**COMMENTS**

Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe end the day with a stage win, beating dominant rally leaders Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen by 2.8s. Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja lose ground on team-mate, but are third overnight clear of Craig Breen/Paul Nagle. Oliver Solberg/Elliott Edmondson carry nose damage to fifth, ahead of a frustrated Elfyn Evans/Scott Martin. Takamoto Katsuta/Aaron Johnston pick up a front-left puncture, while Gus Greensmith/Jonas Andersson are frustrated by their own front-left puncture and a soft left-rear Pirelli too.

**ENDS**

**Media contacts:**

Marko Šivak, press@rally-croatia.com

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