



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

2016 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

RALLYE DEUTSCHLAND

Pre-event Press Conference
Thursday 18 August

Present:

Eric Camilli, M-Sport World Rally Team
Sébastien Ogier, Volkswagen Motorsport
Dani Sordo, Hyundai Motorsport
Ott Tänak, DMACK World Rally Team

Q:

You had a pretty big accident in Finland, how are you feeling after that Eric and is your confidence level okay? How were the pre-event tests?

EC:

It was a huge crash. We tried to prove our speed. It was only the second time in Finland for us and the first time with a WRC [car]. We wanted to go fast, but unfortunately we crashed. The feeling this morning getting back in the car was the same as always, the crash is something of the past now.

Q:

This event is where Malcolm Wilson first noticed you in 2014 when you were in WRC 3 and now you are part of the M-Sport World Rally Team. Do you feel you could achieve a good result here?

EC:

Maybe, I hope so. It can be quite hard, but I am really happy to come back here. Two years ago I started my career in JWRC here, which was a good memory, and last year I finished second in WRC 2, so it has always been a good [event] for us. Shakedown this morning went well. We will do our best and we will see what comes out.

Q:

What do you find the most challenging part of the event? Is it the vineyards, or is it something else?

EC:

I think that the military camp will be the area where we see some big differences. Our target is to be close during the vineyard stages, and then to avoid any punctures on the stages on the military camp.

Q:

Seb, it's the first all-asphalt round since Corsica last year. How are you feeling confidence-wise going into Germany?

SO:

I am feeling great. I also feel really relieved; it is great to be back on tarmac, I am really looking forward to this event. The competition looks strong, a lot of guys will be very fast, as we have seen already at the shakedown. It looks like the rally will be interesting.

Q:

This event throws up lots of different results year on year because the weather always plays its part as well. Do you think we will have rain this weekend?

SO:

It looks like it is a bit unpredictable as always. It looks like at least this afternoon we will have some rain, so we may have some wet areas in the stages, if something remains for tomorrow. If it is wet it can be very muddy and dirty on the stages, so it is good for me to be starting at the front. But I don't wish for that, I always wish for a good and fair fight. I wish that we have as dry conditions as possible. It is more enjoyable when you have a good rhythm in the stages and you can push most of the time. So let's see, but I expect some surprises like every year.

Q:

You have done this event many times. It is interesting with the two different days with mixed surfaces: it kicks off in the vineyards and then into the military ranges. What is the most challenging, is it the tricky vineyards or the tough tarmac at Baumholder?

SO:

I think that there is a challenge everywhere. The vineyards are definitely challenging because of the narrow sections where you have to be very precise. At the end of the day it is always in the military camp that the difference happens. There, the tyre management is playing a major role and the puncture factor is there. Hopefully, we can stay out of this but it's always a bit of a lottery to stay out of problems and to avoid punctures. There is always a bit of fear for me to drive at this camp. Last year, I managed to win the rally there and to make a big difference. First of all, we have to make it through the first day, through the vineyard section. It is tough and it can be very challenging.

Q:

And finally, looking at the championship, how are you feeling? You have got a good lead so are you feeling confident for title number four?

SO:

I am in the best position at the moment, but there are five events to go, so still a lot of points at stake. I am very happy to have this kind of gap coming out of six events on gravel, where it was very tough for me. It is great that we were able to stay in the race and that we came out with a good lead in the championship. We have again a good chance to play. On one hand, I would be very happy to win again after such a long time, but on the other hand I also think about the championship, of course. If I manage to finish on the podium, it will be a very good result anyway for me this weekend, but okay, I will not start with the target of a podium, I will start with the target of victory.

Q:

Dani, welcome back to the championship. You missed Rally Finland due to an injury, are you fully recovered now and ready to go?

DS:

I am fit now, so I am ready to fight in the rally. It is an event that I like. It is much fun to drive in the vineyards and the military area. I think that it will be a very nice weekend.

Q:

You know what it takes to win here in Germany, how is your confidence level ahead of this weekend? Are you prepared to fight for the win again?

DS:

Of course, many drivers will try to win. It will be difficult, but if we can fight for victory it will be very nice. I am sure that Séb and all the others will be doing their very best, as always. It is a rally that provides many possibilities. Normally, the weather is changing a lot as well, which can make the tyre choice very difficult. It is an interesting rally.

Q:

Do you feel pressure coming into the second half of the season to perform well to seal a seat next year, or do you know where you are going next year?

DS:

I will try to do my best for myself and for the team. After that, we see what happens. I hope to be back in the same position in every rally next year. We will be able to see very soon. Maybe in the next couple of weeks.

Q:

Firstly, Ott, congratulations on your wedding! Does it feel different now as a married man, coming to WRC events?

OT:

It doesn't make any difference, but at least back home, it is all fixed now.

Q:

Ott, we have seen some incredible performances from you at the past few rallies, almost sealing a WRC win. Can we see similar on tarmac?

OT:

I think that the progress has been quite normal. Year after year you get some more experience. You start to understand what you need to do to win a rally. At least I am there, which is a good feeling. Obviously, now, we are back on tarmac, which is a bit new. It is my least preferred surface, but we have been doing quite okay and also DMACK has provided new rubber, which adds to my confidence as well.

Q:

How is the performance of the new DMACK tarmac tyre?

OT:

They have been working hard, since March or April, on the tarmac tyre. Developing the slick tyre is the most difficult thing to do. The grip and the feeling on tarmac can make some difference; it is just about the feeling from the tyre. That is not so easy, but it seems that things are going well.

Q:

As you say, tarmac is your least favourite surface, what do you think you can achieve here this weekend, what is your aim?

OT:

My aim is to have a good rally and then just to see where we are and keep developing ourselves. I have enjoyed the Rallye Deutschland before and the pace has been okay, so let's see.

Q:

Do you feel your recent performances will help you get a manufacturer drive next year? There is much speculation that Toyota is chasing you - have you tested with them?

OT:

That is 2017, it is still 2016. We still have a lot of time.