



MEET THE CREWS SESSION LEG 2 – 20 August, 2016

Present:

Jost Capito, Volkswagen Motorsport
Michel Nandan, Hyundai Motorsport
Malcolm Wilson, M-Sport World Rally Team
Sébastien Ogier, Volkswagen Motorsport
Andreas Mikkelsen, Volkswagen Motorsport
Dani Sordo, Hyundai Motorsport

Q:

Jost, it is our triple world champion, Sébastien Ogier, who holds the lead at the end of the day. Before we get to competition and talking about Sébastien, this is, I believe, your last 'Meet the crews' session before you leave the WRC. I am quite sad to see you go. How are you feeling about our last opportunity to chat?

JC:

Guten Abend zusammen und vielen Dank fürs Kommen. Yes, I think, first, we have to say that the best of the day is that Lefebvre and his co-driver are getting okay. That was really a big crash and we are all happy that they are okay and I think that is the best news for the day.

Q:

It certainly is, well said, Jost. Let's talk about your role then as team principal on a rally where you are leading. It will be delightful, I am sure, to go out on a win.

JC:

Yes, of course. I think we had a really good day and it is a fantastic rally. It is good to see Sébastien smiling again after six rallies, so him and Julien, they are really happy and I think they are back where they belong and they have quite a good lead, and then, there is a fantastic fight for second, third and fourth place with Andreas, Dani and Thierry. I think it will be a fantastic rally day tomorrow.

Q:

I think it will be indeed. It all seemed to come down to tyre choice, certainly this afternoon. What was it like at Volkswagen in the engineering hub? You have got rival engineers, of course, for each driver, as those times were coming in, especially on that final stage?

JC:

I was on the motorbike at that time, because I was on the Panzerplatte, so I wasn't in the office and I haven't seen (them) since then.

Q:

But there is always great rivalry and great camaraderie between your drivers. You let them fight it out, which is what we love, but the gap is maybe a little bit too big to fight for the lead tomorrow. What do you think?

JC:

Yes, I think the gap is too big, but still, Andreas has to fight to stay ahead of Hyundai, because I think Michel won't give me the present of (finishing) one and two just because I leave, I think he is not that nice. He has to go flat out, that is for sure.



Q:

Jost, we are going to come back to you at the end. Let's turn to Michel Nandan now, because it has been a fascinating day competition wise with Thierry Neuville and Dani Sordo fighting fiercely, Michel, both of them obviously scoring points for you as well, which is crucial. How have you thought about the day?

MN:

I think it has been a great day and we really have a tough competition at the end of Saturday between second and fourth, it is good, it is good for the sport and I think it is quite promising for tomorrow.

Q:

Are you going to let them fight it out tomorrow, Michel, do you let them battle? Are they allowed to? Jost lets his drivers fight, I hope you will do the same.

MN:

Yes, of course, as Jost said, I don't want to let him take first and second, you know.

Q:

You are not going to give him a present as he is leaving, no?

MN:

That is what we are talking about with Malcolm actually, what can we do?

Q:

And did you come up with a plan?

MN:

Not yet, not yet.

Q:

What is the instruction to the drivers for tomorrow then, Michel? Is it just to go for it and try to catch Mikkelsen in front?

MN:

Well, I think, as the positions are at the moment, they have to try and catch second position. It's so tight that it would be a bit stupid not to go for it.

Q:

It's certainly what we want to see. Just a word on Hayden Paddon. A calmer day today than yesterday, which is pleasing.

MN:

Yes, absolutely. A calmer day today. Okay, he was struggling a bit during the first loop. He is still looking for grip, especially on tarmac. It is quite difficult to play with that, but okay, during the second loop, it was a bit better. He is getting a bit more confident and I think it is coming. You really need to be trained for this type of rally, it is something special.

Q:

Let's turn to Malcolm Wilson from M-Sport now. Talk to us about your day, too, Malcolm. What's your summary of your drivers' action today?

MW:

(microphone problems). It just sums up my day really, doesn't it? Germany has never been one of my top events, that is for sure. It is a rally that we have never won and we are certainly not going to win it this year, that is for sure. No, it has been a very difficult day in many ways. We have touched on about the accident with Sébastien (i.e. Stéphane). Obviously, everybody is pleased that they are okay, but of course, after the day that Eric had yesterday and the meeting that I had with him last night, he wasn't in the best of form for this morning, but to arrive on the scene for the accident, and the extent of the accident was



obviously a very difficult situation for him. Something that... to arrive on the scene and to see such damage and the state of the crew has been a really difficult day for him, but he reacted well to the situation and helped to do what he could, so we are just pleased that we got through all that today, and he has got a bit more experience and a few more kilometres under his belt under very difficult conditions.

Q:

Aside from WRC, you have been watching today with interest, Malcolm, a driver who was with M-Sport last year as part of the main team, who is not here this year, Elfyn Evans has become British rally champion today, twenty years after his father Gwyndaf won the championship. Are we going to see him back with M-Sport? Has he proved himself enough for you to take him back?

MW:

Well, I think the first comment is that everybody needs to know that Elfyn is a lot better than his father ever was. And I am sure Gwyndaf will be very happy to hear that. Yes, for sure, he will be back. We haven't decided yet which other events in the WRC he will do. There are obviously four events left. As everybody knows, he had a fantastic rally in Corsica last year, so we are looking what happens here with the other WRC 2 competitors, and then we will make a decision, probably next week or so, what will be his next event.

Q:

Finally back to Jost. Jost, you have been part of the WRC on many occasions. Before, we have seen you with Ford, of course, and this time with the hugely successful Volkswagen team, but this event does mark your final event with the WRC, and what a legacy you leave behind of success and great camaraderie within your team. What are your thoughts on your final event and what you have achieved within the WRC?

JC:

I think it is very hard, for sure, it is very hard to leave, but I am looking forward to a new challenge and I think that the team is now in a position that they don't need me anymore. It is very much built up and the structure is clear, so they can continue to be very successful for the next years.

Q:

Well, Jost, I can certainly say on behalf of everyone, many thanks for what you have done for the WRC and your contribution over the years and the legacy, and we wish you the best of luck for your future in Formula 1.

JC:

Thank you very much. I think what I will miss most are the fans, because, when I went to the stages with the motorbike, what I really enjoyed, was seeing all the fans in all the different countries around the world. You see how big the rally family is, the rally fans, they all enjoy watching the cars and having a big party along the stages, and very friendly and very sporty. I think this experience is very unique and that is what I will miss most, so thanks to all of you who are here, come to watch the rally, not only here, but all around the world. Thank you very much to all the fans for all your big support. That is amazing!

Q:

Séb, let's start with you. It's been a good day, but it has also been a tough day for many reasons today on the second day of Rallye Deutschland. You are in the lead at the end of it, though, how are you feeling? How confident are you feeling going into the final day?

SO:

Obviously, I feel great. It has been a really good day, except about Stéphane and his co-driver. We are all a bit shocked with the crash they had and we are happy to hear that they

are injured, but not in life danger, so we wish both of them the best for their recovery and to be back soon with us. For me personally, it was a good day for sure. It was a tough one. The meteo was crazy, once again, it was changing all the time. The tyre choice was very, very difficult and most of the time, it was not a perfect drive today, but not so wrong either, so we managed to make some good time and take the lead with a big gap. Okay, it is never predictable, but it is better to start the last day with a 30 seconds' advantage than be second.

Q:

It was tough, wasn't it, with regards to the weather today and the tyre choices. You felt it hadn't gone right this morning, but it really paid off this afternoon, especially on the final running of the Panzerplatte stage. Did you know absolutely that those soft compound tyres were going to be right?

SO:

No, I had a little bit of doubt, especially when I was on the start line, the sun was out and it was drying out very quickly, so I was thinking it should be okay, but I knew it was a bit on the limit. At least I was right on one thing: before the start, when we were talking about the rally, we knew that most probably the rally will be played mainly on this stage and again, it was where we made most of the difference, so even with yesterday, I was a bit wrong when I said I don't like the stage. The only factor I don't like on this stage is that the puncture risk is very high, and if you are unlucky, you can lose the rally on that, but I am glad that Michelin has provided us with really good tyres. No one of us has suffered with punctures. It was a good fight, I enjoyed the drive and it was quite a good day.

Q:

It has been a while since we have seen you win a rally, since you have been on the top step of that podium. We know you are hungry for it. The time is looking good going into what we have remaining tomorrow, the four stages that we have, but you can never be quite so confident. Is there just that little part in you, Séb, that says: I can be celebrating tomorrow?

SO:

I hope so. It has been quite long that I haven't celebrated a victory and it is true that I miss it. It is true as well that... It was never my plan to win this weekend. Of course, it was my plan to drive fast and try to go for the victory, but never with full risk. For the championship, a podium would be good for me as well and that I have in mind, but today, we did a good job. We created a gap and if we could win, it is even better, so now I hope, with the position we have, it will be bad to don't keep it tomorrow, but I still have to work for it to bring it home.

Q:

Let's turn to Andreas Mikkelsen now, who was our leader at the end of day one. We have seen a great fight between you and Séb today. The lead changed hands between you. It was fascinating to watch and it all then came down to the tyre choice this afternoon where that gap of time really did extend. You ended with a brave choice, Andreas. It was a gamble and eventually, it didn't pay off. How are you feeling?

AM:

Yes, well, it has been a good day. Obviously, like Sébastien said, a lot (came) down to the tyre choice. It has been a difficult one, for sure, but I have to say that overall, I am quite happy with my choices. The last one I did was very much on the limit. It was very brave, but I had to take some risk, because to catch Séb with just pure driving was impossible, so I had to take something different, obviously knowing that I wasn't far behind as well. But yes, it was not a really bad choice, I believe. Okay, in many sections, it was really difficult, but at the same time, in some sections, it was faster, so it is hard to say in the end which option was faster. Anyway, Sébastien did a great job today and there is no way to keep up with him, I believe. We will see, it will be a tough fight for second and third place tomorrow, I am sure.



Q:

It certainly will. We have got a great battle on our hands between yourself, Dani Sordo and Thierry Neuville. Are you up for that fight, are you ready?

AM:

Of course, of course. We will fight hard. There are four quick stages tomorrow, a few that are different with the tyre choice. Back to the vineyards, that we were quick on yesterday, so I am looking forward to that one, and the other one was the first stage last year, which we were very competitive on as well. I have a good feeling for tomorrow and we will do everything we can to hold on to that second place.

Q:

Let's turn to Dani Sordo now. You were fighting tooth and nail to try and get that third position today. You managed to do it on the final stage. How do you feel about your performance on day two, Dani?

DS:

To be honest, it was not so bad. I had a big fight with Thierry and after the last stage, Andreas lost a little bit of time, so it was close, so I am happy with the performance. It was difficult with the tyres. We didn't get it so wrong, but we were not in a perfect condition, I think, but for everybody, it was the same. The tyres did a lot in the stages today. Sometimes, it was a bit slippery, but it was great fun.

Q:

What about tomorrow? What are we going to see from you? How much do you try and get that second position? How much are you going to fight the Norwegian in front of you?

DS:

It is always good when on the last day of the rally, you are fighting for something. Tomorrow, I will try to fight, of course. We are here to fight, but there is a lot of drivers who also try to do their best, but we will try to finish on the podium, and see if we are second, third or fourth. Third would be fantastic.

Q:

We hope to see a good fight tomorrow. Finally back to Sébastien Ogier. Séb, it is the last rally for your boss, Jost Capito. He bids farewell to the WRC. He has, of course, been an intrinsic part of Volkswagen's success in the past few years. What words have you got for your team boss who leaves us here in Germany?

SO:

A tough question, but for sure, we are going to miss him. I have been a big part of the success he had. He was fighting. Jost is someone who is emotional and who fights with his heart. He loves what he does. He was a great boss for us. We are definitely going to miss him, but I would like to wait for tomorrow to maybe say it. I try, I mean, I didn't promise him. I promised him to do my best to score a victory this weekend and I hope I can achieve that tomorrow.