

14 August 2017 – no. 16 – 2017 ADAC Rallye Deutschland

Press conference: WRC stars, young drivers, organisers and high-profile politicians come to the Saarland for the new ADAC Rallye Deutschland

- German event of the FIA World Rally Championship ready to start
- New stages and challenges create additional excitement
- WRC stars look forward with great anticipation to the 21 Special Stages

Munich. The excitement will be greater than ever – that was the unanimous view of the official press conference prior to the ADAC Rallye Deutschland which will take place from 17 to 20 August 2017 in the Saarland and neighbouring regions. At the German event of the FIA World Rally Championship, fans can look forward to many spectacular innovations and thrilling duels between the world's best rally drivers.

The press conference at the Saarland state parliament in Saarbrücken saw **Sébastien Ogier (FRA)** and **Thierry Neuville (BEL)** meet as the drivers currently sharing the top WRC position. **Kris Meeke (GB)** and local hero **Marijan Griebel (GER)** were also there to answer questions from the media. Finally, the press conference was also attended by Clerk of the Course **Friedhelm Kissel** as well as Saarland state politician **Klaus Bouillon** (Minister of the Interior, Building and Sport).

Sébastien Ogier is one of the top favourites of the German rally event. The World Champion and triple Rallye Deutschland winner (2011, 2015, 2016) is looking forward to the new stages. “This will be a great change for the fans and a challenge for us drivers. The fact that Thierry and I come to Germany with equal standings makes it even more exciting.” Thierry Neuville won the ADAC Rallye Deutschland in 2014 and is especially fond of the Panzerplatte stages. “With the constantly changing tarmac and concrete surfaces, you need to develop a good feel for the tyres. This can really give you a head start.”

After one win in Mexico and several disqualifications, Citroën driver Kris Meeke wants to catch up in Germany. “Our focus is on improving the vehicle. With its great variety of road conditions, the German event is the ideal opportunity for this.” Young driver Marijan Griebel emphasized the closeness to the fans at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. The ADAC sport foundation grantee lives in the rally region and will make his debut in a WRC2 vehicle at the German WRC rally this year. “I really look forward to the ADAC Rallye Deutschland – not least because many of my relatives and friends will be there in person. What makes this event so unique is that the spectators are always very close to the action and get plenty of rally action.”

“We have successfully concluded the preparations for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland and look forward to the start and the first Special Stage in the heart of Saarbrücken Thursday night,” said Friedhelm Kissel as he presented the rally highlights as head of the organising team. The rally will kick off with a novelty on Thursday (17 August): for the first time, the official opening ceremony will take place at Tbilisser Platz in Saarbrücken. From there, the rally drivers will head straight for the first Special Stage, a spectacular circuit course through the city centre. Another circuit course and spectators' highlight awaits on Friday (18 August), including the new Wadern-Weiskirchen Special Stage. On Saturday (19 August), the action will move to the infamous Panzerplatte stages at the Baumholder military range. The St Wendeler Land Power Stage on the last day (20 August), finishing at the new Service Park on the lakeshores of Bostalsee, will provide an unprecedented finale.

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Here is a selection of the most important comments from the press conference

Klaus Bouillon (Saarland Minister of the Interior, Building and Sport)

“After ten years, the ADAC Rallye Deutschland is finally back in the Saarland – which makes me happy, not only personally as a rally fan, but also as Saarland’s Minister of Sport . The German WRC rally is a world-renowned crowd-drawing event with a positive impact on the economy and tourism throughout the region.”

Friedhelm Kissel (ADAC Rallye Deutschland Clerk of the Course):

“This year, we have brought more innovations to the ADAC Rallye Deutschland than ever before. We could never have done this without a great team effort – and the team is very big. Over the next few days, there will be more than 3,000 volunteer helpers working for us, including some 2,000 Marshals who will ensure maximum safety. In this connection, I would like to appeal to the fans along the track: spectators are an important part of the rally and have their share of responsibility for its success.”

Sébastien Ogier (M-Sport World Rally team)

“In the past two years, I won my former team’s home rally in Germany for Volkswagen Motorsport – that was a very emotional experience. Meanwhile, the ADAC Rallye Deutschland has also become a sort of home rally for me. Now that I am with the M-Sport World Rally team, I will of course do my best here in the Ford Fiesta WRC to defend my World Championship lead. My experience will help, but winning the ADAC Rallye Deutschland has never been a walk in the park. You need to stay fully focussed from the very first to the very last second!”

Thierry Neuville (Hyundai Motorsport):

“This season has been going great for us so far, and I am heading for the ADAC Rallye Deutschland with plenty of confidence. The new start in Saarbrücken with the timed city circuit course will be a first opportunity to see where we stand, and we would like to use it to get into a rhythm quickly. We will try to find a good combination of attack and concentration. I look forward – as I do every year – to the many fans who will be there to cheer us on.”

Kris Meeke (Citroën World Rally team):

“The great number of fans at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland has always impressed me. There is a true stadium atmosphere at the military range. I believe that we will experience this even more often this year – be it at the start in Saarbrücken or during the Power Stage. It is actually quite a good idea for the rally to finish directly at the Service Park. This will allow all the teams’ mechanics, for example, to experience the action as well and, ideally, celebrate.”

Marijan Griebel (ADAC sport foundation grantee, Škoda Fabia R5):

“I will start in the WRC2 at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland for the first time and compete with the world elite gathered for the event. It’s a dream come true! I will try to use my “home field advantage”, but it will still not be easy: the German WRC rally and its distinctive Special Stages in the Saarland, the Mosel vineyards and the Baumholder military range is one of the toughest challenges on the WRC schedule.”

Get your rally and day passes now!

In addition to the four-day rally passes, the fans can now also buy day passes for Friday, Saturday or Sunday in pre-sale until 16 August 2017. On the day printed on the pass, passholders get access to all spectator areas along each Special Stage and the ADAC Rallye Deutschland Service Park. For the first time, fans can also buy self-print passes. They serve as proof of purchase to be redeemed for rally passes or day passes at the rally venue. Visit the official ticket shop on the web at www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland (go to the Tickets tab).

Pre-sale buyers will enjoy discounts and an attractive package offer that includes the official ADAC Rallye Deutschland magazine. The same as last year, the pre-sale price of a rally pass

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package is €70 (€65 for ADAC members). Day passes are available for €35 exclusively in pre-sale.

From 17 August 2017, rally passes will be available from the outlets listed at www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland (click on “English”, then “Tickets” and then “Tickets at the event”).

The rally passes cover:

- Access to all Special Stages on all days
- Access to the Service Park on all days
- Access to the Shakedown on Thursday
- A spectator map providing all the essential information about the rally
- ADAC Rallye Deutschland lanyard
- ADAC Rallye Deutschland sticker
- ADAC Rallye Deutschland magazine (in German with essential information in English and French)

ADAC Rallye Deutschland information:

The ADAC Rallye Deutschland has a unique worldwide reputation. Its mix of hairpin stages in the vineyards, tough tracks on the Baumholder tank range and fast asphalt roads presents extreme challenges for both the teams and the drivers. Excellent driving skills and versatility are of the essence here. Diversity, high-class action and closeness to the fans are the ingredients that make the ADAC Rallye Deutschland such an attractive package for spectators as well. Year after year, this major event draws enthusiastic crowds from all over Europe, giving it a special, international atmosphere.

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