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16 August 2018 – 2018 ADAC Rallye Deutschland

MEET THE CREWS SESSION LEG 1 – 16 August, 2018**Present:**

Ott Tänak, Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT

Jari-Matti Latvala, Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT

Sébastien Ogier, M-Sport Ford World Rally Team

Q:

Welcome guys. Strong start for you this morning Ott. This is a rally, which we saw you win last year. Different colours this time around though. Are you feeling confident that another win is on the cards here for you?

OT:

It is never on the cards before it is on the cards. We need to see how the weekend goes. But obviously, yes, we are feeling good. Everything was working this morning. Maybe just a couple of small adjustments, but we have not been on tarmac for some time now. We were testing before Finland so overall it was nice to get some feeling. Also, the Shakedown route was quite representative.

Q:

And it was a good feeling out there, yes?

OT:

Obviously, it was working nicely and if you have no complaints then there's not a lot to say.

Q:

After Finland, you told us that you are not so much thinking about the championship title – you are just going rally by rally for wins. Is that still the case here?

OT:

Yes, for sure. We are still far away from the two guys at the front. Obviously, they are not bad guys, so they will not be so easy to catch. Our only target for now is to do the best rallies we can and to go event by event. Our target is obviously always to take the maximum from every rally and we will try to do the same this weekend.

Q:

Talk to me about testing: You told me yesterday that you didn't so much test on the vineyard stages here, more the country roads.

OT:

Yes, our first test run was basically on the country roads. Obviously, lots of junctions, nothing too special. The next one we did was at the military area, where all the teams have been doing the same. It's quite standard testing for Germany.

Q:

Do you feel fully prepared, Mr Tänak?

OT:

I do, yes. Thank you.

Q:

Let's turn to a man who has a big smile on his face. Jari-Matti: You ended a run of bad luck, of not great events, in Finland. It was great for you there. You were very, very confident last night when we were talking to you. Is that still the case after the shakedown today?

J-ML:

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Yes, thank you. The feeling is good. I was working with the car a little bit. There were a couple of things we needed to check this morning. At the end of the shakedown I am very, very pleased with the car

Q:

What about your hopes for this weekend? Can you go out and challenge for that top step of the podium?

J-ML:

Ott Tänak, Sébastien Ogier and Thierry Neuville - I think they will be pushing hard for the victory. Especially Seb and Thierry, as they are fighting for the championship. I still have some chance if something happens. With these guys, you have to have pretty much a perfect weekend to beat them. But we will take it one step at a time and will see what happens.

Q:

There has been some news in the past couple of days from your manager, Timo Jouhki, that we will see you compete in all the WRC events next year. There is a signature on a contract somewhere, but we don't know which team it is. Can you enlighten us, Jari-Matti?

J-ML:

Basically, the most important thing is that I know I will be driving next year. Regarding the team, you can ask Timo Jouhki.

Q:

Is he going to be here this weekend? Can we bring him onto the stage?

J-ML:

Yes, he is here.

Q:

I think we will do that. Thank you, Jari-Matti. Seb: Same question to you. What about your manager, when are we going to hear what is happening with you next year?

SO:

My manager says he doesn't know where I'm going to be next year.

Q:

Is there a bit of a timeframe for when you want a decision? There are probably lots of options on the table for you right now...

SO:

There are some, but the truth is that I would love to know already. As soon as you are fixed it is easier for your mind and for everything. You can focus on what's going on. It is no secret that I am trying to get continuity and stay where I am, but I also need some guarantees to be sure that we can continue to progress. We'll see. So far, I'm only sure about the end of this year. The rest we don't know yet.

Q:

Talk to me about this event: It's a great one for action. We always see a bit of drama here in Germany, it never disappoints. How much of a challenge is it as a tarmac rally?

SO:

I believe it is one of the most challenging rallies, because it is, as we used to say, three rallies in one. There is less and less vineyard section now, but a bit still remains. We are now spending much more time in the countryside, on country roads. They are narrow and fast, with a lot of junctions. And, of course, Baumholder is still there. So, there are many places where you can make a mistake. Many places where you can just miss a braking point and miss a junction. It is not easy to do a perfect rally here. The competition is tough at the moment. As Jari said, if you want to be on the top step, you need to.....sorry.....

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**Q:**

Is someone calling you? Is that your manager? Maybe he has some news about next year.

SO:

I guess it's my little boy. I think he will be telling me to come home, so maybe it's better if I don't answer. So, it's a challenging rally, but I love it. When the weather is like this, it's very enjoyable. When it's like it is probably going to be tomorrow, it is even more of a challenge. We will probably have to manage the tricky conditions. We will try to make the best of it. Of course, we are here to try to score maximum points.

Q:

You did score more points in Finland than your championship rival Thierry Neuville. I know it was a frustrating rally for you though. It can all change here, can't it?

SO:

We certainly hope so. Finland was definitely a disappointing event for us. We didn't have the speed we wanted. There was just no way of fighting with these guys. It was a bit frustrating, but that's part of the game sometimes. We hope to be back on top here, in terms of speed, and fighting for the victory. Like you say, the most important thing to come from Finland is that we scored more points than Thierry. That's what we need from now until the end of the season – to consistently score more than him. We'll focus on that mainly, but we would like to do it in style this weekend with a podium, at least. I will not lie: I really want to get the win here.