

Ott Tänak leads the 2018 ADAC Rallye Deutschland

- Last year's winner takes thrilling Super Special Stage win in St. Wendel
- German WRC rally kicks off with exciting shakedown and opening ceremony

Munich/St. Wendel. Tremendous start, spectacular action, ideal conditions – day one of the 2018 ADAC Rallye Deutschland had plenty to offer. The sporting highlight was watched by large crowds at the opening stage of the German WRC rally, which took place at the new start and finish venue of St. Wendel. The entrants mastered a 2.04-km route in the arena-like Wendelinuspark, drifting with millimetre precision, to the delight of those watching on.

Last year's winner Ott Tänak (EST) was the fastest man, setting a stage-winning time of 2:11.2 minutes in his Toyota Yaris WRC. Škoda Fabia R5 drivers Kalle Rovanperä and Ole Christian Veiby caused an upset, finishing second and third respectively, ahead of the bulk of the WRC stars. Dani Sordo (ESP), at the wheel of the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC, clocked the fourth-fastest time on the Super Special Stage. Fifth place went to another Škoda man, Jan Kopecký (CZE): the WRC 2 driver was 0.3 seconds faster than world champion Sébastien Ogier (FRA), who finished sixth in his Ford Fiesta WRC. World Championship leader Thierry Neuville (BEL), who won the German round of the FIA World Rally Championship in 2014, ended the opening stage two seconds off the pace in 13th place.

The thrilling sprint stage was preceded by the opening ceremony at the ADAC Rallye Deutschland, which was held in a great atmosphere on the Schlossplatz square in St. Wendel. The spectators, competitors and many volunteers at the German WRC rally were welcomed to Saarland by Klaus Bouillon (Saarland Minister of the Interior, Building and Sport), Peter Klär (mayor of St. Wendel) and Hermann Tomczyk (ADAC Sports President). Once the rally teams had been introduced, the fans were able to get close to the WRC stars and collect their autographs.

The Shakedown St. Wendeler Land on Thursday morning gave fans a taste of the kind of action they can look forward to over the coming days. The 5.6-kilometre warm-up route played host to a thrilling battle for the fastest time, which saw the top five finish within one second of each other. The fastest man was once again Ott Tänak with a time of 2:52.9 minutes, closely followed by fellow Toyota driver Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN) and defending champion Sébastien Ogier (FRA). The Hyundai duo of Thierry Neuville and Dani Sordo finished fourth and fifth in the shakedown. The fastest Citroën C3 WRC driver was Craig Breen (IRL) in sixth place.

Standings after 1 of 18 special stages:

1.	Tänak/Järveoja (EST/EST)	Toyota Yaris WRC	2:11.2 minutes
2.	Rovanperä/Halttunen (FIN/FIN)	Škoda Fabia R5	+ 0.1 sec
3.	Veiby/Skjærmoen (NOR/NOR)	Škoda Fabia R5	+ 0.2 sec
4.	Sordo/Del Barrio (ESP/ESP)	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+ 0.4 sec
5.	Kopecký /Dresler (CZE/CZE)	Škoda Fabia R5	+ 0.6 sec
6.	Ogier/Ingrassia (FRA/FRA)	Ford Fiesta WRC	+ 0.9 sec
7.	Mikkelsen/Jæger (NOR/NOR)	Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC	+ 1.0 sec
8.	Breen/Martin (IRL/GBR)	Citroën C3 WRC	+ 1.1 sec
9.	Scandola/Gaspari (ITA/ITA)	Škoda Fabia R5	+ 1.3 sec
10.	Kajetanowicz/Szcepaniak (POL/POL)	FORD Fiesta R5	+ 1.4 sec

Media information



Tickets still available on-site

Those who did not make the pre-sale, still do not have to miss out on the ADAC Rallye Deutschland. Last-minute spectators can buy their passes at the ADAC local offices in St Wendel, Saarbrücken, Neunkirchen and Saarlouis as well as at the AUTODOC Service Park at Bostalsee. €20 Special Stage passes grant access to the respective Special Stage (SS). The Arena Panzerplatte SS on the Baumholder military range is an exception: the pass costs €25 because rally spectators are offered a much more extensive programme. Admission to the AUTODOC Service Park at Bostalsee is free on all rally days. The same goes for the opening ceremony (16 August) in St Wendel's Schlossplatz. All information on where to buy a pass or redeem a self-print pass can be found at www.adac.de/rallye-deutschland (go to the tabs *Tickets at the event* or *Ticket exchange points*).

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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