

2013 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP  
ADAC RALLYE DEUTSCHLAND

**Post-event Press Conference  
Sunday 25 August**

**Present:**

1<sup>st</sup> – Dani Sordo, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team  
1<sup>st</sup> – Carlos Del Barrio, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Thierry Neuville, Qatar World Rally Team  
2<sup>nd</sup> – Nicolas Gilsoul, Qatar World Rally Team  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Mikko Hirvonen, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team  
3<sup>rd</sup> – Jarmo Lehtinen, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team  
Yves Matton, Team Principal, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team

Q:

Dani, congratulations on your first ever WRC win! How does it feel to finally get the result you have dreamed of for a long time?

DS:

I am felling really well after my first rally. We didn't start well, but things improved after we changed the set-up. In bad conditions we had to fight a little bit more and in the end we finally won.

Q:

A fantastic battle, especially today when you started in the lead by 0.8 seconds. Were you nervous this morning?

No, it was quite okay. In the first stage, we were a little bit faster than Thierry Neuville. Then we had to wait for one hour doing nothing before the next stage. That was a little bit long, to be honest. In the last stage, it was interesting, but it was nice.

Q:

You have spent the majority of your career with the Citroen team, does it feel good to take the first win with them?

DS:

It was an emotional one, of course. A lot of people were there, close friends and family. Many people were very happy for my win. I knew that the team and Mikko (Hirvonen) were supporting me as well. You feel that people are supporting you, that is always nice.

Q:

What was the feeling when you crossed the finish line and realised you had done enough to win?

DS:

It was a very good feeling. In the middle of the stage, I wasn't nervous, but Thierry (Neuville) was pushing like hell, so it was really close. After we crossed the line, we saw the message in the car that Thierry was driving slowly. Then it was already looking good, but we weren't sure. We had to wait for the confirmation and it was a relief when it finally came.

Q:

Was there any pressure on your shoulders to do well here?

No, it wasn't a lot of pressure. On tarmac, we were confident we could do well. I was more scared about the set-up, because we didn't do a lot of testing here, but we made some good changes and after that, the car was really good.

Q:

How much will this help you to secure a drive for next year?

DS:

I don't now, but I am really happy with the victory. If it helps me for next year, than it is good, but if not, so be it. Having this victory is just very nice.

Q:

Carlos, the first win in the WRC is special, congratulations. How are you feeling after a successful weekend here in Germany?

CDB:

It was a well-deserved win for Dani, for me and also for Citrën. They have done an outstanding job. Two years ago, I scored my maiden podium finish here just after turning 43. Now I am 45 and I finally got my first win. And I hope it will not be the last one. Dani has driven very well. In France, we will be in a position to win and we will be able to fight from the very first stage.

Q:

Dani talked about the one hour of regroup this morning. What was it like for you? Were you nervous?

Normally if you see the footage from the onboard cameras when we start a special stage, we shake hands and say: 'We must have fun'. This guy (Dani Sordo) must have fun to set fast times in special times. This week, we had fun all the way.

Q:

Thierry, just like Finland - a great fight! The final stage was thrilling to watch and it seemed like gave your all! How are you feeling?

TN:

I feel very happy with our performance this weekend. We were the only crew who was always in a position to fight for victory from the start to the finish. This performance throughout the weekend without any big mistakes is good. I was flat out on the final part of the last stage, but then, I made a mistake. It was my fault, I went off and we were happy to get back on the road again. Congratulations to these guys, they have done very well, also in the wet, which normally are the conditions that I am very strong in, but they were even quicker than me.

Q:

Yesterday, conditions were very difficult and you had a bit of a moment. Talk us though what happened.

We were going quite well. There was a very tricky place. I was very surprised about the lack of traction. We went wide into the logs, but I had a good reaction to spin the car and we could get back onto the road again.

Q:

Has this been the biggest battle of your career to date?

TN:

I remember one of the IRC rounds I did in the past, in which I had a huge battle with Mikkelsen. That is what I did today. We had nothing to lose, we decided to try and see where we end up. I am happy and pleased with my second place.

Q:

Nicolas, congratulations on the result! Was there a lot of tension today because you were in a big battle?

NG:

We were very happy to be back on tarmac after many rallies on gravel. Thierry lives the stages here, and it went well.

Q:

Were you nervous or quite cool in the car?

NG:

I try to be blind and keep focussed, but usually, when I have a helmet on, it is no problem to do the job anyway.

Q:

After getting off the road yesterday, did you already think your rally was over?

NG:

We were going really quick there, it was a bit too much, but that it is a part of the rally as well.

Q:

Mikk, you came with the aim of equalling your result last year which you have achieved, its third position overall - good points for you and the manufacturers championship. How do you feel about your performance this weekend?

MH:

It could be better, like many times on tarmac. Some days, at the beginning, the pace was really good, but then we were dropping out of the pace of the guys in front. In the end, here we are on the podium again. I am happy to get these points and happy for Dani and the whole team. It was important to get these points and we are back in the fight for the manufacturers' title again

Q:

Was it disappointing for you not being able to keep the pace?

When you are not really right there, you want to try a little bit, but it is not like being in the fight. I need to improve my driving on asphalt, I still have to learn.

Q:

Other than that, were there no moments, no incidents for you?

MH:

No, nothing, really. It was all very straightforward.

Q:

What about next year? Is there already something you can say?

MH:

No, not yet. You never know what is going to happen. We have to wait and see.

Q:

Next up is Rally Australia, a rally where you always have done well in the past. Are you looking forward to it?

Yes, it is good to go back there. It is a nice rally with nice stages, a bit like in Finland. I always have a good feeling of this rally.

Q:

How was your feeling throughout the weekend?

JL:

Especially Friday was really good. We had a pretty good pace if you compare it to the previous times. It was by far the best day on tarmac for us. We were always close, two or three seconds down on the leaders, but it adds up when you have more stages, and after six stages, you are 20 seconds down. You could see by the marks on the road that the boys were fighting out in front, all of them were off every now and then, so we had to back off a little bit as well.

Q:

The battle in the manufacturers' championship is back on. Do you have any expectations, any pressure?

JL:

There is no extra pressure. It has been a tough year for us, we want to improve on every rally. It is quite simple: we need to win. Second places are not enough for the championship.

Q:

Yves, a win for Citroen and Dani's first win, keeping the record of win for Citroen in Germany successful! How are you feeling?

YM:

Better, for sure. The rally was very long and very difficult. Having won here in Germany so many times, there was a lot of pressure here, with everybody expecting us to win again. Now, we have done it. And it was also a special moment because of Dani's first victory.

Q:

How much has Dani impressed you?

YM:

He did exactly what I expected from him. In Finland, it was really difficult for him. When we signed him, the plan was to let him score his first win with us and the idea was to win on tarmac. For him, the start of the rally was not so easy because of his road position, but his speed was getting better and better. Yesterday, he impressed me. He was fast in the dry in the morning and also fast in the rain in the afternoon.

Q:

It's not just in the WRC, the wins in WRC2 & 3 were also for Citroën, that must be satisfying! It looks like we are set for a great battle in the manufacturers championship now?!

YM:

We are coming back in the battle. Now, we are again at 26 points with two rallies remaining on gravel and two on asphalt. It is still possible. After Finland, it was different, but now, I am happy that we are able to fight for the title.

Q:

When will a decision about your team for next year be made?

I don't know, I can't say it yet. I have always said that we start to work on it after Germany. For me, this first event on tarmac was very important to me. It is difficult to say how much time it will take. I am not alone in this game.

Q:

How important is Dani's win for his chances for next year?

It is an important point, for sure, but it is only one of the points. When you sign somebody, you want him to win, but there are other factors playing a role here.

## FIA WRC 2 CHAMPIONSHIP

Present:

1<sup>st</sup> – Robert Kubica

1<sup>st</sup> – Maciek Baran

Q:

Congratulations Robert on your third win this season, and this time you were in a good battle with Elfyn Evans. How do you feel about the result?

RK:

It has been quite a good battle, although it wasn't an easy weekend for us. We had a few issues on the car, with the handbrake. We did only three stages without any issue, which was quite disappointing. It is not easy to do the stages with a handbrake that isn't working properly. Winning WRC 2 is nice, but fifth overall is even nicer.

Q:

How did you feel in the car

RK:

I had a good feeling in the car. Some stages were a disadvantage for us with the RRC car. Conditions weren't easy for us and some stages had nothing to do with the asphalt rallies I did so far. In the tarmac rallies I did in Italy and France, there was clean asphalt and no cutting in the corners. Here, it was quite a challenge.

Q:

This was also your first experience at Panzerplatte? What was that like for you?

RK:

I liked it after recce. It is a very difficult stage. Grip levels changing from tarmac to concrete and from green roads to dusty, and the road is changing from wide to narrow. There are so many junctions, it is very difficult to find the perfect braking points. One is very similar looking to each other. Wasn't an easy one to approach for the first time.

Q:

Another victory for you, what about your championship chances?

RK:

As I have said before, I am not really looking for the championship. My main goal is to gain this year experience. Maybe I carry on with rallying. If not, I spent a good year enjoying what I did and that's it.

Q:

When will a decision for 2014 be made?

RK:

I don't now yet. In the past, I always liked to have a decision as soon as possible, because that is giving you a good winter time and a chance to relax. Maybe, I need one or two months more. Im not in a hurry. I have good opportunities in circuit racing, but there are also chances in rallying.

Q:

How tough a challenge was it this weekend?

MB:

It was a great weekend, or in fact, rather a week that started more than a week ago on Friday. For me, every rally we have won becomes the favourite rally, so now my favourite rally is Rallye Deutschland. However, I am not there yet. I understand that I have more work to do to be on the pace. From tomorrow I have to try harder and learn to be a better co-driver. Conditions and stages on WRC are very tough.

Q:

What do have to work on in particular?

MB:

I can't tell you.

Q:

What was your toughest challenge this weekend?

That surely was the first passing of the stages when I had to do some changes in the notes that Robert told me, and then try to focus on the road at the same time.

## FIA WRC 3 CHAMPIONSHIP

Present:

1<sup>st</sup> – Sebastien Chardonnet

1<sup>st</sup> – Thibault De La Haye

Q:

Sebastien, congratulations on your second win in WRC3 this season. A great win for the championship!

SC:

Of course, it is a very good thing for us and for the championship. At the beginning of the week, we expected a good result here.

Q:

There were some issues for you. Please tell us about them.

SC:

The first day was okay. On the second day, the morning was very good, but in the afternoon on the first stage we had a collision with a dog that was in the middle of the stage. Our car ventilator didn't work anymore. The engine temperature was rising, but we fixed it at the end of the stage and we finally made it back to the service park where the mechanics did a really good job.

Q:

Did you think it was game over?

SC:

Yes, you always think about it, but you try to continue and keep your faith, and that worked out.

Q:

Where you on your limit, or did you have a margin?

SC:

On the first day, we pushed a lot, because the battle with Evans was really close. On the second day, it worked quite well. Then we tried to conserve the lead and not take any risks.

Q:

The battle for the championship is still very close with Keith Cronin. How comfortable are you?

SC:

This win is very good for my confidence. Surely, Cronin is always there, he doesn't make many mistakes. It will be good fight in the end. In the Alsace, we have to score many points. The final in Wales will be our first time there, which will be very difficult. Therefore, our goal is to score maximum points on tarmac.

Q:

Has it been a confident weekend for you?

TDLH:

Since Monte, we waited for second victory of the season after two podiums in Portugal and Finland. We were happy to be back on tarmac. It is good for the championship and for our confidence.

Q:

Daniel Elena is also involved in your team. How much advice does he give you?

TDLH:

That is really difficult to say.

Q:

Talk to me about the challenges this weekend. You had to fix your car on the road. How difficult was that?

It was very difficult, but we managed. The stages after that were hard. We were just looking at the engine temperatures to make it to the finish.