



MEET THE CREWS SESSION DAY 2 – 22.08.2015

Present:

Jost Capito, Volkswagen Motorsport
Michel Nandan, Hyundai Motorsport
Malcolm Wilson, M-Sport World Rally Team
Marek Nawarecki, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team
Sébastien Ogier, Volkswagen Motorsport
Jari-Matti Latvala, Volkswagen Motorsport
Andreas Mikkelsen, Volkswagen Motorsport

Q:

Jost, one day to go here at Rally Germany, it is the perfect situation right now for you guys, it is a Volkswagen one, two and three. Only four stages remaining, are you feeling a little bit nervous about tomorrow?

JC:

Guten Abend zusammen und vielen Dank fürs Kommen. Yes, of course, we feel nervous. We have felt nervous every day so far, especially in our home rally. We never won our home rally so far in the two attempts we have had and in the third attempt, we are 1-2-3 on the first day and then extended the lead for the 1-2-3 on the second day, so it is quite an ideal position for the third day, especially as the gaps between the three drivers are big enough that they don't fight too much, but it is still a long day tomorrow again. There are four stages, anything can happen, but I think the conditions are quite good. We hope it will stay dry until the rally has finished, so all the spectators see a good finish tomorrow and an exciting power stage as well.

Q:

You mentioned the gaps, they are bigger gaps now. Ogier had a fantastic final stage today and the lead that he has now is over 30 seconds. There was a lot of talk this afternoon about whether or not the team had imposed team orders. Jari-Matti seemed really subdued, he didn't seem quite himself. Can you clarify the situation, had you told them to hold position or not?

JC:

No, we told them that they have to finish the rally, especially after the situation in the last two years they have to finish, and in the window in which they can finish, we are happy for them to fight. Jari-Matti was going to fight and he didn't find his perfect rhythm and dropped off a bit, so then he realised that the gap is getting too big to really fight, so he was realising, okay, I make a secure second and maybe I get the chance, so I keep the distance not too big, but he had to accept second place, especially as Séb had some stages on which he did some miracles.

Q:

With the gap so big now, is the advice to hold positions going into the final day? No one is going to take risk, are they?

JC:

We don't need to give advice. I think that they are clever enough and they are professional enough. Andreas, for example, for him it was clear that he can't take the top two, and he had to look backwards to keep the gap to the guys behind him. And in the top two with 30 seconds, Jari-Matti is clever enough to know that with speed, he can't catch Séb, so they will



drive their rhythm. On top of that, they are not going slow, because if you go slow, you easily make mistakes, so they will drive their normal rhythm tomorrow.

Q:

Michel, I asked Jost about team orders, but your boys were pretty much fighting it out today for that fourth position. We were going to come around to Hyundai and see if you were going to tell them to slow down. It has been an interesting battle between Sordo and Neuville. Were there any thoughts about team orders in your mind?

MN:

Well, I have to say, this morning it was a bit difficult to give team orders, because everything was closely behind, so everything could happen. We just told them not to go off the road, which normally is not enough, but, okay, they finished the day and I think the positions are a bit more secure this evening, so I hope tomorrow we can continue like that. But you know, with drivers, you never know.

Q:

So there is no instruction for them and they can still go out and fight for fourth tomorrow. There is not that much time between them.

MN:

No, I think they have to secure their position and the gap with Elfyn is quite enough so they have been asked to stay like that.

Q:

What about Kevin Abbring and Hayden Paddon? Hayden in particular, again, seemed to be a little bit frustrated, but he did mention that, maybe, there has been a little bit of an issue turbo-wise, which has slowed him.

MN:

Yes, we think that since this morning, probably not the first stage but maybe the third one, there was an issue with a leak on the turbocharger line and we didn't know about this. Just after doing the second loop, explaining what was going on, we understood that there was something. So now, looking on the data from the last loop, it was confirmed that there was a problem, so it is a bit of a pity, because he was going quite well yesterday and he was supposed to do the same today, but at least it is good that we found the reason and that he has no more doubt in his mind tomorrow.

Q:

What about Kevin Abbring, we are only seeing him on a handful of events this year. Difficult to impress when we don't see him so often, but what have you thought?

MN:

Kevin had some issues with the differential yesterday, so the handling of the car was really difficult. Today, at the end of the first loop, there was a power steering issue, so it was not so easy either, but I think that after yesterday, he had to bring back his confidence and to try and go again. It was a little bit difficult, but step by step, it is coming and he has still to drive and make his pace and then take some results.

Q:

So, let's turn to Malcolm Wilson now. Yesterday, we joked about maybe having a chat with your drivers at the end of the day, because maybe they hadn't performed as you thought they would. Then Elfyn Evans, first stage this morning, goes out and sets a top three time. That was pretty impressive from Elfyn. What did you say to him last night?

MW:

Well, I spoke with Thierry before and he told me that he is going flat-out tomorrow. Thierry is ignoring team orders (laughs). No, you are right. We had a great start this morning. Elfyn was second-fastest, third-fastest and as you said last night, we really felt we were in striking distance, but then, once we got to Panzerplatte, it has all gone wrong. I don't think we had the correct set-up, to be honest, so a little bit to learn there, but at least we are still here. But



as Michel stays there in a comfortable position, unless something happens, then we can't really expect to do anything.

Q:

What about Ott Tänak today, what have you thought of his performance?

MW:

I think they both had a difficult day, and then, of course, Ott went off at Panzerplatte, where he lost about over a minute, so he has dropped behind Mads now, and I think it is Hayden who is closely behind him, so I hope they don't do too good a job in fixing Hayden's car, because there is pressure there as well.

Q:

So, what is the plan then for the final day as you say, the boys are quite far ahead of Elfyn, what is the instruction to both Ott and Elfyn tomorrow?

MW:

We need to understand why we can be quick on some stages and not on the others. We will be testing various things. The good thing is that we have two stages, then come back and have service, so we can make some set-up changes and come back and find the reason why we haven't been as quick as we should have been today.

Q:

Let's turn to Marek Nawarecki now. Mads is in the best position for you, but it has been Kris Meeke who has really set the times today. We have seen him right up there, challenging the boys in front. Let's talk about Kris first, what have you thought of his performance?

MN:

Yes, for Kris, he is not in the position he would expect before this rally, but he has had a very good day, he was doing very good times all day long from the very beginning. Once again, he is able to do very good times, he is very fast, especially on a type of surface like here in Germany. Unfortunately, what happened yesterday, it seems that he has not improved his position, he is too far for that.

Q:

Mads, though, is in a little bit of a battle and we have seen stronger times coming through from Mads in the afternoon. He seems very comfortable out there on the German stages. What can he do on the final day, though?

MN:

Mads did a very consistent day, a solid day. He improved his pace, his times a bit and it was better than yesterday. Now, he is in seventh position, but very close to Elfyn Evans, so on the final day tomorrow, it should be possible to try and improve his position as well. I think he was very comfortable today in his car. He will probably change a few things in his car for tomorrow and we can expect that he will again have a very good day.

Q:

Sébastien, it looks like it has been a long day. You look exhausted, but it has been a good day! Over a 30 second lead now, going into the final day here, you must be delighted with that.

SO:

Yes, but I will be even more delighted when I am in bed! No, for sure, it has been a great day. I am really happy to be in the lead once again tonight, even with a better gap than yesterday. So far, the ADAC Rallye Deutschland has been a good one for me and I have a good sensation, good pleasure in the car and I am happy to be in front. But at the moment, it means nothing, because we have four more stages to do. I have to finish the job tomorrow, but for sure, now, I can take it a bit easier and tomorrow, the only target now is to cross the finish line.

Q:



Yes, four more stages to go tomorrow, but let's talk a little bit more about today. That final Panzerplatte stage for you was pretty incredible. There was nobody to touch you on that, it was a really good stage.

SO:

Yes, it was a really good stage. Panzerplatte has never been my favourite stage, but I have always been fast there. I know how to go fast and I try to manage the tyres. This stage is always like a mix between managing the tyres and trying to push. On the second loop, I really managed, I think, to find the perfect reason to save the tyres and even on the final kilometres, they were responding to what I wanted to do, which is normally not the case. Normally, you really suffer on the last section. I made some modifications to the set-up and I really had a perfect car until the end and I think that is why I managed to make the difference.

Q:

Four more stages to go tomorrow. We have seen lots of drama on the final day of Rally Germany for the past two years. Do you go into the day feeling a little bit nervous because of the history or not?

SO:

Not at all. I have enough history myself here, but that was for day one and that is now behind me, so day three is not a problem!

Q:

Let's have a chat with Jari-Matti Latvala then. Jari-Matti, we have seen you push Séb today and last night at the press conference, you said you were hoping that the military stages would really benefit you. That wasn't the case, though. What happened out there, why do you think you couldn't find enough pace to catch him?

J-ML:

Normally, I like it there and I have a good feeling, but this year, I couldn't get the feeling with the car. I was suffering with understeering in the morning. We lost around six seconds. I tried to do some modifications, on the set-up and on the suspension, but we went into the wrong direction and it didn't work out at all. But that is the way. Sébastien had a really good run and I couldn't respond on that. The feeling with the car wasn't there, so there was nothing I could do.

Q:

Were you feeling any pressure because of the expectancy of the team to see this 1-2-3 take place? Was that weighing on your shoulders?

J-ML:

Let's say it this way: when you are in Finland, for instance, when you fight, if you go off, it is part of the game, but here, I can't say it is part of the game, so it is a bit different mentally when you go out there, so you have to think of a different way. But I could challenge, and I make the challenge with Séb, there is no team order, but you have to see the whole structure. Houses are not built without bottom parts, so you have to remember that.

Q:

That's a very good point, Jari-Matti. But back to my question, do you feel pressure then?

J-ML:

Well, I don't know. Not that there is so much of pressure, but I haven't had the real fighting spirit either.

Q:

Okay. So what about tomorrow then? Four stages to go, you are in a good second position right now, going into stages that caused you a little bit of difficulty last year. Are you thinking about that or not?

J-ML:

Actually, it was not a little bit of difficulty, it was quite a disaster! The target is to finish tomorrow. That is the first thing. I can't get Séb by normal driving. I just need to be clever and make it to the end.



Q:

So let's turn to Andreas Mikkelsen now. Andreas, it's third position for you and it is a solid third. We talked about this last night: you didn't have any real pressure from behind, you couldn't catch the boys in front. How did you find your pace out there today? I believe you have been doing some testing...

AM:

Yes, we have tried different things. The first loop was quite okay, we increased our gap to fourth place without taking any risks. In the afternoon, we decided that we should try some different things which we can maybe look for in Rally Corsica, so we tried that and maybe it was a bit better in some places. Anyway, it wasn't such an interesting day for me, because I have nobody to fight with, really. I am controlling my pace to fourth place and controlling without taking any risks. It has been a successful day, but not the most interesting day.

Q:

You are the young gun in the team. Not that I am saying that Jari-Matti and Séb are old, of course, but you are going to be battling with them at some point and you are putting in all that work now, we are seeing such a competitive Mikkelsen now already. We have been talking about this first win coming, so are you already thinking about Australia?

AM:

Yes, of course. Australia is a rally that suits me well, but first of all, we need to get finished with Rally Germany, it is one more day, but it is nice to see the pace on tarmac, even though we are not pushing so hard and still, we are setting competitive times, so it is looking good.

Q:

What would it feel like tomorrow to be part of a 1-2-3, in Germany, where it has been difficult for the team before? You have been on the podium, you did that last year.

AM:

We have to finish like this for tomorrow. That would be a great way to pay back our misfortune for the last couple of years. The team usually deserves it. We need to focus on that tomorrow.

Q:

So, let's get back to Sébastien Ogier finally then. I don't know what it is, but there seem to be more people coming out to see the rally this year. The stages have been full, the service park has got a great atmosphere. What have you thought of it as an event? All the support coming through for you guys, every driver?

SO:

Yes, really, really nice. We have been talking about Panzerplatte as a stage, but we also need to talk about the atmosphere there, because year after year, they make it better and better. We have seen a huge amount of people there this time, we had a great atmosphere when the music band was there. The organisation is really nice, so this rally really is a success, especially when the weather is nice and everyone is enjoying it, so thank you everyone for coming and giving us the support. See you tomorrow at Porta Nigra for the same podium, hopefully!