



## END OF DAY “MEET THE CREWS” SESSION DAY 2 – 23-8-2013

### **Present:**

Jost Capito, Volkswagen Motorsport  
Malcolm Wilson, Qatar M-Sport World Rally Team  
Yves Matton, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team  
Jari-Matti Latvala, Volkswagen Motorsport  
Thierry Neuville, Qatar World Rally Team  
Dani Sordo, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team

### **Q:**

Jost, day two and still the lead for Volkswagen. Let's start with Latvala's performance today. What are your thoughts?

### **JC:**

Jari-Matti's performance was excellent today. He kept the lead throughout the day and especially at the end of the day with the fastest time on the two last stages was very good. He found his rhythm, so we will see what he can do tomorrow and on Sunday.

### **Q:**

Is there any pressure on his shoulders from the team, being the top-rated Volkswagen remaining now?

### **JC:**

I think the pressure comes from himself, it doesn't come from us. It is our first rally in Germany and it would be great to have success here, but it is definitely not a must. I think he gives himself so much pressure that he doesn't need any additional pressure from the team.

### **Q:**

Let's talk about the opening stages. It surprised all of us that Sébastien Ogier had effectively made a mistake on the opening stage that led to his retirement for the day. Please talk to us about what happened.

### **JC:**

I think, first of all, it is good to see that he is still human. He was too quick in one corner that was still a little wet. He braked too late and went off and then damaged his front suspension and had to retire. He tried to fix it and go slowly through the stages, but that didn't work. He stopped for safety reasons and retired for the day, but he will be back tomorrow under Rally2 (regulations) and his main target will be to get the three points on Sunday for the Power Stage.

### **Q:**

Malcolm, Thierry Neuville in second position has done a fantastic job, what have you thought of his performance?

### **MW:**

He has followed on from Finland where he left off. A great form this morning with four fastest times, he lost out a little bit to Jari on the last two stages, probably a little bit more than we wanted to, but the important thing is that we have made the decision, we wanted to run as the second car tomorrow, and it was a fantastic day.

### **Q:**

So tactic was coming in at the end of the day?



**MW:**

Yes, but we didn't want to lose as much time as we lost, but we will be happy to run second car.

**Q:**

So, talk to me about tomorrow then, as we have Arena Panzerplatte tomorrow, that big long threatening stage, 41 kilometres. How prepared is Thierry to go through tomorrow's stages?

**MW:**

I think he is very well prepared. The big thing tomorrow is that the weather forecast for the afternoon is looking quite difficult, so we know it is one of the most difficult tarmac stages in the WRC. It is easy to clip a stone and to retire, so the thing is really to concentrate as we did today.

**Q:**

Have we seen Thierry's top speed yet, or is there still more to give?

**MW:**

There is definitely more to give. When you look at his development, the performance in Finland and now setting four fastest times here today, there is a huge potential still there.

**Q:**

Yves, Dani Sordo in third position overall has been battling with the first two drivers. How do you think his performance has been?

**MW:**

He needs some more consistency. In every stage, he is doing one bad split (time). He can really come back for second place, but the gap is 20 seconds and for sure, he needs a good day tomorrow.

**Q:**

Is it nice for the team to see him far more confident than he was in Finland a couple of weeks ago?

**YM:**

Yes, there it was really difficult for him, but he is coming back and he is getting better and better. I am sure he will be very good tomorrow in the stages,

**Q:**

Malcolm mentioned the weather, how concerned are you tomorrow about the threat of rain? What is the Citroën forecast saying?

**YM:**

Why do you ask about the Citroën forecast, you can ask Volkswagen or Ford. It seems to be a little bit difficult at the moment, but we saw also today that it can rain. For me, it is very difficult to say.

**Q:**

Talking about Mikko's performance, he has become more confident as the day went on. Do you think he can increase his speed also?

**YM:**

Yes, a little bit, but it is the first rally with Citroën on asphalt (this year) and his pace is very good. I am surprised. We will make some changes on the set-up, so that he can also get a little bit closer.

**Q:**

Jari-Matti. A flying Finn, leading the way on German tarmac. How does it feel to be the leader in day two?



**JML:**

It feels really good, because Rally Finland was a big disappointment on our home soil and it is really great to be competitive on tarmac. I also have to thank Ford, my previous team, because they forced me to do some tarmac training and doing that improved my tarmac driving as well, so I am getting better, but the car is really good as well, the Volkswagen Polo R is doing really well on tarmac.

**Q:**

You seem to be loving the stages out there. The question is: can you hold on to that lead, with a charging Thierry and Sordo behind you?

**JML:**

Thierry has been making really good progress this year. He is now up to speed in every condition. We will see tomorrow. I love the military area. For me, the Panzerplatte is really nice, I enjoy driving over there. Let's see how the weather is, it can be very difficult, and Dani is in a good position as well. When the rain comes, it can change a lot of things, so I have to stay focused and find a rhythm and then we will see at the end where we are.

**Q:**

You seem very focussed this evening. Do you feel a bit of pressure on your shoulders?

**JML:**

Yes, you always feel the pressure. It is just a question of managing it.

**Q:**

Let's move over to Thierry Neuville now. Let's talk about the final stage first, because Malcolm said there was some tactical element in you losing a little bit of time to make sure that you weren't first on the road tomorrow. Is that the case?

**TN:**

Yes, our plan was to be second tonight because I didn't want to go first on the road tomorrow. Now, I can see the lines of Jari-Matti. Being second was my expectation, but I didn't want to lose five seconds on two stages. I wanted to be much closer, but Jari-Matti was fast. I am still learning the car on tarmac, it is my first tarmac rally with the Fiesta. We have already made a big improvement, but we can do some adjustments for tomorrow.

**Q:**

It is only seven seconds between you and him, so not a lot of time, but do you have more speed to give? At the end of some stages, you said that that was all you could do. Is that your speed, then?

**TN:**

On some of the stages, I was really flat out, but taking no risk, driving very clean. I made no mistake today and it was a good performance. For tomorrow, I hope it is going to rain a little bit, because in wet conditions, I always show a good speed and I am sure the Fiesta will work here very well, so I am looking forward to tomorrow. The stages are nice, the military camp is lovely to drive, but it is not easy, so let's continue.

**Q:**

I am probably going to ask you this question every day, but in the pre-event press conference, you said you weren't going to take so many risks here. Is that changing in your mind now, that you are getting closer to a possible win?

**TN:**

I took no big risk today, I got a good rhythm and the speed was good, so tomorrow should just continue like this and it is great to drive with so many spectators out there, Belgian flags everywhere, so I really enjoyed today and tomorrow it will be the same and hopefully we can stay in this position or even get closer to Jari-Matti.



**Q:**

Dani Sordo, we have seen a strong day from you with a good pace on the stages. Are you happy?

**DS:**

Yes, I am happy. It was a nice battle with Jari-Matti and Thierry. It was close, but I made a mistake on a hairpin the final stage, so there I lost a little bit more time, but it was a nice battle, so I hope to continue the battle tomorrow.

**Q:**

Same question I put to Thierry, do you feel you have more speed to take on the stages?

**DS:**

Yes, I will try tomorrow. If it rains, it will be a big difference, because it will be much more slippery. I don't know, we will see what it will be.

**Q:**

Jari-Matti has said he likes the Panzerplatte, what do you think of that stage?

**DS:**

It is a really nice stage, we have some new parts also for this year.

**Q:**

Should these two guys be worried about you?

**DS:**

I don't know, you need to ask them. At the moment, I am behind them and they are really fast, but I think I need to push Jari-Matti to challenge him for second place.