



Rally Finland (30 July - 2 August 2009) – Day 3

Ogier, Ingrassia and the Citroën Junior Team show their class in Finland

On their first participation in the Rally Finland at the wheel of the C4 WRC, Sébastien Ogier and Julien Ingrassia have finished sixth after setting a fastest time on day two. This excellent result underlines the progress made by the Citroën Junior Team since the start of the 2009 season.

Having started the final day just 17.5 seconds behind Matti Rantanen, a local driver supported by the Finnish motorsport federation, the Equipe de France FFSA crew of Sébastien Ogier / Julien Ingrassia knew that fifth position was within their reach on this short (47.44 kilometre) final day of the Rally Finland. « There is no point in taking needless risks » said the reigning Junior World Rally Champion as he drove his C4 WRC out of parc ferme on the morning. « We will start the day at our own pace and see on the split times if we have the chance to make up a place. »

In Hannula (SS20), Sébastien Ogier beat his rival by 2.8 seconds over 10.82 kilometres. A little later, a third-fastest stage time allowed the C4 WRC driver to reduce the gap to 10.1 seconds before the first run through Myhinpää. By the time the cars got to the regroup, the Frenchman was just 4.6 seconds behind. « We're not going to alter our tactics » he said. « I am sure that the pace will be quicker on the second run through the stages but we are not going to take more risks. »

The duel continued in Myhinpää 2. Ogier took 4.0 seconds out of Rantanen to head into the final televised spectator superspecial stage with just a 0.6 second deficit. The Frenchman set second fastest time overall on the stage, but missed out on fifth overall by just 0.3 seconds after 345 kilometres of flat-out driving. « That doesn't really matter if you look at the way that the rally has gone for us generally, » he said. « I'm very happy with how we drove on the second half of the event. We enjoyed ourselves a lot and built up a lot of confidence, thanks to a perfect car and good pace notes. We were able to up the speed as the rally went on and this continues our learning curve well. Now I can't wait to get to Australia! »

After setting a fastest time yesterday in Kavala (SS18), Ogier and Ingrassia ended Rally Finland in sixth place overall. The last two drivers to have set a fastest time in Finland on their debut there with a top-category car were Didier Auriol and Carlos Sainz in 1988.

Following two impressively consistent days, Conrad Rautenbach and Daniel Barritt were caught out by the seventh kilometre of Myhinpää 2: « That's not how we wanted to end our rally » said the Zimbabwean. « We weren't taking any risks but these are always very complex stages. I'm bitterly disappointed. »

« It was a big accident for Conrad » explained Benoit Nogier, Citroën Junior Team Manager. « Luckily the crew is uninjured, even though the car is damaged. Sébastien has driven an exceptional rally. Very few drivers have been able to set a fastest stage time here on their debut in a top category car. He obtained this great result by gradually increasing his pace, to mix it with the frontrunners by the middle of the second day. For three rallies now, he has shown his capability to challenge for top results. This is very satisfying, particularly after what is well known as the most difficult event of the season. Now we are going to concentrate on Rally Australia, where we will run two cars for Conrad Rautenbach and Sébastien Ogier. Until then, we have a lot of work to do to prepare our C4 WRCs for their next challenge. »

THE RALLY BY NUMBERS

	Conrad Rautenbach Daniel Barritt		Sébastien Ogier Julien Ingrassia	
	Stage	Overall	Stage	Overall
SS20 : Hannula (10,82 km)	10th +15''1	9th +8'52''1	4th +5''1	6th +4'26''4
SS21 : Myhinpää 1 (15,06 km)	9th +17''4	9th +9'00''1	3rd +1''9	6th +4'18''9
SS22 : Myhinpää 2 (15,06 km)	-	-	5th +3''3	6th +4'19''7
SS23 : Ruuhimäki (6,50 km)	-	-	2nd +0''5	6th +4'18''5

Fastest stage times

Day 1 : SS1 : S. Loeb (Citröen C4) – SS2 and 3 : M. Hirvonen (Ford Focus) – SS4 and 5 : S. Loeb – SS6 and 7 : M. Hirvonen – SS8 to 10 : S. Loeb.

Day 2 : SS11 to 15 : M. Hirvonen – SS16 : J. Latvala (Ford Focus) – SS17 : M. Hirvonen – **SS18 : S. Ogier (Citröen C4)** and J. Latvala – SS19 : J. Latvala.

Day 3 : SS20 : J. Latvala – **SS21 : S. Loeb** – SS22 and 23 : J. Latvala.

Best performers : M. Hirvonen 10, S. Loeb 7, J. Latvala 6 and S. Ogier 1.

Leaders : SS1 : S. Loeb – SS2 to 23 : M. Hirvonen.

Provisional final classification

1.	Hirvonen/Lehtinen	Ford Focus	1h02'51''4
2.	Loeb/Elena	Citröen C4	+25''1
3.	Latvala/Anttila	Ford Focus	+49''9
4.	Sordo/Marti	Citröen C4	+1'06''1
5.	Rantanen/Lukka	Ford Focus	+4'18''2
6.	Ogier/Ingrassia	Citröen C4	+4'18''5
7.	Ketomaa/Stenberg	Subaru Impreza	+5'07''5
8.	Wilson/Martin	Ford Focus	+6'33''6
9.	Al Qassimi/Orr	Ford Focus	+12'57''3
10.	Hänninen/Markkula	Skoda Fabia	+14'13''7...

FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

OFFICIAL CLASSIFICATIONS

		IRL	NOR	CYP	POR	ARG	ITA	GRK	POL	FIN	AUS	ESP	GBR	TOT
1	Mikko Hirvonen	6	8	8	8	0	8	10	10	10				68
2	Sébastien Loeb	10	10	10	10	10	5	0	2	8				65
3	Dani Sordo	8	4	5	6	8	0	0	8	5				44
4	Jari-Matti Latvala	0	6	0	0	3	10	6	0	6				31
5	Henning Solberg	5	5	0	4	6	1	0	6	0				27
6	Petter Solberg	-	3	6	5	0	6	0	5	0				25
7	Matthew Wilson	2	2	4	0	4	3	0	4	1				20
8	Sébastien Ogier	3	0	0	0	2	0	8	0	3				16
9	Federico Villagra	-	-	2	2	5	0	5	-	0				14
10	Conrad Rautenbach	0	0	3	0	0	0	4	1	0				8
11	Mads Ostberg	-	0	-	3	-	2	2	0	0				7
12	Khalid Al Qassimi	1	-	1	1	-	0	3	-	0				6
13	Chris Atkinson	4	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				4
14	Evgeny Novikov	-	0	0	0	-	4	0	0	0				4
15	Matt Rantanen	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	4				4
16	Krzysztof Holowczyc	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	-				3
17	Jukka Ketomaa	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2				2
18	Nasser Al Attiyah	-	-	0	0	1	0	0	-	-				1
19	Urmo Aava	0	1	-	-	-	-	-	-	-				1
20	L. Athanassoulas	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	-	-				1

1	Citroën Total WRT	18	14	16	16	18	8	4	12	13				119
2	BP Ford Abu Dhabi	8	14	10	8	3	18	18	10	16				105
3	Stobart VK M-Sport	8	8	6	5	10	7	5	11	4				64
4	Citroën Junior Team	5	2	4	0	2	5	6	5	4				33
5	Munchi's Ford	-	-	3	4	5	0	6	-	2				20

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