



CITROËN TOTAL WORLD RALLY TEAM

2009 FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP

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

Citroëns drivers stay focused

After starting the second day of the 2009 Rally Finland with the firm intention of continuing his scrap with Mikko Hirvonen for first place, Sébastien Loeb has been forced to switch his focus to defending second place following a puncture. Dani Sordo is just seconds away from a footing on the overnight podium and has his sights on finishing in the big points for the Citroën Total World Rally Team.

Following the opening day's bright sunshine, competitors were greeted by wet weather for the beginning of the Finnish round's second leg this morning. The programme for the day featured three loops of three stages which were split by visits to the service park in Jyväskylä.

The times of the two front-runners on Leustu 1 (SS11, 21.35km) set the tone for the morning, with Sébastien Loeb finishing 2.2 seconds behind Hirvonen: "I can't go any faster. Mikko has a small advantage because he is running first on the road and he is also depositing a thin layer of mud on my line. I can see where he is putting his wheels and he is going very quickly indeed. I am, too, but not quite as quickly..." Dani Sordo faced even trickier conditions on his way to the third best time, 13.1s behind the leader: "There are places where Seb can opt for a slightly different line to that of Mikko, but I haven't really got any choice: I've just got to plough through the greasy top-coating."

Sébastien Loeb and Daniel Elena dropped further seconds on Himos 1 and Surkee 1, and the Citroën pair checked in at the day's first service halt with a deficit of 10.9s to make up. The sun was back out for the 30-minute break, after which crews headed out for a second visit to the same three tests.

Sébastien Loeb's bid for victory took a blow on SS15 (Himos 2), however: "My front-right wheel got caught in a rut which unseated my tyre, letting practically all the air out. The gap is now up to 26 seconds, which basically means we've got little chance of winning now under normal circumstances. The important thing will be to keep my car on the road, and that's not easy on stages like this."

Dani Sordo had a similar misadventure on the following test (Surkee 2, SS16): "I clipped a stone and I was sure I had punctured. I dropped a little time and that was sufficient for Latvala to pass me. I found today's stages a bit more difficult on the whole, but Jari-Matti has upped his pace, too."



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Following the day's second service halt in Jyväskylä, the day ended with a final loop of three stages, and Sébastien Loeb's objective was now to defend second place: "We tried a number of adjustments to the set-up of my C4 WRC, but that didn't really change anything. Indeed, I am pretty happy with its handling. It's just that Mikko has got the edge this weekend. I will continue to keep up a strong pace just in case anything happens, but my goal is now to finish second and try to make sure of scoring eight points." Dani Sordo and Marc Marti also profited from the final loop to consolidate their position: "We are only about 10 seconds behind Latvala, but we haven't lost sight of our objective. Citroën needs points to help its lead in the Manufacturers' World Championship. We can't afford to take big risks just to gain an extra point."

RALLY FACTS

	Sébastien Loeb / Daniel Elena		Dani Sordo / Marc Marti	
	Stage	Overall	Stage	Overall
SS11 : Leustu 1 (21,35 km)	2 nd +2''2	2 nd +5''5	3 rd +13''1	3 rd +33''1
SS12 : Himos 1 (20,94 km)	2 nd +1''4	2 nd +6''9	4 th +11''8	3 rd +44''9
SS13 : Surkee 1 (14,95 km)	2 nd +4''0	2 nd +10''9	4 th +7''9	3 rd +52''8
SS14 : Leustu 2 (21,35 km)	2 nd +1''6	2 nd +12''5	3 rd +3''7	3 rd +56''5
SS15 : Himos 2 (20,94 km)	4 th +13''5	2 nd +26''0	3 rd +7''2	3 rd +1'03''7
SS16 : Surkee 2 (14,95 km)	3 rd +3''3	2 nd +28''0	4 th +7''8	4 th +1'10''2
SS17 : Urria (12,75 km)	4 th +4''4	2 nd +32''4	2 nd +3''2	4 th +1'13''4
SS18 : Kavala (10,35 km)	4 th +1''4	2 nd +33''2	5 th +2''0	4 th +1'14''8
SS19 : Väärinmaja (29,29 km)	2 nd +2''3	2 nd +32''0	5 th +7''5	4 th +1'18''8

Stage wins

Day 1 – SS1 : Sébastien Loeb (Citroën C4) – SS2 and 3 : Mikko Hirvonen (Ford Focus) – SS4 and 5 : Loeb – SS6 and 7 : Hirvonen – SS8 and 9 : Loeb – SS10 : Loeb
 Day 2 – SS11 to 15 : Hirvonen – SS16 : Jari-Matti Latvala (Ford Focus) – SS17 : Hirvonen – SS18 : Latvala and Ogier – SS19 : Latvala.

Best performers : Hirvonen, 10 fastest times – Loeb, 6 fastest times – Latvala, 3 fastest times including 1 equal time – Ogier, 1 equal time fastest time.

Leader : SS1 : Loeb – SS2 to 19 : Hirvonen.

Leaderboard after day 2

1.	Hirvonen / Lehtinen	Ford Focus	2h27'35''8
2.	Loeb / Elena	Citroën C4	+32''0
3.	Latvala / Antilla	Ford Focus	+1'08''3
4.	Sordo / Marti	Citroën C4	+1'18''8
5.	Rantanen / Lukka	Ford Focus	+4'10''6
6.	Ogier / Ingrassia	Citroën C4	+4'28''1
7.	Ketomaa / Stenberg	Subaru Impreza	+4'59''1
8.	Wilson / Martin	Ford Focus	+6'01''7
9.	Rautenbach / Barritt	Citroën C4	+8'43''8
10.	Al Qassimi / Orr	Ford Focus	+11'29''0

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Day 3 (Sunday, August 2): 285.27km, including 47.44km divided into 4 stages (3 different). Service H (06.50, 15 minutes). SS20 (Hannula, 10.82km), SS21 (Myhinpää 1, 15.06km). Regroup (09.46, 30 minutes). SS22 (Myhinpää 2, 15.06km), SS23 (Ruuhimäki, 6.50km). Service I (13.16, 10 minutes). Finish (13.26).

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