

Julien Moncet (Hyundai Shell Mobis World Rally Team)

Jari-Matti Latvala (Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT)

Richard Millener (M-Sport Ford World Rally Team)

Julien, Ott Tänak leads at the end of leg one and I don't think he expected to be there. He took the lead at the end of the first stage this morning, he's had a pretty epic day, what did you think of his performance?

JM: Yes, we did not expect him to be that fast to be honest, although I know our colleagues think we are cheating a bit on the overall operation of the car. We know we are struggling a bit with the car and to be in such a position today is really a relief. For sure Ott was able to get out 110% from the car more than what we were thinking we could have. Yeah. A very good day, we won three stages, he's in the lead by 3.8s. Tomorrow will be a very challenging day, because 3.8s is nothing. There should be some rain as well I guess. It will be a very intense battle definitely.

What can the team and Ott do against the might of the Toyotas and against Rovannerä who is not cleaning the road tomorrow?

JM: The same as today, to win stages! Obviously Ott took a lot of risk and he pushed the car, but we will not stop him from doing that. The championship is not easy for us right now so I think we have to target wins and for me I would say it's all or nothing. We will continue to push and hopefully target the best possible result on Sunday afternoon.

Jari-Matti, an interesting day out there. Esapekka Lappi is your leading driver and as Julien mentioned the gap has narrowed and it's looking like a thriller of a day tomorrow. Are you a happy team principal?

J-ML: Yeah, I'm obviously happy. Julien and Hyundai have done a good job and Ott has been pushing hard and fighting. After the comments Ott gave on shakedown we didn't expect that he would be fighting for the victory, but he has done a great, great job. He has won this rally in the past. But I'm absolutely really happy with the performance of our drivers. They are all in the zone to fight for the victory. Esapekka was in the afternoon finding even more confidence and was able to drop from eight seconds to 3.8s against Ott, so I'm really pleased to see that. Kalle was opening the road and is only about 20s behind. Elfyn was a little bit not the best feeling with the car, but he's also in the touch zone like Kalle and if he can find a bit more confidence everything is also possible for him tomorrow.

Rovannerä had a bit of a moment on the final stage. I believe you didn't see that, you were out spectating?

J-ML: Yes, luckily I was spectating so I didn't get the heart attack!

What can he do tomorrow, because we are so used to him switching it on on a Saturday?

J-ML: I must say here and now in Finland as Julien said Hyundai is going to go flat out and fight for all or nothing. We know the competition is hard here. It's even harder I would say now than in Estonia. These Finnish roads are not forgiving anything, and you have to really attack if you want to be on it, so our drivers in the morning need to be on the case to fight. On the other hand the weather can also play a role. If it is raining heavily tomorrow and

there is some rain expected, we don't know when it comes or where it comes. It can also make it a very big challenge, as we saw in Estonia. It also opens more doors I would say.

Richard, let's talk about the M-Sport Ford day. There have been some nice moments and some stressful moments. Tell me about the overall picture for M-Sport.

RM: Not too bad. It's been a bit of a copy of our season so far. A lot of small positives but probably not the overall day we wanted. I think Craig has had a very good day but unfortunately I think that impact on the stage this morning that lost him 10-12s has put him back a bit out of the fight from where we want him to be. But the pace is still there and as the other guys have said I think we are all expecting rain tomorrow, so we have just got to keep Craig positive and keep pushing because we are not too far away.

He did seem in a positive mood and the pace was there before that little incident knocked his confidence.

RM: Yeah, the pace after that has been pretty good, waving at spectators at speed is always nice to see. I'm sure Jari-Matti used to do that when he was driving.

Did you wave at any spectators, Jari-Matti, at almost 200km/h?

J-ML: No, I tried to stay away so they wouldn't recognise me...

What about Jari Huttunen? It's been his first day in a Rally1 car and he started off very well this morning.

RM: I think he's had a very good day all together. Unfortunately a technical problem stopped him in the last couple of stages which we'll need to fix this evening, but if you look away from that considering his only test was in Estonia pre-Estonia Rally his speed has been really impressive and everyone has seen a slightly different side of Jari Huttunen, that he can smile. That's nice to see and hopefully he can do that over the next two days.

Now tell me gents, we saw you all in Estonia compete against each other in trucks which Jari-Matti won. But we've seen no competition between you guys here...

RM: Apparently there was a Scalextric competition here and Jari pulled out.

J-ML: Honestly I was asked to be in a VIP tent and I had promised to go there. That was my excuse!

RM: We know your priorities!

You've changed!

J-ML: No, if I promise something I keep my promise!

Ott Tänak (Hyundai Shell Mobis World Rally Team)

Esapekka Lappi (Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT)

Elfyn Evans (Toyota Gazoo Racing WRT)

Ott, you lead at the end of the first day after taking the lead after the first stage. When we spoke earlier in the week you didn't expect to be leading this event, it's been an incredible day. How are you feeling, apart from exhausted?

OT: I feel actually positive. Obviously it's been a tricky day but we decided to really put all our cards on the table from the first corner this morning and just go all out. Maybe there were some moments which were not expected in the early stages but later the rhythm was getting smoother and it was playing out better. So overall I would say better than we thought it would be.

How many times did you get to the stage end and think that was on the limit in there?

OT: The second Laukaa I didn't enjoy too much, it's a fast stage and some places at high speed we had some surprises which I didn't like. In the end we are here.

Not too far behind you is Esapekka Lappi. What can you do tomorrow, Ott? The weather is going to change and it will be wet maybe, first thing. You say it's a positive feeling now, can that momentum carry into tomorrow?

OT: There will be some very new aspects tomorrow. We're going to new stages and the weather is definitely going to change, so it sounds like a bit like we had in Estonia. I guess you need to be a bit lucky with the showers and when you get the rain. Let's see. There is no doubt we will fight.

Do you go to bed now or watch some videos of the onboarders?

OT: We have some videos to do, yeah.

Esapekka, what a day for you. You really had some confidence that carried through across three stages. Are you up for the fight with Ott Tänak tomorrow?

EP: Well, at least we started to catch him finally in the afternoon. For sure I will keep doing what we did today and then we will see what is the pace, ours and Ott's and the others as well. The gaps are not crazy big and if the conditions are really tricky five seconds is nothing. Let's see.

Were you happy with the pace you had out there this afternoon or is there more we can see from you?

EP: I think it was pretty clear in the morning we were... not slow, but a bit slower than in the afternoon. We started to push a bit more in the afternoon definitely as I felt it safe. Still, I haven't had too many moments yet so maybe there is the potential to do more but does it make sense? The car feels really good.

You said you were driving really well and you were happy with that.

EP: Yeah, yeah. Everything is pretty easy at the moment and I don't want to change that. So let's keep it this way.

Elfyn, this position. Every one of you on this stage has won this event. What is it going to take tomorrow to get really close to the action. You're not too far away right now, but I have a big sense there is more to come from you.

EE: Yeah, we've sort of had that feeling all day. It's been a bit of a frustrating one really. We've not quite been where we want to be in terms of the feeling and yeah, I've always been a bit guilty of needing to settle into this event, it's so different. I needed a bit of time to find the rhythm. It got a bit better in the afternoon, but let's see.

Tomorrow will be difficult, especially with the weather changing. How different are the stages compared to today?

EE: A bit of a mix tomorrow. Obviously there are more of the wider flowing stages with the big jumps tomorrow. We have to see how everything is feeling there and of course with the weather coming in as well, we really don't know what to expect to be honest. Let's wait and see.

You managed to keep Kalle Rovannerä behind you this evening, but he will be flat chat tomorrow. How worried are you all about him, starting with you Elfyn?

EE: I'm worried about everybody! There's quite a few people there that can challenge. At the end of the day we have to focus on ourselves and there's plenty to worry about there.

Ott?

OT: Let's see tomorrow if he can put the charge on.

Is that you saying bring it on?

OT: Yes!

EP, what about you on your team-mate?

EP: I just said it in Finnish. We are all in trouble!

ENDS