

Kalle, it's your home event, the sun is shining, you had a good shakedown this morning. How are you feeling for what is a huge event for you?

KR: Of course the feeling is great as it always is for a home event. What could we have other than a great feeling with all the fans and nice stages?

It's good to see the fans back in the service area. Good feeling with the car going into the weekend?

KR: Yeah it was quite a good feeling. After that it was not the best feeling, we had to change the car a bit. Hopefully we will find some small things for the rally, then it will be a bit better.

You like to win as we've seen this year. You are leading the championship. You don't have to win any more events because you have an 83-point lead in the standings, yet I'm sure you want to win here I'm sure. How much risk will you take when you have two previous winners beside you who I'm sure will be pushing hard?

KR: Of course this is one of the rallies you want to win. But yeah, there are quite many guys who also want to win and will be fast. We at least have to try to be sensible and not do anything crazy. For sure I will push for it and see what we can do.

Can rally drivers be sensible?

KR: Usually not, but at least I would say this season I have been sometimes.

Talk to me about the route because we have seen some changes for this event. What do you think of it? Is it going to be very fast, the fastest we see all year?

KR: Yeah, the stages seem quite fast. A lot of fast parts all the time, not so much the small and narrow parts anymore. So yeah, I would say overall the stages look really fast, so it should be quite a fast weekend.

Esapekka, you know how it feels to win your home event. There are a lot of drivers who could be on that top step, could you be one of them?

EL: You know we haven't even started the race yet, everything is possible. But I don't know, to be fair. Everything feels good at the moment, but this is only shakedown, so we need to see over the weekend where we are in terms of the speed. Let's see to understand the big picture over the weekend.

Talk to me about your thoughts on the route because Kalle mentioned bigger roads are being used, nice, wide and fast. Are you happy with what you see out there this weekend?

EL: It looks like they are in good condition at the moment. I'm sure stage three tomorrow Lankamaa will be breaking a lot, let's say, for the second pass. New sections also. On the new stage, Vekkula, if the rain comes the second pass will be interesting over there also. There are a lot of cuts on the small roads and they are soft, so there can be some surprises as well. Let's say it's the best roads in a few years. I like it.

Good news. Weather-wise, you are going to want it to stay like this surely, whereas Mr Rovannerä is probably doing a rain dance after this.

EL: Yeah. But it doesn't matter what weather it is. It's always good for the Finn, then it doesn't matter. The dry is good for me, if it's wet it's good for him. So it's always good for Finnish people.

Ott, you also know what it's like to be on the top step of the podium here. How does it go to be against the charging Toyotas, especially against Kalle who just wants to win everything this year?

OT: Obviously feeling quite strange here and in the press conference as well next to Toyotas and Finns, so no doubt it will be a big job to do. If it's really possible we will see. Honestly, this morning there was not really this kind of performance that we would put much pressure on Toyota. But still we will do everything we can and work with the tools we have. Let's see.

You've won here twice. How special is it? It seems to be one of the events every driver wants to have on their roster.

OT: No doubt. It's Finland, it's Monte-Carlo, it's Wales. These are the unique rallies which you want to have on your CV. Finland over the years, it's basically the place where rallying is from, so you want to be the fastest there.

We saw in Estonia you were on the podium, but you had to hustle and take the extra risks. How much are you prepared to take the extra risks here?

OT: It's not about taking the extra risks, the risk counts when you are fighting for the last seconds. If you are fighting for the minutes obviously the risk will make no difference. You are more working on the hustle part to get everything to behave like we expect, then that's the place where the speed normally should come from. I would say we were able to test before this rally and we were able to work a bit more and we will find out tomorrow.

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