



## SS14: PELLAFOL / AGNIÈRES-EN-DÉVOLUY 2

Date :	27.01.2024		
Day :	3	Flash N° :	23
Special Stage :	14	Distance :	21,37 km
Weather :	8°C – Clear weather		
Road conditions :	Dry conditions, few damp patches		

### SS14: Neuville in pole position!

**Thierry Neuville (Hyundai) will start the final day of the 92<sup>nd</sup> Monte Carlo Rally as the overall leader, after a beautiful battle against Sébastien Ogier. He set a memorable fastest time on SS9 on Saturday morning, to kick off Day 3 in style, and ended it in the same way with another phenomenal fastest time on SS14, at sunset.**

Thanks to beating Ogier (Toyota) by 4.1 seconds between Pellafol and Agnières-en-Dévoluy (21.37 km), the Belgian regained the upper hand in this high-flying duel that pitted him all day against the Frenchman, beaten fair and square on the day: *"Since the start of the rally, I've done my utmost to try and catch him, in fact, but today I didn't do enough. He (Neuville) did a good stage. We'll have to push even more tomorrow,"* smiled the eight-time world champion as he looked at his rival's time on the board at the end of the stage.

*"We did a good stage, it was perfection,"* reacted Neuville at the last stop of this long day (120 km). He had already said, after the previous stage, that *"everything is in place, everything is going well"*. He repeated it, clearly delighted with his performance, and added some detailed insight: *"I'm really enjoying the car, it's incredible. Obviously, it was important to take the points tonight but we need to keep the car on the road [until tomorrow]"*.



## Neuville and Ogier on another planet

This Saturday evening, before the last three stages on Sunday morning (SS15 to 17), Neuville has a 3.3 second lead over Ogier, and above all 18 points in the World Championship, under the new points scale. There is just one condition to fulfil: to complete the rally on Sunday, in Monaco, whatever his position in Sunday's classification.

There's something new this year in the WRC, and Elfyn Evans, who has been on a back foot since Friday morning, is determined to make the most of it: *"With the new format, tomorrow is a new day, and that's how we're going to attack it,"* summed up the Welshman from Toyota. He was completely outclassed on Saturday by the Neuville-Ogier duet, he only holds 13 points tonight, but he is capable of pulling out a great Sunday to take 7 more points, plus 5 for winning the Power Stage.

The provisional assessment of this rally is clear: this week, Neuville and Ogier are aliens, as Evans is relegated to 34.9 seconds and Tänak to almost two minutes. When it comes to fastest times in the stages, there's no photo finish either: 6 for Ogier, including the 700<sup>th</sup> of his career on SS13, 5 for Neuville (3 on Friday, 2 on Saturday), 2 for Evans and just one for Tänak (on SS11, by 12 thousandths of a second). Roll on Sunday!



## Quotes

### 18. KATSUTA-JOHNSTON

« The cuts are much worse [than this morning] so it was very slippery in places. This morning, there were dry sections but now it's quite damp and wet. The gravel crew did a good job but there were still some surprises. »

### 9. MIKKELSEN-ERIKSEN

« I didn't have the hybrid in the last split, that was a really long straight. Overall, it's been positive, now we are in a comfortable pace, big step-up from yesterday and just improving all the time. Really looking forward to continue this tomorrow. »

### 16. FOURMAUX-CORIA

« I am really happy about the last three days. We have done a really good job on Thursday and Friday, so it was a bit easier today to manage it. For sure, we always want to be better, but at least it's a good start. »

### 8. TÄNAK-JÄRVEOJA

« It's a difficult stage. At the beginning of the rally, I have been a bit in trouble with the whole engine topic. It's difficult to know how it would be [better] but at the moment it's not there yet. »

### 11. NEUVILLE-WYDAEGHE

« We did a good stage, it was perfection. Everything went well, I really enjoy the car, it was incredible. Obviously, it's important to take the points tonight but we need to keep the car on the road [until tomorrow], I just had a good feeling and we went for it, and I feel like it's paying. »

### 17. OGIER-LANDAIS

[Related to the duel with Thierry Neuville] « I tried since the beginning of the rally, basically. Same thing in this stage, but Thierry [Neuville] did a good one. It looks like we need to try harder tomorrow. »

### 33. EVANS-MARTIN

« This afternoon's not been what we hoped for. The feeling is not where it was for some reason, but that's how it is. Tomorrow, new format will be like the start of a new day, so that's what we'll treat it like. »



## Classifications SS14

POS	DRIVER	STAGE TIME	DIFF 1st	DIFF PREV	CAR No.
1	<a href="#">Thierry NEUVILLE</a>	12:47.8	-	-	#11
2	<a href="#">Sébastien OGIER</a>	12:51.9	+4.1	+4.1	#17
3	<a href="#">Ott TÄNAK</a>	12:57.9	+10.1	+6.0	#8
4	<a href="#">Takamoto KATSUTA</a>	12:59.7	+11.9	+1.8	#18
5	<a href="#">Andreas MIKKELSEN</a>	13:01.1	+13.3	+1.4	#9
6	<a href="#">Elfyn EVANS</a>	13:01.6	+13.8	+0.5	#33
7	<a href="#">Adrien FOURMAUX</a>	13:07.6	+19.8	+6.0	#16
8	<a href="#">Grégoire MUNSTER</a>	22:47.8	+10:00.0	+9:40.2	#13

## After SS14

POS	DRIVER	TOTAL TIME	DIFF 1st	DIFF PREV	CAR No.
1	<a href="#">Thierry NEUVILLE</a>	2:37:58.5	-	-	#11
2	<a href="#">Sébastien OGIER</a>	2:38:01.8	+3.3	+3.3	#17
3	<a href="#">Elfyn EVANS</a>	2:38:33.4	+34.9	+31.6	#33
4	<a href="#">Ott TÄNAK</a>	2:39:45.4	+1:46.9	+1:12.0	#8
5	<a href="#">Adrien FOURMAUX</a>	2:40:52.5	+2:54.0	+1:07.1	#16
6	<a href="#">Andreas MIKKELSEN</a>	2:42:19.7	+4:21.2	+1:27.2	#9
7	<a href="#">Takamoto KATSUTA</a>	2:45:32.5	+7:34.0	+3:12.8	#18
8	<a href="#">Grégoire MUNSTER</a>	3:11:29.1	+33:30.6	+25:56.6	#13