



SS15: LA BRÉOLE / SELONNET

Date :	28.01.2024		
Day :	4	Flash N° :	26
Special Stage :	15	Distance :	18,31 km
Weather :	3°C – Sunrise		
Road conditions :	Road with some patches of ice		

SS15: Neuville – Ogier 1-0. Game on!

To kick off the grand finale of the 92nd Monte Carlo Rally in style, Thierry Neuville (Hyundai) put pedal to the metal in SS15 (La Bréole-Selonnet, 18.31km), the same stage where Sébastien Ogier had been dominant on Friday (SS5, SS8). This was enough to extend his lead over the Frenchman from 3.3 to 8 seconds, with just 33km of timed sections remaining...

It was very early on Sunday morning, daylight was just breaking and there was black ice everywhere in the second part of this very fast special, but none of the top drivers let themselves be surprised. Especially not Neuville and Ogier, engaged in a sumptuous mano a mano keeping rally fans on the edge of their seats since Thursday night.

"It's great! At the start, I pushed a lot, and towards the end I was a bit more cautious, but I think that everyone else must have done the same. We did some good things and I'm happy with my time," said a beaming Neuville, still very much at ease in his Hyundai i20N. Thanks also to star engineer François-Xavier Demaison (ex-Citroën, VW Motorsport and Williams F1), who has already made some precious improvements to the South Korean car.

"The conditions were interesting, with a bit of black ice in places, so I was perhaps too cautious. He [Thierry Neuville] pushed a lot," admitted Ogier when admiring his Belgian rival's performance, posted on the end of stage board, after having conceded 4.7 seconds to him over 18 km. Without slowing down so much on the way.



The two other members of the initial Group of Four, Ott Tänak and Elfyn Evans, also showed in that stage that they were ready to take as many points as possible this Sunday: 7 for the whole of the final day, 5 for the Power Stage, i.e. a maximum of 12 points to add to the points already scored on Saturday. To be continued.



Quotes

13. MUNSTER-LOUKA

« A tricky one for sure. Less ice than expected. I was very cautious but I have nothing to play for today. For the ones that are in the tight battle, it [this stage] might be tricky if they take the full risk. »

18. KATSUTA-JOHNSTON

« Conditions are tricky as we expected. My plan has changed a bit and I am just bringing the car back [to Monaco]. Nothing special. »

9. MIKKELSEN-ERIKSEN

« The stage conditions are like they are. I did the best I could with what I saw. I approached every corner cautiously. I was so slow. »

16. FOURMAUX-CORIA

« I had a small push in that one. The gravel crew has done a really good job so it gave me a lot of confidence. It will be faster behind, but to be fair I still need to keep my position to finish that day. »

8. TÄNAK-JÄRVEOJA

« We had a good run, but let's see. There are still some sketchy places where it's difficult to be brave. At least, it's a good run. »

33. EVANS-MARTIN

« Quite OK. I was really too careful at the end with the ice. It's really difficult to judge but all OK. »

17. OGIER-LANDAIS

« It was interesting conditions with some ice in places, I was a little bit cautious. It was a big push [from Thierry Neuville]. »

11. NEUVILLE-WYDAEGHE

« That's good! The beginning was a big push, towards the end I was a bit more careful but I guess everybody had to slow down on that section. We did well, I'm happy with my time. »



Classifications SS15

POS	DRIVER	STAGE TIME	DIFF 1st	DIFF PREV	CAR No.
1	Thierry NEUVILLE	10:31.8	-	-	#11
2	Sébastien OGIER	10:36.5	+4.7	+4.7	#17
3	Ott TÄNAK	10:36.9	+5.1	+0.4	#8
4	Elfyn EVANS	10:38.7	+6.9	+1.8	#33
5	Adrien FOURMAUX	10:48.2	+16.4	+9.5	#16
6	Grégoire MUNSTER	11:01.0	+29.2	+12.8	#13
7	Takamoto KATSUTA	11:09.0	+37.2	+8.0	#18
8	Andreas MIKKELSEN	11:15.1	+43.3	+6.1	#9

After SS15

POS	DRIVER	TOTAL TIME	DIFF 1st	DIFF PREV	CAR No.
1	Thierry NEUVILLE	2:48:30.3	-	-	#11
2	Sébastien OGIER	2:48:38.3	+8.0	+8.0	#17
3	Elfyn EVANS	2:49:12.1	+41.8	+33.8	#33
4	Ott TÄNAK	2:50:22.3	+1:52.0	+1:10.2	#8
5	Adrien FOURMAUX	2:51:40.7	+3:10.4	+1:18.4	#16
6	Andreas MIKKELSEN	2:53:34.8	+5:04.5	+1:54.1	#9
7	Takamoto KATSUTA	2:56:41.5	+8:11.2	+3:06.7	#18
8	Grégoire MUNSTER	3:22:30.1	+33:59.8	+25:48.6	#13