



SS8 : ST-LÉGER-LES-MÉLÈZES / LA BÂTIE-NEUVE 2

Date :	24.01.2025		
Day :	2	Flash N° :	11
Weather and road conditions	7°C, damp part with some icy sections	Distance :	16,68 km

SS8: Ogier finally wins at home!

It was something he really wanted to do, and he did it, at last: on Friday afternoon, home-grown Sébastien Ogier won 'his' special stage from Saint-Léger les Mélézes to La Bâtie-Neuve (SS8, 16.68 km) in front of his family and friends. And as luck would have it, the eight-time world champion regained the overall lead, 6.8 seconds ahead of Elfyn Evans, his Toyota team-mate.

"I knew that all my family and friends were there, and I'd never won this stage. So I said to myself that I had to do it one day and I did my best", a relieved and happy Ogier said after crossing the finish line of the stage closest to his village, where he had just changed his tyres. It was the same ritual as in the morning, except that SS5 had been cancelled at the last minute, and that he had not been able to go for that rather special best stage time.

It was, as expected, a very tricky stage, in which all the top drivers started with four super-soft tyres and zero stud, while the descent offered a long, very tricky section, totally snow-covered and icy, between the trees. They were all very careful, using a variety of different lines, and the only one to get caught out was Evans, who did a half spin without hitting anything and lost a handful of seconds in the process.

After Ogier, neither Adrien Fourmaux (Hyundai), who came second on the special, 3.9 seconds behind Ogier, nor Kalle Rovanperä (Toyota) managed to do better than the Frenchman, and so he achieved his sentimental, symbolic and personal goal: a victory 'at home', really, close to the village of Forest Saint Julien, in the Champsaur région, where he often played boule lyonnaise, when he was younger, while taking his ski instructor's certificate.



It was also his third fastest stage time of the 93rd Monte Carlo Rally, a better score than any of his rivals, for the moment. After SS8, and with just one stage to go in this rather hectic day, two French drivers, Ogier and Fourmaux (in the best Hyundai), are still in the Top 3, sandwiching Evans (2nd).

In WRC2, the soap opera continues: Yohan Rossel (Citroën C3) has clawed back another 3.6 seconds from Nikolay Gryazin (Skoda Fabia RS) and is now just nine seconds behind the category leader... who chose not to score any World Championship point in this event.

Quotes

1. NEUVILLE-WYDAEGHE

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"It is really tricky. On the ice, I was pushing the clutch and pushing the handbrake, and all four wheels were locking. It is not easy to keep it on the road. We were talking about the car. [There is] a change of balance, once the tyres get very hot I get massive understeer. It's something we couldn't test yet so we need to find out."

33. EVANS-MARTIN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

[About his half-spin right before 10.8 km] "I was proper steady, it just started to go and I couldn't recover. I was on the ice, we just went a margin too far, we were almost there. It's like that. We had the information, it was just Bambi on ice."

8. TÄNAK-JÄRVEOJA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"It was actually much much better than anticipated. Happy to be through. [About the icy section on the stage] Can be better."

17. OGIER-LANDAIS

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"I tried my best like always, my whole family, so many friends are in this stage and I never won it! I really need to try this time, I'm not sure if it will be enough with the guys behind but I've tried my best. Let's see."

16. FOURMAUX-CORIA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"It was a compromise, I didn't want to take the studs for two or three corners, I just wanted to be cautious. In a downhill you cannot stop, but I stopped the car completely. I'm sure you could walk next to the car ! I was so slow. We are there and we have a good time. I am happy."



18. KATSUTA-JOHNSTON

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"It's okay actually, not as bad as expected. I was much careful on the ice because I had a bad memory from last year. It is okay."

69. ROVANPERÄ-HALTTUNEN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"I think it was pretty ok. I don't know where the difference came but of course, it's the first pass conditions. The road was getting a lot dirtier and muddier especially the downhill here, for sure it makes a difference."

13. MUNSTER-LOUKA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 non-studded

[About his right-front puncture and what happened] "Nothing. I was on a straight uphill and then suddenly, we lost pressure. I have no idea. We didn't hit anything, there is snow everywhere on the edge so we cannot take a cut. No clue. It's how it is. [It happened] Halfway through the stage. I didn't take studs, so at least, I don't have to take the studs on."

5. PAJARI-SALMINEN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"Well, I think it is all about taking all the experience we can. Again, the first time to be on such a condition with these tyres. A lot to learn, a lot to do better, but it's always about experience. It is interesting, I must say. Quite tricky but you think it is more tricky than it actually is, so it is about finding the balance."

55. MCERLEAN-TREACY

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"First time for everything I suppose! Nice to get through, big challenge honestly. I messed some things up at the start, it wasn't ideal but it is good learning. Not every day we can come to Monte-Carlo and do that there, so good fun. The Anti-Lag system at the start, I was just playing about with it and of course we were on ice. You're always learning."



Classifications SS8

POS	DRIVER	STAGE TIME	DIFF PREV	DIFF 1st	CAR No.	CO-DRIVER	TEAM/CAR
1	Sébastien OGIER	9:31.7	-	-	#17	Vincent LANDAIS	GR Yaris Rally1
2	Adrien FOURMAUX	9:35.6	+3.9	+3.9	#16	Alexandre CORIA	i20 N Rally1
3	Thierry NEUVILLE	9:38.3	+2.7	+6.6	#1	Martijn WYDAEGHE	i20 N Rally1
4	Takamoto KATSUTA	9:41.2	+2.9	+9.5	#18	Aaron JOHNSTON	GR Yaris Rally1
5	Kalle ROVANPERÄ	9:41.9	+0.7	+10.2	#69	Jonne HALTUNEN	GR Yaris Rally1
6	Ott TÄNAK	9:43.9	+2.0	+12.2	#8	Martin JÄRVEOJA	i20 N Rally1
7	Elfyn EVANS	9:46.4	+2.5	+14.7	#33	Scott MARTIN	GR Yaris Rally1
8	Sami PAJARI	10:07.2	+20.8	+35.5	#5	Marko SALMINEN	GR Yaris Rally1
9	Grégoire MUNSTER	10:19.4	+12.2	+47.7	#13	Louis LOUKA	Puma Rally1
10	Joshua MCERLEAN	10:30.5	+11.1	+58.8	#55	Eoin TREACY	Puma Rally1

After SS8

POS	DRIVER	TOTAL TIME	DIFF PREV	DIFF 1st	CAR No.	CO-DRIVER	TEAM/CAR
1	Sébastien OGIER	1:16:25.0	-	-	#17	Vincent LANDAIS	GR Yaris Rally1
2	Elfyn EVANS	1:16:31.8	+6.8	+6.8	#33	Scott MARTIN	GR Yaris Rally1
3	Adrien FOURMAUX	1:16:36.4	+4.6	+11.4	#16	Alexandre CORIA	i20 N Rally1
4	Kalle ROVANPERÄ	1:16:54.1	+17.7	+29.1	#69	Jonne HALTUNEN	GR Yaris Rally1
5	Ott TÄNAK	1:17:02.7	+8.6	+37.7	#8	Martin JÄRVEOJA	i20 N Rally1
6	Grégoire MUNSTER	1:17:40.1	+37.4	+1:15.1	#13	Louis LOUKA	Puma Rally1
7	Takamoto KATSUTA	1:17:49.9	+9.8	+1:24.9	#18	Aaron JOHNSTON	GR Yaris Rally1
8	Thierry NEUVILLE	1:18:17.4	+27.5	+1:52.4	#1	Martijn WYDAEGHE	i20 N Rally1
9	Sami PAJARI	1:19:24.8	+1:07.4	+2:59.8	#5	Marko SALMINEN	GR Yaris Rally1
10	Joshua MCERLEAN	1:21:27.8	+2:03.0	+5:02.8	#55	Eoin TREACY	Puma Rally1