



SS9 : LA BRÉOLE / SELONNET 2

Date :	24.01.2025		
Day :	2	Flash N° :	12
Weather and road conditions :	6°C, damp sections with ice	Distance :	18,31 km

SS9 : Ogier extends his lead!

Sébastien Ogier ended Day 2 of the 93rd Monte-Carlo Rally just as he began the opening night on Thursday, setting two fastest times in quick succession. First in SS8, on his home turf, and then just around the corner in SS9, between La Bréole and Selonnet (18.31km). Two 'masterclasses' in a row, in tricky conditions and with all his rivals reduced to the role of extras. But there's still a long way to go...

'It was a good end to the day for us, but I fought hard for it. Up until the last two stages, I was a bit on the defensive, but then I felt better. I changed my driving mode', smiled Ogier, delighted with this fine day of rallying and with his 12.6 second lead over Elfyn Evans, his Toyota team-mate. This should give him plenty to look forward to on Saturday, with two loops of three stages in the Drôme region.

As has often been the case since the start of this rally, Adrien Fourmaux (Hyundai) was very good, the only driver to rival the eight-time world champion. The driver from the north of France finished 2nd on the stage again, 2.8 seconds behind Ogier, and he will start Saturday's rally with a clear objective: to catch Evans on a regular basis by continuing to attack as hard as possible... while keeping a small margin for error.

'It was another clean stage, even if I lost a bit of time when I made a small mistake. It was a really good afternoon for us,' said Fourmaux before setting off again for the service park in Gap. He is only 14.2 behind Ogier this evening, and especially 1.6 behind Evans, who also put in a great day's driving.

At the halfway point of the rally, after 9 stages, 8 of which were hotly contested (and one cancelled, SS5 on Friday morning), the balance sheet is in Toyota's favour, with three Gazoo Racing drivers in the top 4 (Ogier, Evans, Rovaniemi), but Fourmaux seems determined and, above all, capable of disrupting the Japanese party. After five learning seasons with M-Sport Ford, the Frenchman seems to have turned a corner by joining Hyundai, and he has negotiated the early pitfalls of this rally much better than his two world champion team-mates.



Thierry Neuville had already been trapped in SS6 at the end of the morning, and this time he was the victim of a puncture of the front-left tyre, on the same stage, which ruined SS9 for him. 'I don't know if I should have stopped to change my tyre', said the Belgian at the end of the stage, having lost a further two minutes in the adventure.

He then returned to Gap, with a new wheel, in 9th place overall, 4 minutes behind Ogier. Nothing to be proud of for the new world champion, who has often struggled in this rally (2 wins in 15 appearances).

In WRC2, the final stage of the day brought about a change in the leaders. Yohan Rossel now leads the way in his PH Sport Citroën C3, ahead of Nikolay Gryazin (Skoda Fabia RS). There are still 9 stages to go until midday on Sunday. Everything is still possible, the best and the worst...

Quotes

1. NEUVILLE-WYDAEGHE

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"I was punctured far before, front left puncture since the beginning. We tried to go as far and as fast as we could but at some point the tyre just went and we went straight again. I don't know if we should have stopped and changed it or not, in the end, it is hard to know if the tyre will be okay. It's just a puncture. We change the tyre and we go again."

33. EVANS-MARTIN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"Pretty ok. No real ice in this one, normal damp conditions, but all ok, no real issues."

8. TÄNAK-JÄRVEOJA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

[Talking about the stage and the conditions] "This one was actually a bit better, just need to get used to it now. "

17. OGIER-LANDAIS

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"That's a good end to the day, I had to fight for that. Earlier today I didn't have a mega feeling, I was a little bit on the backfoot, there were tricky conditions and I couldn't find the perfect rhythm but the last two stages were better for me. [Asked about what changed] The driving mode."



16. FOURMAUX-CORIA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"It's been a clean stage for us, definitely Sébastien [Ogier] woke up in this one compared to this morning. I made a small mistake when I went wide, but it has been a really good afternoon for us so I am really positive. [Position] is really good but still two big days to do."

18. KATSUTA-JOHNSTON

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"Afternoon was much better and easier for sure, it improved from the morning. I couldn't trust the information on the pace notes so we need to discuss what to do for tomorrow morning."

69. ROVANPERÄ-HALTTUNEN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"This one is again pretty difficult, starting to get darker and darker for the cars behind. Obviously, it's never easy. That's not the best. Not where we want to be pace-wise, but that is where we are and nothing we can do more."

13. MUNSTER-LOUKA

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 non-studded

"It's a tricky one, with the puncture we had the stage before and to drive a tyre package which is not ideal. We put the snow tyre on the car which was moving a lot, a bit like a small puncture on the rear-right. Damage limitation for sure but the rear-right was sliding everywhere."

5. PAJARI-SALMINEN

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"Obviously, a really tricky day, I know many things where I have to improve, but I have solely the mindset that I want to be clean and taking step-by-step fill up with confidence and knowledge, then speed up. It is still going towards the plan even though I would like to be quicker. Let's see, somehow the days in the morning were already better but, in the afternoon, I was a bit cautious. We need to see."

55. MCERLEAN-TREACY

4 Z215 WRC9 supersoft, 2 SR20 WRC5 studded

"We got a fogged up windscreen halfway through, we started to lose a lot of time. But we're here. Another day done, another learning experience, we probably run first on the road tomorrow so another new experience but the team has done a top job. We have to be patient. Another two days to go, let's enjoy them."



Classifications SS9

POS	DRIVER	STAGE TIME	DIFF PREV	DIFF 1st	CAR No.	CO-DRIVER	TEAM/CAR
1	Sébastien OGIER	10:35.6	-	-	#17	Vincent LANDAIS	GR Yaris Rally1
2	Adrien FOURMAUX	10:38.4	+2.8	+2.8	#16	Alexandre CORIA	i20 N Rally1
3	Elfyn EVANS	10:41.4	+3.0	+5.8	#33	Scott MARTIN	GR Yaris Rally1
4	Kalle ROVANPERÄ	10:45.0	+3.6	+9.4	#69	Jonne HALTTUNEN	GR Yaris Rally1
5	Ott TÄNAK	10:45.2	+0.2	+9.6	#8	Martin JÄRVEOJA	i20 N Rally1
6	Takamoto KATSUTA	10:48.4	+3.2	+12.8	#18	Aaron JOHNSTON	GR Yaris Rally1
7	Grégoire MUNSTER	10:54.2	+5.8	+18.6	#13	Louis LOUKA	Puma Rally1
8	Sami PAJARI	11:08.7	+14.5	+33.1	#5	Marko SALMINEN	GR Yaris Rally1
9	Joshua MCERLEAN	11:23.8	+15.1	+48.2	#55	Eoin TREACY	Puma Rally1
10	Thierry NEUVILLE	12:41.8	+1:18.0	+2:06.2	#1	Martijn WYDAEGHE	i20 N Rally1

After SS9

POS	DRIVER	TOTAL TIME	DIFF PREV	DIFF 1st	CAR No.	CO-DRIVER	TEAM/CAR
1	Sébastien OGIER	1:27:00.6	-	-	#17	Vincent LANDAIS	GR Yaris Rally1
2	Elfyn EVANS	1:27:13.2	+12.6	+12.6	#33	Scott MARTIN	GR Yaris Rally1
3	Adrien FOURMAUX	1:27:14.8	+1.6	+14.2	#16	Alexandre CORIA	i20 N Rally1
4	Kalle ROVANPERÄ	1:27:39.1	+24.3	+38.5	#69	Jonne HALTTUNEN	GR Yaris Rally1
5	Ott TÄNAK	1:27:47.9	+8.8	+47.3	#8	Martin JÄRVEOJA	i20 N Rally1
6	Grégoire MUNSTER	1:28:34.3	+46.4	+1:33.7	#13	Louis LOUKA	Puma Rally1
7	Takamoto KATSUTA	1:28:38.3	+4.0	+1:37.7	#18	Aaron JOHNSTON	GR Yaris Rally1
8	Sami PAJARI	1:30:33.5	+1:55.2	+3:32.9	#5	Marko SALMINEN	GR Yaris Rally1
9	Thierry NEUVILLE	1:30:59.2	+25.7	+3:58.6	#1	Martijn WYDAEGHE	i20 N Rally1
10	Joshua MCERLEAN	1:32:51.6	+1:52.4	+5:51.0	#55	Eoin TREACY	Puma Rally1