



## **Oliver Solberg, historic winner of a memorable Rallye Monte-Carlo!**

**Oliver Solberg, ably assisted by his co-driver Elliott Edmondson, made Rallye Monte-Carlo history on Sunday by winning the 94<sup>th</sup> edition of the event, which will be remembered for its difficulty. From Thursday to Sunday, the road conditions encountered by the competitors were particularly unpredictable and tricky, adding further credit to the victorious crew.**

On equal terms, in a Gazoo Racing Toyota Yaris, Solberg beat his teammates Elfyn Evans and Sébastien Ogier, followed in the final overall standings by two Hyundai drivers, Adrien Fourmaux (4<sup>th</sup>) and Thierry Neuville (5<sup>th</sup>). At 24 years, 4 months and 2 days old, he becomes the youngest winner of the Rallye Monte-Carlo since the establishment of the WRC in 1973. René le Bègue, a French driver, won in 1937 at 23 years and 15 days old, but the championship did not yet exist in its current form. Solberg is also the first Swede to win in the Principality, after the relative failures of Bjorn Waldegard (2<sup>nd</sup> in 1976 and 1979) and Stig Blomqvist (2<sup>nd</sup> in 1984).

The son of Petter Solberg, 2003 world champion, took the lead in this 94<sup>th</sup> edition from the second special stage on Thursday evening and did not relinquish it until the Power Stage at Col de Turini on Sunday, during the SS17. He made very few mistakes, the most spectacular being a passage through a snow-covered field on SS12. The latter ended well and did not prevent him from setting the fastest time in this stage on Saturday morning and returning to Monaco as the clear leader.

### **Nerves of Swedish steel**

The final morning of the race changed nothing, with the young Solberg showing nerves of steel to avoid making any mistakes in road conditions that were just as treacherous, if not more so, than during the previous three days. He never gave in to the pressure from Evans, alternating between defensive and attacking modes, and preserved what was essential until the end of the Power Stage, which he finished in style with a second place and four bonus points behind Evans.

"It's incredible. I won thanks to the support of my whole family, which is a kind of the story of my life," said the hero of the day, visibly moved, after climbing down from the roof of his Yaris and before stepping onto a 100% Toyota podium. He leaves the Principality as the World Championship leader and will be racing on home turf next month in Sweden to defend his position. Ogier will only be back at the Safari Kenya Rally next March.



### **Rossel wins WRC2, Lancia returns**

In the WRC2 category, a French crew took the honours, consisting of Léo Rossel, 2024 French rally champion, and Guillaume Mercoiret, in a Citroën C3, after a perfectly controlled rally. On a side note, we will also remember that in this category Lancia made its big comeback in the WRC with two new Ypsilon HF Integrale cars, one of which driven by Yohan Rossel, Léo's brother.

Last but not least, a small two-wheel drive Ford Fiesta of the WRC3/Rally3 category set two consecutive fastest times on Sunday (SS14, SS15), ahead of all the four-wheel drive Rally1 cars, twice as powerful, taking advantage of favourable road conditions in Col de Turini. This was also thanks to the talent of 22-year-old Italian Matteo Fontana, and it was historic. Just like Oliver Solberg's victory in this 94<sup>th</sup> Rallye Monte-Carlo.

Roll on 2027!