

STAGE FLASH

Date:	26 February 2021	Flash N°:	2
Day:	1	Distance:	31.05 km
Special stage:	SS1 (Sarriöjärvi 1)		
Weather:	Some cloud, +1 degree		
Road conditions:	Good grip but some loose and fresh snow nearing the stage finish		

Car #1. SÉBASTIEN OGIER/JULIEN INGRASSIA

“It was quite tough conditions with the snow and unfortunately I don’t think I’m going to have a great time. I’m happy with my stage, I had a clean drive and drove much better than I did in the shakedown this morning. Let’s see how it evolves.”

Car #33. ELFYN EVANS/SCOTT MARTIN

“Pretty difficult I’d say, the grip deteriorated a bit as we went into the stage with more loose snow towards the end. Overall sort of okay but you feel in some places you can go faster but in other places you’re a bit more on the limit. It’s difficult to find the balance in these conditions.”

Car #11. THIERRY NEUVILLE/MARTIJN WYDAEGHE

“Obviously there is a lot of cleaning and a lot of fresh snow. I was already getting a bit of benefit from the line. Unfortunately, we were looking to find a good rhythm, it didn’t work all the time but where we had a good rhythm I was able to push a bit more. But it won’t be enough for the guys behind, for sure not.”

Car #69. KALLE ROVANPERÄ/JONNE HALTTUNEN

“I was stuck in the snowbank for a while. It was a stupid mistake just coming into the junction. I thought I had a bit more time to the junction but I just went wide and hit the rear. Luckily we got out straightaway but we lost like eight or 10 seconds there so the time is not that bad. We cannot have mistakes like that again.”

Car #18. TAKAMOTO KATSUTA/DANIEL BARRITT

“The grip is getting worse in the end, we have in the test quite a similar feeling. I needed to be careful in some points but in some corners I had a very good grip but it’s quite difficult to judge how the grip is like. I was quite careful in the tricky sections but maybe later on I will be quite okay. It’s okay but quite difficult.”

Car #44. GUS GREENSMITH/ELLIOTT EDMONDSON

“It was really enjoyable. Some places I would have a good rhythm but in the next one I wouldn’t so I was struggling to find it in there. I was hoping for a bit better than that so I will try to do a bit better.”

Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA

“It’s hard to say it’s perfect because there is still quite a lot of understeer. But, generally, it’s a very demanding stage and the conditions are nice so for sure it’s enjoyable. But it’s just the first stage and there’s a long way to go.”

Car #3. TEEMU SUNNINEN/MIKKO MARKKULA

“Quite nice conditions, I haven’t seen better conditions as we are having now. Make the fastest times, simple tips [was the message from the boss].”

Car #42. CRAIG BREEN/PAUL NAGLE

“That was s****. This is a big boys game you have to be on it from the first pass and I was way too slow with my notes. I just didn’t take advantage of the road I had in front of me. I had the perfect car and the perfect road so I’m not so happy with that to be honest.”

Car #2. OLIVER SOLBERG/SEBASTIAN MARSHALL

“For sure it’s very, very tricky. Very difficult. My front tyres are not so good anymore, they are finished. Not so good but very enjoyable. I had to stop and reverse, I lost 10 or 12 seconds but okay, I’m learning.”

Car #7. PIERRE-LOUIS LOUBET/VINCENT LANDAIS

“For the start here it’s not so bad but we will see, it will be long. I was really careful in some parts for the tyre. I don’t know if I managed it because in the end we were using a lot. We will see but it’s not a bad start. The stage is fast, it’s better than the ice on Monte.”

Car #12. JANNE TUOHINO/REETA HÄMÄLÄINEN

“In one junction I went too long. In the beginning I went too wild and at some points I went too slow.”

Car #37. LORENZO BERTELLI/SIMONE SCATTOLIN

“It was okay, very enjoyable, in the last part I had a lot of understeering.”

Car #20. ANDREAS MIKKELSEN/OLA FLØENE

“It was okay, my tyres were going off towards the end. But it was a clean stage with no other issues.”

Car #21. ADRIEN FOURMAUX/RENAUD JAMOUL

“It was really nice stage. It was very good and enjoyable. We need to improve the time.”

Car #22. EYVIND BRYNILDSEN/VERONICA ENGAN

“It feels so great to be here and I’m really happy for my time. It’s the best thing you can do with the clothing on.”

Car #23. SEAN JOHNSTON/ALEXANDER KIHURANI

“We’ve got some weird sound coming from the front brakes. I had a good rhythm in the beginning, then we fell off a bit.”

Car #24. JARI HUTTUNEN/MIKKO LUKKA

Stopped in stage.

Car #25. ESAPEKKA LAPPI/JANNE FERM

“It was fine, completely different from the shakedown, super-tricky. A lot of loose snow. I tried to drive quite safely in the grooves.”

Car #26. OLE CHRISTIAN VEIBY/JONAS ANDERSSON

“We lost a lot of time, I’m not happy.”

Car #27. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV

Second fastest on stage, no comment recorded.

Car #28. GEORG LINNAMÄE/VOLODYMYR KORSIA

“We missed a junction. We also hit a bank and spun on the stage and lost time.”

Car #29. MARTIN PROKOP/MICHAL ERNST

“It was difficult because the feeling on the first part was nice but in the second part there was a lot of gravel. But a very nice stage.”

Car #30. TEEMU ASUNMAA/MARKO SALMINEN

“It was very difficult and we did not succeed as we wanted to. I was too nervous but I will try to relax and make a better time later.”

Car #31. EMIL LINDHOLM/MIKAEL KORHONEN

“The stage was in a bad condition because there was holes in the road. We must see what we do with the car.”

Car #32. MIKKO HEIKKILÄ/TOP LUHTINEN

“At one cross-roads I was slowing down went too far into the junction. There were no further problems but it was slippery.”

COMMENTS

Arctic Rally Finland Powered by CapitalBox got underway with the opening special stage, Sarriojärvi. Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja were fastest by 3.6s ahead of Hyundai Shell Mobis World Rally Team team-mates Craig Breen/Paul Nagle. Kalle Rovander/Jonne Haltunen were third fastest after losing time when they ran wide at a junction after 16 kilometres and struck a snowbank. Significantly, Tänak, running seventh on the road, was the one of only three leading drivers to carry one spare Pirelli Sotttozero Ice tyre in his car, a weight saving of approximately 23 kilograms.