

STAGE FLASH

Date:	27 February 2021	Flash N°:	9
Day:	2	Distance:	27.68 km
Special stage:	SS8 (Siikakämä 2)		
Weather:	Dry, full dark, -4 degrees		
Road conditions:	Some gravel patches, ruts emerging		

Car #1. SÉBASTIEN OGIER/JULIEN INGRASSIA

Went off into a snowbank on a left-hand corner at the 27.4-kilometre point, essentially two corners from the stage finish, and got stuck for several minutes.

“Last real corner, just the tyre were gone obviously I guess like for everybody. I was a little bit too much sideway, hit the bank and then catch the front. I almost made it to the end. It’s not so frustrating. It’s a weekend to forget when you come here first on the road it’s always the same. At the end of the day it’s not so bad.”

Car #33. ELFYN EVANS/SCOTT MARTIN

“Not specifically any moments but the grip was very low towards the end there. To be honest I was too careful. I didn’t take enough chances, that’s how it is but we’re still here.”

Car #11. THIERRY NEUVILLE/MARTIJN WYDAEGHE

“It was a really good stage, the car was working really, really nice. I tried to save my tyres throughout the whole stage and not over-push. We were always clean, I had a very clean run. Since the communication is working better I can push harder without making mistakes. We still need to improve, I am not happy yet, we need to work on the system to get it better.”

Car #69. KALLE ROVANPERÄ/JONNE HALTTUNEN

“Thierry did the right choice with the tyres because he was saving one new for the stage. It was really clever from him I have to say. Tomorrow we have to push and let’s see what we can do.”

Car #18. TAKAMOTO KATSUTA/DANIEL BARRITT

“In the morning I enjoyed a lot on the stages but in the afternoon it was quite difficult conditions. Okay, I made one mistake into the snowbank. After that I needed a clean run to get back into the confidence. Also, on this stage I had a quite clean run. I have small improvements [to make] but I must be happy because it’s difficult conditions.”

Car #44. GUS GREENSMITH/ELLIOTT EDMONDSON

"It's pretty good [experience] but it's bloody tricky this afternoon just getting the car to do what I wanted it to do. It just wasn't happening and whatever we tried just didn't seem to work. But it's pretty special, we've just got to commit. It wasn't as good as the morning."

Car #8. OTT TÄNAK/MARTIN JÄRVEOJA

"All to plan. The tyres were quite tired so it was important to get here without any mistakes and we are here so it's all good. It's all okay."

Car #3. TEEMU SUNNINEN/MIKKO MARKKULA

"On the stage before we started to have a lot of movement on the tyres so we fit new tyres to the front [for this stage] and I had a really precise front but the rear was limiting my driving. I believe it was quite okay to do it like that."

Car #42. CRAIG BREEN/PAUL NAGLE

"It's so frustrating for me honestly. You need to bring your top game here and I'm not really bringing it today. It's a pretty incredible time from Thierry to be fair but I just tried to preserve everything, I tried to learn and do what I know in my little brain with my little experience of this car and tried to manage it as best I could but it's not easy for sure."

Car #2. OLIVER SOLBERG/SEBASTIAN MARSHALL

"[Ogier's] gone off in the last corner. It's a very neat corner, a corner like where everyone went off in shakedown, it's a corner like that, so it's very, very tricky. I think I had a good stage but I lost my glasses, you see, no glasses! I think I drove faster because I don't see. I went absolutely maximum, very enjoyable."

Car #7. PIERRE-LOUIS LOUBET/VINCENT LANDAIS

Retired after SS6 (suspected technical issue).

Car #12. JANNE TUOHINO/REETA HÄMÄLÄINEN

"It's nice to drive, I really enjoy, both of us. Some small mistake in one junction, we had to use the handbrake and go on the snowbank on the rear. But it was fun."

Car #37. LORENZO BERTELLI/SIMONE SCATTOLIN

Retired on SS3 (stuck in snowbank 4.2 kilometres from start of stage).

Car #20. ANDREAS MIKKELSEN/OLA FLØENE

"It was okay. I was very careful towards the end. I didn't need to push because we had a good gap."

Car #21. ADRIEN FOURMAUX/RENAUD JAMOUL

Stopped on SS6.

Car #22. EYVIND BRYNILDSEN/VERONICA ENGAN

"It's been a fantastic day, actually every day in a rally car is the best day. We are satisfied with our fourth place in our class at the moment. We are trying to keep up the good pace. In overall it's a good day."

Car #23. SEAN JOHNSTON/ALEXANDER KIHURANI

“The studs were wobbling, the tyres are going off. I had too many interactions with the snowbanks. It was incredibly fun, I’m absolutely loving it. I am really looking forward tomorrow. I’m feeling more comfortable with the car due to set-up changes.”

Car #24. JARI HUTTUNEN/MIKKO LUKKA

Retired on SS1 due to a technical issue.

Car #25. ESAPEKKA LAPPI/JANNE FERM

“It is nice, it is just too pretty long for the tyres. After 10 kilometres it became very tricky and challenging. It is the same for everyone. I was too wide on one left turn and stuck for a while. The tyres are pretty done.”

Car #26. OLE CHRISTIAN VEIBY/JONAS ANDERSSON

“Today it has been a real challenge. This one was really bad for the tyres, I had to slow down a lot because there was no grip and I didn’t want to do any mistakes. We want to catch Eyvind Brynildsen in the front. We need to go fast tomorrow.”

Car #27. NIKOLAY GRYAZIN/KONSTANTIN ALEKSANDROV

“It was a quite okay day for me, nothing special. I made a small mistake. For this stage we tried to get an okay result.”

Car #28. GEORG LINNAMÄE/VOLODYMYR KORSIA

“I liked the stage. Unfortunately, we were sideways on the road just before the finish, I lost time in that. Everything’s okay with the car.”

Car #29. MARTIN PROKOP/MICHAL ERNST

“My day was very nice, it was a very enjoyable day. The conditions were nice, a day full of learning. Not an easy one, but overall a really nice day. A lot of learning with the car. Racing in Finland is always great. It’s the best.”

Car #30. TEEMU ASUNMAA/MARKO SALMINEN

“We had a strategy. There is a lot of snow. We planned not to do anything stupid on this last stage.”

Car #31. EMIL LINDHOLM/MIKAEL KORHONEN

Retired on SS4 (reported to have crashed).

COMMENTS

A charging time from Thierry Neuville/Martijn Wydaeghe gave the Belgians their first stage win on Arctic Rally Finland Powered by CapitalBox – and also put them within 1.8s of Kalle Rovanperä/Jonne Halttunen in the battle for second place starting the final day’s two stages. Neuville/Wydaeghe were a commanding 12.3s faster than their factory Hyundai team-mates Ott Tänak/Martin Järveoja, who continue to lead round two of the 2021 WRC season by 24.1s. There was high drama when Sébastien Ogier/Julien Ingrassia crashed into a snowbank within sight of the finish. The Frenchmen were able to

reach the stage finish almost 20 minutes behind schedule after they dug their Toyota Yaris WRC out of the snow.