

## More Heartbreak for Hyundai Motorsport in Rally Sweden

- Hyundai Motorsport has missed out on the chance to secure victory in Rally Sweden after Thierry Neuville crashed out from the lead in Saturday evening's super special stage
- The Belgian had built up a 43-second lead but hit a concrete block at the Karlstad trotting track, causing damage to his Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC. He will re-join on Sunday under Rally 2
- Super special stage winner Dani Sordo has moved up to fourth place with Hayden Paddon seventh ahead of Sunday's three final stages.

Torsby, Sweden

February 11, 2017 – For the second rally in a row, Hyundai Motorsport has seen its chances of victory snatched away as long-time rally leader Thierry Neuville went off in Saturday evening's super special stage.

The Belgian and co-driver Nicolas Gilsoul had enjoyed a positive Saturday, extending their overall lead to 43 seconds after a strong stage win in the afternoon's Vargåsen stage.

Unfortunately, their progress was halted in cruel fashion at the Karlstad trotting track when they hit a concrete block. The damage was too substantial to complete the stage but they will re-join under Rally 2 regulations for the final day.

### Up and Over

Eventual winners of SS15, Dani Sordo and Marc Martí have moved into fourth place, where they finished at the previous rally in Monte-Carlo. Hayden Paddon and birthday boy John Kennard recovered from power steering problems in the morning and now hold seventh overall.

Saturday's itinerary took in a shortened distance of 93.78km after the repeated 31.6km Knon stage was cancelled. Still, there was plenty of action for the WRC crews with six stages, including two attempts at the legendary Colin's Crest jump.

### Crew Notes: Sordo/Martí (#6 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)

Sordo and Martí started Saturday in seventh place with an objective to make up some positions during the course of the day. It was a target they achieved, albeit with help from others' misfortunes. Securing their second stage win of 2017 in the evening's super special means they head into the final morning in fourth overall.

*Sordo said: "I enjoyed driving the very fast stages today, but obviously we are all sorry to see Thierry lose the lead of the rally this evening. It was hard to take comfort from winning that stage considering what happened to our team mates. Generally, we have tried to get into a rhythm today and to pick up our pace, but it's not been easy. On the opening stage this morning, it was difficult to keep the speed through the corners. I then made a small mistake in the first Hagfors stage, SS10, which lost some time. Vargåsen is always fun, especially with the Colin's Crest jump, but overall I could've done better on the loop. We couldn't take it too easy in the afternoon with Breen so close behind, so Sunday will be about managing*



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*our gap to him, and securing fourth place.”*

#### **Crew Notes: Paddon/Kennard (#4 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)**

It was another day of struggles for Paddon and Kennard, who was celebrating his 58<sup>th</sup> birthday on Saturday. The Kiwis experienced power steering problems for most of the morning loop, which required Paddon to wrestle the car around some of the fastest and challenging stages on the calendar. The resultant time loss dropped them down to tenth, but they had moved into seventh by the day's end.

*Paddon said: “Another day of two halves for us. This morning was difficult and physically demanding. Rallying on these stages with no power steering is a just incredibly tough. It felt like an extended gym session, or wrestling a lion – and coming off second best! To make it through the loop was an achievement in itself. With power steering back in the afternoon, it was like having a feather at the fingertips. We hadn't done the two stages at speed so we were playing catch-up to find a rhythm. We are overdue a change of fortune, but I'm determined to end this rally on a high.”*

#### **Crew Notes: Neuville/Gilsoul (#5 Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC)**

Having claimed five stage wins on Friday, Neuville and Gilsoul set about defending a 28-second lead on Saturday morning. The pair focused on keeping the driving clean, making no mistakes but mindful of chasing rivals, who were looking to reduce the gap. They were in control throughout the day. But got caught out in the evening's super special, which abruptly ended their victory charge.

*Neuville said: “There are really no words that convey how I feel right now. It was a very sudden end to what had been a good rally for us. We had spent all Saturday with a deliberate strategy to take things steady and to stay in control of the rally. We didn't want a repeat of Monte, but that's exactly what we got. I am so disappointed for the team, for Nicolas, and myself but we have to put it quickly behind us. We can't dwell on such things, however frustrating. We know we have the pace to win rallies with the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC. We have the confidence and I am sure the results will come. Tomorrow, we come back under Rally 2 and we'll go for Power Stage points. We will then fight back again in Mexico.”*

#### **Saturday Night Frustration**

Hyundai Motorsport has finished on the podium in the past two years at Rally Sweden. With Sordo in fourth place, there is still a chance of continuing that trend. As has been the case on Saturday, in WRC it is not over until it's over.

Team Principal Michel Nandan said: *“It's easy to say that this is rallying, however when you have a 43-second lead these things shouldn't happen in a super special stage. It's disappointing for everyone in the team, and of course for Thierry and Nicolas after what had been another commanding performance. Until that final stage, they had done everything right - controlling the rally and actually extending their lead. The old saying is true: it's not over until it's over. Rally 2 will give them the chance to put this behind them quickly. We have to focus on the potential from our car despite the issues we've faced so far this season. Our crews are resilient. We could see that from Hayden and John this morning with their power steering problems. It was a gutsy effort, and epitomises our team's never-give-up attitude. Tomorrow is another day.”*

### What's in store on Sunday?

Sunday will see two separate stages run over a total distance of just 58.81km. The 21.19km Likenäs route will be run twice with just a remote refuel in between.

Rally Sweden will conclude with a repeat of the Torsby stage. Run initially on Friday evening in darkness, it will act as the rally-concluding Power Stage with five extra points up for grabs for the top-five fastest drivers.

### Overall Classification after Day Two

1	J. M. Latvala	M. Anttila	Toyota Yaris WRC	2:04:59.3
2	O. Tanak	M. Jarveoja	Ford Fiesta WRC	+3.8
3	S. Ogier	J. Ingrassia	Ford Fiesta WRC	+16.6
<b>4</b>	<b>D. Sordo</b>	<b>M. Martí</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC</b>	<b>1:39.5</b>
5	C. Breen	P. Nagle	Citroën C3 WRC	+2:04.5
6	E. Evans	D. Barritt	Ford Fiesta WRC	+3:44.7
<b>7</b>	<b>H. Paddon</b>	<b>J. Kennard</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC</b>	<b>+5:00.2</b>
8	S. Lefebvre	G. Moreau	Citroën C3 WRC	+5:37.0
9	P. Tidemand	J. Andersson	Škoda Fabia R5	+6:36.7
10	T. Suninen	M. Markkula	Ford Fiesta R5	+7:52.9
11	O.C Veiby	S. Skjaermoen	Škoda Fabia R5	+7:58.2
12	K. Meeke	P. Nagle	Citroën C3 WRC	+9:09.2
<b>13</b>	<b>T. Neuville</b>	<b>N. Gilsoul</b>	<b>Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC</b>	<b>+9:15.8</b>

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### **About Hyundai Motorsport GmbH**

Established on 19 December 2012, Hyundai Motorsport GmbH is responsible for Hyundai's global motorsport activities and primarily for its World Rally Championship programme. Based in Alzenau on the outskirts of Frankfurt in Germany, the company embarked on its debut season in the FIA World Rally Championship in 2014 with a bespoke team of skilled staff and a brand new car, the Hyundai i20 WRC. The team made a strong impression in its first year claiming podium results in Mexico and Poland, as well as a memorable 1-2 in Germany. In its second season, the team was involved in a closely fought battle for second place in the Manufacturers' Championship, adding more podiums and stage wins to its tally. For its third year in WRC, Hyundai Motorsport developed a brand new car, the New Generation i20 WRC. The team enjoyed its most successful season to date in 2016 with two victories (Argentina and Sardinia) and a total of 12 individual podium results, finishing second in the Manufacturers' Championship. With a number of key technical regulation changes introduced for the 2017 season, Hyundai Motorsport has developed a brand new car, the Hyundai i20 Coupe WRC, with which it will contest its fourth season.

Further information about Hyundai Motorsport is available at: <http://motorsport.hyundai.com>

### **About Hyundai Motor**

Established in 1967, Hyundai Motor Company is committed to becoming a lifetime partner in automobiles and beyond. The company leads the Hyundai Motor Group, an innovative business structure capable of circulating resources from molten iron to finished cars. Hyundai Motor has eight manufacturing bases and seven design & technical centres worldwide and in 2015 sold 4.96 million vehicles globally. With more than 110,000 employees worldwide, Hyundai Motor continues to enhance its product line-up with localised models and strives to strengthen its leadership in clean technology, starting with the world's first mass-produced hydrogen-powered vehicle, Tucson Fuel Cell and IONIQ, the world's first model with three electrified powertrains.

More information about Hyundai Motor and its products can be found at: <http://worldwide.hyundai.com> or <http://globalpr.hyundai.com/>

To download high-resolution photos for editorial use, full drivers' profiles, as well as other useful press information about the team please refer to:

<http://press.motorsport.hyundai.com/home>

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