



FEDERATION INTERNATIONALE DE L'AUTOMOBILE

## 2018 RALLY SWEDEN

### PREVIEW

As the only true winter round of the FIA World Rally Championship, Rally Sweden (15-18 February) is unique; cars running on skinny tyres equipped with tungsten-tipped steel studs, mandatory shovels and drivers wearing heated racing boots and anti-glare glasses. The challenge is like no other in the series and the truly spectacular backdrop is a white winter wonderland.

Frozen roads are lined with snow banks, which the drivers 'lean' cars against to help guide them round corners but, in warmer temperatures, the banks disintegrate on impact potentially leaving cars stuck in the snow. Being able to judge these conditions, save studs on differing road surfaces and acclimatise to different braking points is crucial for success. Because of its fast and specialised nature, Rally Sweden has been dominated by Nordic drivers during the 65 years it has run, Frenchman Sébastien Loeb becoming the first outsider to claim victory back in 2004. Since then, only Sébastien Ogier has achieved a similar feat and he and Jari-Matti Latvala have locked out the top step of the podium over the last six years.

In Sweden, each of the four registered manufacturers is fielding three nominated crews with Mads Østberg joining Citroën for one of his favoured events. Teemu Suninen also starts the first of his eight outings in the Ford Fiesta WRC and Hayden Paddon is back with Hyundai. There is a strong 15-car entry in the highly competitive FIA WRC 2 Championship category and this will be the opening round of the FIA Junior WRC Championship. No fewer than 14 crews from 12 different countries over three continents have registered in the one-make series and an additional two crews join this two-wheel drive competition in the WRC 3 Championship. Reigning FIA World Rallycross Champion Johan Kristoffersson will also be contesting his home round of the FIA World Rally Championship in a non-registered Škoda Fabia R5.

The opening stage in Karlstad, SS14 on Saturday and the Power Stage will be broadcast live on television, with all stages also available on WRC All Live on the WRC+ platform.

### THE 2018 ROUTE

This year, approximately 24% of the route is new compared to 2017; this is made up of modifications to a number of stages and one re-introduced, Torntorp, which was last run in 2014. The rally has also moved its HQ from Karlstad to Sunne, 35 kilometres south of the Torsby service park. Traditionally the event kicks off with the crowd-pleasing super special stage in Karlstad on Thursday evening and Friday then heads into the Swedish and Norwegian forest stages. With the exception of Torsby, and part of Røjden, the route essentially runs in Norway and is the longest of the event. Saturday returns to Sweden and takes in the now famous 'Colin's Crest' in the Vargåsen stage, where an award in the name of the late Colin McRae is given for the longest jump. The day is rounded off with another run around the Karlstad special stage before returning to Torsby for a short 3.43 kilometre sprint run in darkness. Sunday covers just three stages in Sweden, Likenäs run twice before the concluding Torsby Power Stage, which first ran on Friday.

### RALLY DATA

Total distance:	1,400.79 km
Stage distance:	314.25 km (22.4%)
Number of stages:	19

### RALLY SWEDEN TIMETABLE AND MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES ORGANISED BY THE FIA

#### Wednesday 14 February

Mandatory media safety briefing, media workroom, Torsby 17:00 hrs

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### Thursday 15 February

Shakedown (P1 drivers)	08:00-09:30 hrs
Shakedown (P1, P2 and P3 drivers)	09:30-11:30 hrs
Shakedown (non-priority drivers)	11:30-13:30 hrs
'Meet the Crews', Service Park, Torsby	12:00 hrs
FIA Press Conference, Press Room, Rally HQ	15:00 hrs
Autograph session, Karlstad SS	18:15-18:45 hrs
Opening Ceremony and presentation of drivers, Karlstad SS1	19:00 hrs
	20:08 hrs

### Friday 16 February

First car arrives for regroup, service and Media Zone, Torsby	11:16hrs
First car arrives for final service and Media Zone, Torsby	17:21 hrs
'Meet the Crews', Service Park, Torsby	During the 45' service

### Saturday 17 February

First car arrives for regroup, service and Media Zone, Torsby	11:08 hrs
Regroup, Karlstad	17:02 hrs
First car arrives for final service and Media Zone, Torsby	19:46 hrs
'Meet the Crews', Service Park, Torsby	During the 45' service

### Sunday 18 February

Regroup, Ambjörby	08:27 hrs
Regroup and Media Zone, Torsby	11:16 hrs
Prize-Giving and podium ceremony, Service Park, Torsby	13:00 hrs
FIA Press Conference, Press Room, Rally HQ	15:00 hrs

### FIA PRESS CONFERENCE ATTENDANCE

Thursday 15 February	Dennis Rådström, FIA Junior/WRC 3 Championship David Holder, FIA Junior/WRC 3 Championship Jari Huttunen, FIA WRC 2 Championship Pontus Tidemand, FIA WRC 2 Championship Johan Kristoffersson Mads Østberg, Citroën Total Abu Dhabi World Rally Team Thierry Neuville, Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT Teemu Suninen, M-Sport Ford World Rally Team Jari-Matti Latvala, Toyota GAZOO Racing World Rally Team
Sunday 18 February	Winning FIA Junior/WRC 3 Championship crew/s Winning FIA WRC 2 Championship crew Top three crews in the overall classification Representative of the winning competitor

### MANUFACTURER ENTRIES, RALLY SWEDEN

M-Sport Ford WRT	Sébastien Ogier / Julien Ingrassia (#1) Elfyn Evans / Daniel Barritt (#2) Teemu Suninen / Mikko Markkula (#3)
Hyundai Shell Mobis WRT	Andreas Mikkelsen / Anders Jæger (#4) Thierry Neuville / Nicolas Gilsoul (#5) Hayden Paddon / Sebastian Marshall (#6)

Toyota GAZOO Racing WRT      Jari-Matti Latvala / Miikka Anttila (#7)  
Ott Tänak / Martin Järveoja (#8)  
Esapekka Lappi / Janne Ferm (#9)

Citroën Total Abu Dhabi WRT      Kris Meeke / Paul Nagle (#10)  
Craig Breen / Scott Martin (#11)  
Mads Østberg / Torstein Eriksson (#12)

#### **ADDITIONAL MEDIA OPPORTUNITIES**

**Autograph Signing Session:** On Friday and Saturday, selected crews will be available for a 15-minute autograph session. This will take place in the service park during the end of day service at the teams' service areas.

#### **FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP CLASSIFICATIONS**

The provisional classifications for all the WRC Championships will be available on the following link:

<https://www.fia.com/events/world-rally-championship/season-2018/standings>

#### **STAGE CHART**

Shortly after the finish of the event, a downloadable stage chart showing the progressive positions of the leading crews during the rally will be available. This is copyright free for editorial purposes and available at the following link:

<https://www.fia.com/events/world-rally-championship/season-2018/stage-chart-0>