



## STAGE FLASH

**Date:** 2019-02-17  
**Day:** Sunday **Distance:** 8,93  
**Special Stage:** SS17  
**Weather:** Sunrise today at 0742hrs. We're expecting a cloudy day, with very light winds and a temperature of between -1 and 2°C.  
**Road Conditions:** Gravel

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### 1- GRÖNHOLM

He's through in 5m 32.6s. Back in the WRC for a belated birthday treat, it's been an up and down weekend. How did he like his present? "A lot of action! The last stage was okay."

### 2- OGIER

Seb is the highest-profile restarter following his retirement on Friday. Will 5m19.75s be enough to collect some consolation points here? "I don't think I will get so much. The end of the stage is slushy - it will improve. Every year the same story for me on this very nice rally."

### 3- ØSTBERG

The clear leader in the WRC 2 Pro class, but Mads has not felt confident in Citroën's C3 R5. There is a smile on his face now though. "It's a smile of relief to be at the end. The result is really good, to come here on my first rally in the category and win is good. A difficult weekend but the result is strong."

### 4- SUNINEN

Second fastest so far for Suninen after a weekend that was memorable for different reasons. On Friday he was celebrating his first time leading a WRC rally. On Saturday he was out with roll cage damage after rolling into a tree. "The good pace here has given me confidence, but in the end there are no points. Okay, there are positive things. Now I need to prepare for the next rally."

### 5- LATVALA

Another driver trying to salvage points from a disappointing Sweden. He's 1.1sec slower than Ogier "It's getting very difficult. On the last part here there was lots of snow and slush. Very difficult to drive. I'm not sure if the road is getting better or worse."

### 6- BERTELLI

A few incidents along the way, but Bertelli reaches the end of his first WRC rally since Argentina 2017. "It's fantastic to be back. We had some super stages in the good conditions."



#### 7- TIDEMAND

He lost time on Friday with a broken throttle sensor. A decent run since looks to be rewarded with 8th place on his final confirmed rally of the season. He's 8.3sec slower than Ogier on this stage. "It's a dream to be here in a World Rally Car. I want to say thanks to all the people that are helping me. I really enjoyed this weekend and felt I improved. You need time to get used to a car like this. My next rally? I don't know but for sure I hope there will be more this year."

#### 8- LOEB

Third quickest on the Wolf Power Stage so far and that's seventh place overall. How his first Rally Sweden for six years? "It was complicated. Up and down. I'm happy to be at the finish. We did some good times, some less-good times. We understood a lot, so not so bad at the end."

#### 9- MEEKE

Second quickest so far on the stage - six-tenths behind Ogier - and it looks like sixth overall for Kris. "I had a massive impact on the front-left and now the power-steering feels tight. I struggled after that - lost some time."

#### 10- EVANS

Locked in a close battle for fourth with Mikkelsen, Evans goes quickest here, one-tenth up on Ogier. His time: 5m 19.5s. "It was good. A few small errors in places but in these conditions that's inevitable."

#### 11- MIKKELSEN

Sixth quickest so far. That's enough - just - to keep fourth place overall. Evans was just 2.8sec short. "Tricky conditions in there. I tried to stay in the lines, not go crazy. Let's see what Thierry does. I cross my fingers."

#### 12- NEUVILLE

Quickest so far! That's at least third place secure for Thierry. "I tried to have a good stage. We were not able to fight with Lappi in the fast sections today. We are good in the twisty but on the fast stages we are missing something - on the edge all the time. That's part of the game." Has he done enough to catch Lappi? He's up next...

#### 13- LAPPI

Fourth fastest on stage and Lappi holds second place from Neuville by 3sec! Lappi looks relieved. "I expected the conditions to be worse in the beginning of the stage. I was too cautious but then I started to push!"

#### 14- TANAK ON THE PODIUM

"It's amazing. I know how hard my very good friend Markko [Martin] was pushing to win here in Sweden and he was once very close. So I'm very happy that we finally did it and we have this win in the team now. In the Power Stage I just went with a good rhythm again. I just drove a bit faster than normal - but still no risks. It was a really good stage."

## COMMENTS

(The news from the stage)