

Rally d'Italia Sardegna

Press Office



Comunicato n. 18
19/05/07

SEBASTIEN LOEB AND DANIEL ELENA, ON CITROEN C4 WRC, CONTINUE TO LEAD

Olbia, 19 May 2007 – The French driver Sebastien Loeb, winner of the second Leg of the Rally d'Italia Sardegna, is running towards the victory. Together with the Monegasque co-driver Daniel Elena, the three times World Champion and his official Citroen C4, have been able to take under control the several attacks by Marcus Gronholm (Ford Focus WRC). In the meantime he has continued to attack trying to get even more advantages on his rivals. *"I will have to attack hardly even tomorrow, Gronholm is still too close and dangerous"* - says Loeb.

The Stages, that have been raced today, have been characterised by a warm sun and by the duel between Loeb and Gronholm, 36"5 second distant each other. It has also offered several but no successful suggestions to Mikko Hirvonen, on Ford Focus WRC, third overall, to attack Gronholm, his own team-mate but over a minute distant from him. Out from the Podium, in fourth position the Spaniard Dani Sordo (yesterday fifth overall), on the second factory Citroen C4, has been able to well interpretate the several difficulties met during the Leg and to be faster than Henning Solberg. The Norwegian, who yesterday was quite aggressive, has driven a second leg making several mistakes that have allowed to the Spaniard to reach him. This one has looked much more self confident thanks to a better feeling with the car.

Sixth overall, like yesterday, is Petter Solberg, on Subaru Impreza Wrc, who has declared to be quite satisfied of the feeling with the car. Unfortunately he has not been able to rise in classification as he would have liked. The other Finnish driver, Toni Gardemeister, on Mitsubishi Lancer Wrc has finished the race much farer, accusing set up problems during all the Leg. In the top ten we also find Manfred Stohl, eith overall on Citroen Xsara Wrc, who has bettered the results already obtained during the first Leg, and the finnish Juho Hanninen, on Mitsubishi Lancer WRC and Jari Matti Latvala on Ford Focus Rs Wrc, the great protagonist of the first Leg. Out from the first ten best drivers classification is the Australian Chris Atkinson on Subaru Impreza WRC and the new entry of the Championship the Argentinian Federigo Villagra, at his debut with the Ford Focus Rs WRC.

Great rhythm and performances of great effects even for the protagonists of the Junior Rally Championship, which the Estonian Urmo Aava, on Suzuki Swift, is leading before the Team-mate Per-Gunnar Andersson, slowed by a puncture during the tenth special stage and by a final brake problem that have not allowed to keep distance from the Czech Martin Prokop on his Citroen C2, slowed by punctures and brakes' problems.

The best Italian driver has been Giovanni Manfrinato, from Veneto, on Subaru Impreza STi, together with the Sardinian driver Carlo Pisano, who leads the classification from the second last SS. The previous leader, till the second last chrono, was the young Simone Campedelli on Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX, beat due to a puncture.

In the local challenge, the classification is leaded by Giuseppe Dettori and Marco Corda on Mitsubishi Lancer EVO IX, 30° overall, although all the mechanical problems.

Tomorrow the last Leg, other six stages for a total of 54,740 km all chrono. The start at 07h00 in the morning and the arrival if fixed at the old pier in Porto Cervo at 14h30.

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Maria Laura Berlinguer +39.333 1143007 – m.berlinguer@rallyitaliasardegna.com
Luca Bartolini +39.335 7553762 – l.bartolini@rallyitaliasardegna.com
Marco Giordo +39.333 4889552 – m.giordo@rallyitaliasardegna.com
Elisabetta Demurtas +39.333 1103098 – e.demurtas@rallyitaliasardegna.com
Località Porto Cocciani – Porto Industriale – Settore 1 – Edificio B – 07026 Olbia
Tel. +39.079.5551234 – fax +39.079.5551244
press@rallyitaliasardegna.com

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General Classification after the second Leg: 1. Loeb – Elena (Citroen C4 Wrc) in 3h12'46"5; 2. Gronholm – Rautiainen (Ford Focus Rs Wrc) a 36"5; 3. Hirvonen – Lehtinen (Ford Focus Rs Wrc) a 1' 30"2; 4. Sordo – Marti (Citroen C4 Wrc) a 2'22"4; 5. H. Solberg – Menkerud (Ford Focus Rs Wrc) a 2'32"7; 6 . Solberg - Mills (Subaru Impreza Wrc) a 3'02"6; 7. Gardemeister – Honkanen (Mitsubishi Lancer Wrc) a 5'21"5; 8. Stohl - Minor (Citroen Xsara Wrc) a 5'44"8; 9. Hanninen - Markula (Mitsubishi Lancer Wrc) a 9'43"3; 10. Latvala-Anttila (Ford Focus Rs Wrc) a 12'15"8.

Classifica concorrenti Junior Rally Championship dopo la seconda tappa: 1. Aava – Sikk (Suzuki Swift) in 3h35'51"7; 2. Andersson – Andersson (Suzuki Swift) a 1'28"5; 3. Prokop –Tomanek (Citroen C2) a 3'13"4.

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