

Pre-Rally Press Conference Transcript

Thursday 27 February 2003

DRIVERS: Richard BURNS (PEUGEOT)
Toni GARDEMEISTER (SKODA)
Colin MCRAE (CITROEN)
Armin SCHWARZ (HYUNDAI)

TEAM PERSONNEL: David LAPWORTH (SUBARU)

Q: Turkey is a new event to the WRC this year. From what you have seen, how far does it meet the standards you would expect from a new world rally and what do you think about it's date in the calendar?

Richard Burns: "I don't really have a problem with the date in the calendar because I think with the other two rallies that are very similar - the ones in Cyprus and Greece - we already have two very hot gravel rallies and I don't think we need another one of those. This is very similar terrain at least this has different weather.

"The organisation of the rally itself I don't really have any remarks to make about that. Everything seems fine and the organisers have done as best they can to repair the damage the weather has done to the roads and I hope everything goes smoothly for the next few days."

Q: Skoda are traditionally very strong on rough gravel rallies like Safari and the Acropolis. What do you think the strengths of the Skoda are and how well do you expect it to perform on this rally which is also quite rough ?

Toni Gardemeister: "Yeah for sure it's a rough rally and normally our car is quite okay in rough ones and for sure we aim to get some points here that is the goal. But we will see I think the first stages are the best ones in the rally and I think we will start flat out immediately, but for sure we will try to get points."

Q: To what extent are you surprised to be in joint lead of the World Championship after two rounds and do you think you can still be on top Sunday afternoon?

Colin McRae: "Not at all surprised."

Q: And will you still be on top on Sunday?

CM: "I don't know. We will have to wait and see. It's the same at the start of every rally for me at the moment. Obviously I am still learning the car and learning how the car performs in different conditions so I really can't answer at the moment apart from it feels okay. I feel quite comfortable. We've made a lot of improvements so really we have to see. If we're not leading the championship at the end of this event it might not be a great loss because obviously we're going to New Zealand and obviously we don't want to be first on the road there."

Q: There has been a lot of talk recently that the Rally Australia might be dropped from the world championship this year. If it did disappear would you like to see it replaced by another event or should the World Championship just have 13 rounds?

Armin Schwarz: "Not everybody will agree with me on that but I would like to see Safari back but it's the only one that was staying out of the calendar."

CM: "Me too."

MC: You're not the only to agree with it.

Q: What do you think from the point of view of a team and what about Safari in the longer term?

David Lapworth: "I think we need to put things in the right order. First of all lets just concentrate on going to Australia. As far as I think all teams are concerned, and as far as all the drivers are concerned, Australia is a great rally. As far as I can make out everybody wants the rally to happen in Australia, all over the rest of the world so I don't think there is an issue this year. I'm expecting that we're all going to Australia."

Q: You start this rally with a new engineer why did you make this change and what do you hope to achieve from it?

RB: "It was kind of a decision made by myself and the team. We're all in this together. Things were not going one hundred percent smoothly. I know how well things can work and we wanted things to work well again. So, I have a new engineer - Christian Deltombe - and so far so good. Everything seems to be going very smoothly and communications are improved."

Q: How much do you know now about the new Skoda Fabia WRC and when do you expect to drive it?

TG: How much I know ... first thing, I have only sit in the car, not really test it and for sure I think everybody knows that it belongs in the Geneva Motor Show and first test for me I don't know actually when we will test.

Q: The Citroen has shown itself to be excellent on asphalt and pretty good on snow so far. How do you think it will perform on rough gravel? I note you were fastest on shakedown.

CM: "Have to wait and see."

Q: Any expectations or thoughts?

CM: "No, I'm approaching it with a fairly open mind. Hopefully very good. it's a difficult event. It is going to be very rough in certain parts. You have to find the balance between the durability and getting to the end and also the performance, so it's not a very straightforward rally and I think there will be quite a few surprises"

Q: The Hyundai struggled a bit in Monte Carlo and Sweden because of lack of testing. Do you think that will be less of a disadvantage here as nobody has driven this rally before?

AS: "I only can hope so. I mean I think it will equal the chances a bit if no one has been here before but nevertheless some days testing would have been quite nice."

Q: This is the first true gravel round of the championship, but to what extent do you think it will be representative of the remaining gravel rounds?

DL: "I have to say I think I've changed my mind a little bit from before we came here. Before the rally we thought that although the terrain might suit us as a team and so on we thought that because of the organiser problems that they would face because of the weather and the extremes of the weather you can have here in this time of year here it might be a bit of a lottery and we might have to wait to New Zealand to have any kind of feeling for the form for gravel for this year but from what I can see and from what everybody has told me about the stages the rally might be more representative of places like Cyprus and Greece than perhaps we thought and we maybe we will get some kind of feeling for the form we will get for the rest of this season."

Q: Do you think position on the road will make a difference?

CM: "Not as much as other events. I think the only places it will clean will be a disadvantage for runners further back for the condition of the road. I think it will probably even itself out on this rally."

FIA RALLY NEWS

RALLY OF TURKEY

Thursday, 27 February 2003

This will be the Rally of Turkey's debut in the FIA World Rally Championship, and of the manufacturer drivers present on this third round, only Citroen's Sebastien Loeb has seen the stages before – albeit at the wheel of a Saxo. Loeb arrives back at the rally's base in Kemer as leader of the championship, following his round one win and a points-scoring finish in Sweden earlier this month.

Loeb will have an advantage over his rivals, but what he has in experience of the rally, he gives away in years of experience to the majority of his fellow championship competitors. Few have more experience than Loeb's team-mate and fellow championship leader Colin McRae. This will only be the Scotsman's third outing in a Xsara WRC, but his speed over the first two rallies of the year indicate that he's already feeling comfortable in his new surroundings. Peugeot's Marcus Gronholm and Richard Burns are joint third ahead of this first all-gravel round of the FIA World Rally Championship.

The stages run high above the Mediterranean coastline and the central service area in Kemer. The average height of the stages is around 1,200 metres. Recent heavy rain and snow has damaged some of the roads, forcing the organisers to re-grade some of the stages. The rally is expected to offer similar terrain to Cyprus, although the average speed is likely to be higher than the island event.

The Rally of Turkey is also the second round of this year's FIA Junior World Rally Championship. Winner of the opening round Brice Tirabassi will lead the crews away in his Renault Clio.

Citroen Total (1st – 24 points)

Technical: Citroen conducted rough road testing in Portugal and France prior to this event. Colin McRae and Sebastien Loeb have brand new Xsara WRCs, while Sainz has the car which Thomas Radstrom drove in Finland last season.

Sporting: Citroen has maintained its grip on both the drivers and manufacturer's championship title races. Sebastien Loeb competed here last season but neither Colin McRae – with whom the Frenchman shares the lead in the driver's championship – or Carlos Sainz sampled these stages before. McRae and Sainz should have the edge on their younger team-mate as they have considerably more experience on this rough style of rally. McRae is an acknowledged master of the rough rally, winning both the Acropolis and Safari rallies last season. All three drivers took part in the testing in the run up to the event.

Quotes: Colin McRae said: "The state of the stages really depends on the weather. If it rains then I could see quite a few rocks being pulled out and the road getting quite cut up. This is my first gravel event in the car, so I'm still learning about it – but I'm feeling more confident all of the time."

Sebastien Loeb said: "I've done five of the stages on the rally, which is a plus – but it was in a Saxo Challenge car, not the same as a World Rally Car. It's great to be still leading the championship, but I'm not sure what this will mean for running first on the road, with the loose gravel around it won't be ideal."

Carlos Sainz said: "I still haven't driven the car enough on gravel. Okay, we did some testing before the rally, but you could always use more time driving."

Marlboro Peugeot Total (2nd – 22 points)

Technical: There are no major changes to the specification of the Peugeot 206 WRCs, which started today's shakedown test in Cyprus Rally specification.

Sporting: Marcus Gronholm arrives in Turkey on the back of a commanding win in Sweden – his third victory on the championship's only snow rally. Gronholm and the 206 WRC are likely to be a potent force on this style of event, the Finn showing how comfortable he is on this style of rally by winning in Cyprus last season.

Richard Burns starts Rally of Turkey working with a new engineer in the Peugeot team. The Briton admitted that his relationship with Jean-Charles Odon (his previous engineer) hadn't worked at 100 per cent. Burns is in a confident mood ahead of round three of the FIA World Rally Championship, having enjoyed his best ever start to the championship – he is joint third. Conversely, Harri Rovanpera's start to 2003 hasn't been great. The Finn wasn't competing in Monte Carlo and then crashed out of Sweden.

Quotes: Marcus Gronholm said: "This rally is okay, but I don't really understand why we need another round of the world championship like this – with similar conditions to those in Greece and Cyprus, but okay we will see what we can do."

Richard Burns said: "The decision to change the engineer was made by the team – we are all in this together. I know how well the relationship can work, so I knew this one wasn't working 100 per cent smoothly. I am looking forward to this event, it's a bit of an unknown quantity, but I'm happy with the car and everything right now."

Ford Motor Company (3rd – 15 points)

Technical: This will be the final time the Ford team runs three Focus RS WRC02s. From the next round onwards, only Mikko Hirvonen will drive the '02 car, with Markko Martin and Francois Duval moving on to the all-new 2003-specification car. There have been no developments to the Ford for Rally of Turkey, but Ford is the only team among the Michelin runners to have selected the narrow ZE pattern of tyre for this event.

Sporting: Markko Martin holds a strong fifth place in the championship, just two points adrift of the leaders, after enjoying his best start to the championship yet. Martin – and his team-mate Duval – go well on this style of events. Both drivers led the Cyprus Rally at some stage last year. Duval has a new co-driver (Stephane Prevot) for this

rally, and is in need of a finish to boost his confidence after crashing in both Monte Carlo and Sweden. Hirvonen will be looking for a finish to gain more valuable time behind the wheel of his Focus.

Quotes: Markko Martin said: "Shakedown has gone very well for me. I made lots and lots of changes to the car, but I'm happy with it now. The stage we've just used wasn't so much like the stages will be in the rally, but it was good to get an idea of what's coming."

François Duval said: "I prefer loose surface rallies, so this should be good. This could be a good rally for me, being a young driver I don't have the same experience that some of the others in the championship do. As for my new co-driver, we tested together already and I don't see any problems in us settling down together."

Mikko Hirvonen said: "I started at shakedown this morning with the car set up the same as Markko's – which is what I always do. Since then, I've made a couple of changes and made the car better for me. The stage was quite rough in the end, and we lost a little time when we broke something on the steering. It wasn't a big problem, though."

555 Subaru World Rally Team(4th – 11 points)

Technical: This is the first loose-surface event for the new shape Subaru Impreza WRC2003. The team's test driver Pasi Hagstrom has spent seven days in Spain testing the car, although there are no major developments for the car.

Sporting: Tommi Makinen enjoyed a strong run on the last round of the championship, eventually finishing second behind Gronholm. His team-mate Petter Solberg was steady through the first two legs, struggling to find a car set-up which he was happy with. On the final day of the rally, Solberg settled down and was much happier with the car, posting fastest time on the final test of the event.

Quotes: Petter Solberg said: "I haven't driven on gravel since Rally GB, not even in testing – so this is going to be an interesting event. I like these rough, tight and twisty style of stages, so I'm really looking forward to this event – especially as nobody really knows too much about it."

Tommi Makinen said: "Pasi was happy with the car when he tested it, so I am happy. The shakedown stage this morning wasn't so good at the finish, it was a little too rough – rougher than the stages will be anyway."

Hyundai World Rally Team (5th – 3 points)

Technical: The Accent's engine and suspension have received some attention since the last round of the championship in Sweden, although the drivers still haven't conducted a full pre-event test. The misfire which slowed Armin Schwarz's car in Sweden, has been traced to a faulty spark plug.

Sporting: The Hyundai Accent WRCs of Armin Schwarz and Freddy Loix will continue to run in their interim colour scheme – as the team still awaits the announcement of its title sponsor. Both drivers are more upbeat about this rally than either of the previous two rounds, as both point out that the slightly twistier rallies seem to suit the car better than the faster events such as Sweden.

Quotes: Armin Schwarz said: "As Turkey is classes as a long-haul rally, nobody is allowed to test on the event, which is not going to make things easy. This being a new rally does even the chances out for everybody a little bit more, but it would have been nice to have tested for the event."

Freddy Loix said: "This will be a good rally for us. I like new stages, if you look at the times from the Acropolis Rally last season, then you can see that it was on the new ones where we went quickest."

Skoda Motorsport (6th – 2 points)

Technical: The Skoda team spent four days testing in Spain prior to this event, but there are no major changes to the Octavia ahead of the Rally of Turkey.

Sporting: This will be Didier Auriol's first event in an Octavia WRC on gravel. While he made a good start to 2003 in Monte Carlo, Sweden was not so good for the Frenchman. He admitted he wasn't happy with the car and struggled to match the times set by team-mate Toni Gardemeister. Gardemeister finished round two in eighth place, but had run in the top six overall earlier in the rally.

Quotes: Didier Auriol said: "I like the challenge of this type of rally, with the narrow roads. If I have the feeling in the car, then I can attack from the start and making the points at the finish is possible. It would be very difficult for us to talk about the win or the podium."

Toni Gardemeister said: "We want points here. The first group of stages should be best for us, but over the last couple of seasons we have seen that the rougher rallies like Acropolis or Safari – and now Turkey do suit the Octavia quite well."

Other entries

Brice Tirabassi leads the competitors in the FIA Junior World Rally Championship away in his Renault Clio, following his win on the opening round. The second-placed driver in Monte Carlo, Kosti Katajamaki, was excluded from the results following a technical problem with the rear brakes on his Volkswagen Polo. Fiat Punto driver Marcos Ligato is now second in the standings. Official Peugeot driver Gilles Panizzi starts the event in a factory-specification 206 WRC, run by Bozian Racing.

15/12/2003 RALLY STATISTICS

EVENT: The Rally of Turkey is the 3rd of 14 events in the FIA World Rally Championship.

ENTRIES: 70 (62 Group A, 8 Group N)

DRIVERS: Austria 1, Argentina 1, Belgium 2, Bulgaria 2, Croatia 1, Czech Republic 2, Estonia 2, Finland 8, France 6, Georgia 1, Germany 4, Great Britain 5, Hungary 2, Italy 3, Lebanon 1, Lithuania 1, Norway 2, Poland 1, San Marino 2, Spain 3, Sweden 2, Turkey 18.

MANUFACTURER TEAMS: Citroen, Ford, Hyundai, Peugeot, Skoda, Subaru

CARS: (including the manufacturer cars): Citroen 9, Fiat 8, Ford 12, Hyundai 2, Mitsubishi 7, Opel 4, Peugeot 8, Renault 5, Skoda 3, Subaru 3, Suzuki 4, Toyota 2 Volkswagen 3.

TIMETABLE:

Thursday 27 February

Ceremonial start at 18h00, Antalya. One Superspecial Stage.

Friday 28 February

Leg 1 restarts from Kemer at 08h00 and covers 344.19km, including 93.80km on five stages. The first car is expected to arrive back in Kemer at 17h33.

Saturday 1 March

Leg 2 starts from Kemer at 06h00 and covers 483.35km, including 158.52km on seven stages. The first car is expected to arrive back in Kemer at 18h24.

Sunday 2 March

Leg 3 starts from Kemer at 07h00 and covers 320.95km, including 84.01km on five stages. The first car is expected to arrive back in Kemer at 15h23.

Total

The rally covers 1193.85km, including 337.88km on 18 special stages (including eight run twice). All stages are on gravel roads closed to other traffic.

TOMORROW:

Friday 7 February

Leg 1 restarts from Kemer at 08h00 and covers 344.19km, including 93.80km on five stages. The first car is expected to arrive back in Kemer at 17h33.

WEATHER FORECAST: Clear skies with temperature rising through the day.

FIA RALLY NEWS

RALLY OF TURKEY

Friday, 28 February 2003

Peugeot endured mixed fortunes on the opening leg of the third round of the FIA World Rally Championship. Harri Rovanpera led the event by 20.7 seconds, but that was balanced by the persistent power steering problems, which beset reigning World Rally Champion Marcus Gronholm's 206 WRC and left him languishing in 19th place, more than ten minutes behind his team-mate.

Rovanpera's day on the stages to the west of the rally's base in Kemer had been largely trouble-free. The Finn wasn't ready, however, to predict a possible second world championship victory, pointing out that his lead wasn't insurmountable to the crews behind. That chasing pack? was headed by the hugely experienced Carlos Sainz. By his own admission Sainz still has plenty to learn about the Xsara WRC, but he settled on a set-up which was to his liking and stuck to it. Ford's François Duval belied his lack of WRC experience to hold an overnight third place, just 8.8 seconds off Sainz.

The Junior World Rally Championship runners, were headed by Suzuki driver Daniel Carlsson. The Swede had eked out an advantage of 1m 20s from his nearest category rival Kosti Katajamaki.

Peugeot

Technical: Marcus Gronholm's Peugeot 206 WRC suffered a hydraulic problem from the third stage onwards today. Richard Burns' 206 WRC developed a gearbox problem in the final stage of the day.

Sporting: Harri Rovanpera moved into the lead of the rally after setting fastest time on the fourth stage. The Finn admitted that his position further back on the road was helping him, but he said he wasn't taking any big risks with his pace. His team-mate Richard Burns was sixth at the end of the day, having suffered a puncture on each one of this morning's three stages. Every one of the deflations was on the front-right of his 206. Gronholm didn't get the chance to get into a rhythm for this event, as power steering gremlins hit his Peugeot on the day's second stage. The reigning world champion lost the power steering on his 206. The unit was changed at lunchtime service, but the problem reoccurred on the road section out of service, leaving him to drive the final two stages of the day without power steering. In total the Finn lost ten minutes through the day.

Quotes: Harri Rovanpera said: "The road surface is being swept clean in some places, but on the other hand the drivers are pulling some rocks out on to the road, so it's not all good news. The long stage the first time through wasn't so bad, but the second run at some of the stages is going to be very rough – not so nice. It's going to be hard work tomorrow, there's a long way to go – I'm not going to predict anything."

Richard Burns said: "I'm happy enough with the way things have gone. Okay we had the punctures this morning, but they didn't really cost us much time. The car was jumping out of third gear on the last stage, but the gearbox will be changed tonight."

Marcus Gronholm said: "I'm not really very interested in this rally now. The problem came the first time about five kilometres from the end of SS3. Then doing the long stage without power steering was really hard work, my arms are a little tired now."

Citroen

Technical: Sebastien Loeb retired from the event after running out of fuel on the first loop of stages this morning. The other two Xsara WRCs ran without any problems.

Sporting: Carlos Sainz ended leg one in second place after a trouble-free day in his Xsara WRC. The Spaniard reported that he was happy with the way his car was running and added that he wouldn't be making any changes to the car's set-up. Sainz did go off the road on the first loop of stages this morning, inflicting some minor panel damage to his Xsara, but he didn't lose any time. Once Loeb had retired, Colin McRae was faced with the task of running first on the road. The Scot said he was cleaning the stages for the cars behind him, but he was more dismayed at his time through the final stage of the day – which was 28 seconds slower than Sainz. McRae intended to make minor adjustments to his car overnight.

Quotes: Carlos Sainz said: "I'm still not 100 percent confident in the car, but it is getting better with every kilometre. Tomorrow is the longest day of the rally, so we will see where we are then. There's not a lot more for me to say, except that I'm happy now."

Colin McRae said: "The day has been okay, but that last stage wasn't very good for us. I don't know what it was, if you look at Carlos's time it was good, but it just didn't work for us. The stage was a bit dirty on top, but that shouldn't have cost us that much time."

A team spokesperson said: "The crew took the wrong way leading to the refuelling point after SS3. Realising their mistake they turned around and went back. Unfortunately they didn't have enough fuel to cover the extra kilometres they had driven."

Ford

Technical: Markko Martin's Ford Focus RS WRC suffered a broken gearbox on the second stage this morning and Mikko Hirvonen retired with damaged suspension on SS4. François Duval's example ran without any problems.

Sporting: Young Belgian driver François Duval is the leading Ford on the event, holding third after leg one. Duval posted two third fastest stage times and enjoyed a trouble-free day. Running further down the order helped him through the morning, but on the day's only repeated stage he still managed to set a highly competitive time.

Markko Martin picked himself up from the disappointment of having to do a stage and a half (including all of the 30km Silyon test) with just first and second gears. Martin was fastest on SS5. Hirvonen retired with suspension failure on the first loop of stages this morning.

Quotes: Markko Martin said: "It's so difficult to drive the car when you've only got two gears. Obviously you have no top speed, but it makes the corners hard to get into the rhythm when you're used to changing up or down the gearbox. It was a mechanical problem in the gearbox, all of the electronics and everything else was working but we just didn't have any drive."

François Duval said: "A good day. Everything is working well. Our tyre choices have been perfect. I have no complaints. Getting to know my new co-driver has been fine today."

Subaru

Technical: Petter Solberg's Impreza WRC2003 retired three kilometres into the fourth stage with a broken track rod end. Tommi Makinen's sister car suffered suspension problems on SS4.

Sporting: Tommi Makinen held fourth place overnight, having been passed by Carlos Sainz on the fifth and final stage of the opening leg. The Finn admitted he'd found plenty of big rocks around on the day's stages, and while he'd done his best to avoid most of them, a bent sumpguard after the first loop was testament to some of the rocks making it under the car. Solberg had made a fine start to the rally, joint fastest time on the second stage of the event promoted him to the lead. He was still out front two stages later when he suffered a broken trackrod end and retired.

Quotes: Tommi Makinen said: "The rear dampers went completely in stage four. The car was hard to drive, it was all over the road. Once we'd got that problem sorted, this afternoon was better."

Petter Solberg said: "The car was really good this morning, everything was looking perfect. I came into a third-gear right hand corner with a little bit of oversteer, but I'm not exactly sure what happened – I think the front wheel got caught in a rut and just broke the trackrod end. This is not something which has ever happened before. It's really disappointing, but it was good to see just how well the car was going before the problem."

Hyundai

Technical: Both Accent WRCs suffered suspension trouble through the first loop of stages. Armin Schwarz also suffered an exhaust problem, while Freddy Loix's car was hit with a broken turbo on the final stage of the day and a throttle problem.

Sporting: Both Armin Schwarz and Freddy Loix have suffered troubled starts to the event. The carbon underbody protection on Schwarz's car was being burned by an exhaust system which was damaged by the rocky Turkish roads. Despite this trouble, the German was still able to set second fastest time on the stage and move into second place overall. When the car came into service the mechanics worked flat out to solve the problem, which unfortunately meant they didn't have time to replace the suspension or brakes, which slowed Schwarz through the day's final two stages. He slipped back to eighth overnight. The turbo on Loix's car was changed at first service, along with the front dampers, which had leaked all of their fluid. The Belgian was happier with the car through the afternoon, despite the turbo blowing on the final stage – and the throttle sticking open momentarily.

Quotes: Armin Schwarz said: "When I started to smell the smoke coming on the fourth stage I thought straight away that it was the same problem as on Rally GB. I thought it was going to be a fire and we were going to have to stop. In the end it was okay. These stages do suit the car a little better than the ones we've had in the championship before."

Freddy Loix said: "Once the team changed the turbo after first service the car was better, but then the turbo went right near the finish of the final stage. We were lucky this happened near the finish, we didn't lose much time. The suspension wasn't right at all this morning, the fluid went out of the dampers and we were driving the car on the bump stops and sump guard. It wasn't easy to drive like that."

Skoda

Technical: Gardemeister's Octavia WRC ran without any major problems today. Didier Auriol retired on the way into the day's final service engine failure. The team had been concerned about the water temperature after SS4 and the engine problem is believed to be linked to this.

Sporting: Toni Gardemeister was the quickest Octavia through the opening day, but the Finn made it quite clear that he was no fan of this rally. He smacked a rock with the back end of the Octavia on the opening loop and knocked the tracking out. From then on he said he was just trying to avoid the rocks which had been pulled out by the cars ahead. Gardemeister held tenth place overnight, just 8.8 seconds ahead of his team-mate Didier Auriol. Auriol felt that the four days he'd spent testing the car prior to the event hadn't been entirely representative of the conditions he was greeted with in Turkey. The former world champion made changes to the car and pronounced himself happier, but then retired with engine problems.

Quotes: Toni Gardemeister said: "I think it is a bit stupid to be driving here. The roads are very bad, there are rocks all over the place. I must have hit 100 big rocks today, this is knocking the car about quite badly. We didn't have any mechanical problems with the car, but we have had some punctures. Not good."

Didier Auriol said: "Considering that the car's not perfect for me, the times haven't been so bad. I'm going to be making some adjustments to the car; we'll be looking at the ride height and the diff mapping. After not doing so much testing for this event, I can't expect everything to be perfect."

Other entries

Just as he did on round one, Suzuki Ignis driver Daniel Carlsson leads the way after the opening leg's stages. It was round one winner, Brice Tirabassi who stole the march on the superspecial stage last night. The Renault driver crashed out on the third stage, however. Carlsson was already out front by then and would continue to set a blistering pace through the Friday stages to open up a comfortable lead over Kosti Katajamaki's Volkswagen Polo. Marcos Ligato was just 3.5s off the back of the Finn, placing his Fiat Punto in third place at the end of leg one. Among the non-works World Rally Cars, Gilles Panizzi was in fifth place overnight. His 206 WRC had run without any problems through the opening leg and the Frenchman was enjoying his first trip to Turkey. Fellow Peugeot driver Juuso Pykalisto rolled on the third stage, having scored a third fastest time in SS2. He lost four minutes while the car was put back on his wheels and ended the leg 22nd.

15/12/03 RALLY STATISTICS

STARTERS: 60 crews (54 Group A and 6 Group N) were allowed to start this morning.
58 crews (53 Group A and 5 Group N) actually started.

RETIREMENTS: Loeb (F), Solberg (N), Hirvonen (FIN), Auriol (F) and 15 other drivers

TODAY: **Friday 28 February**
The second part of Leg One started from Kemer at 08h00 and covered 344.19km, including 93.80km on five stage.
With one Superspecial Stage of 1.55km run yesterday, after the ceremonial start, the first leg totals are 389.55km, including 93.35 on six stages.

TOMORROW: **Saturday 1 March**
Leg 2 starts from Kemer at 06h00 and covers 483.35km, including 158.52km on seven stages. The first car is expected to arrive back in Kemer at 18h24.

WEATHER FORECAST: Remaining bright and dry.

SS1 EFES PILSEN (1.55km)

1	Gronholm	(FIN)	Peugeot	1m	12.1
2	Solberg	(N)	Subaru	1m	12.2
3	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot	1m	12.3

SS2 SIMENA 1 (2.73km)

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	1m	52.7
1=	Solberg	(N)	Subaru	1m	52.7
3	Pykalisto	(FIN)	Peugeot	1m	53.5

LEADERS AFTER SS2

1	Solberg	(N)	Subaru	3m	04.9
2	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	3m	06.6
3	Sainz	(E)	Citroen	3m	06.7

SS3 PHASELIS 1 (16.42km)

1	Solberg	(N)	Subaru	12m	28.6
2	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru	12m	35.6
3	Duval	(B)	Ford	12m	36.3

LEADERS AFTER SS3

1	Solberg	(N)	Subaru	15m	33.5
2	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru	15m	42.8
3	Duval	(B)	Ford	15m	44.7

SS4 SILYON (29.87km)

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	23m	51.8
2	Schwarz	(D)	Hyundai	23m	59.6
3	Sainz	(E)	Citroen	24m	02.6

LEADERS AFTER SS4

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	39m	40.1
2	Schwarz	(D)	Hyundai	39m	47.4
3	Sainz	(E)	Citroen	39m	52.7

SS5 PERGE 1 (14.91km)

1	Martin	(EE)	Ford	11m	50.5
2	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	11m	51.3
3	Duval	(B)	Ford	11m	51.8

LEADERS AFTER SS5

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	46m	55.2
2	Duval	(B)	Ford	47m	21.5
3	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru	47m	26.9

SS6 SILYON 2 (29.87km)

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	23m	19.1
2	Martin	(EE)	Ford	23m	19.7
3	Sainz	(E)	Citroen	23m	20.9

LEADERS AFTER SS6

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot	1h 14m	50.5
2	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		+20.7
3	Duval	(B)	Ford		+29.5
4	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru		+31.4
5	Panizzi	(F)	Peugeot		+37.9
6	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot		+56.5
7	C.McRae	(GB)	Citroen	+1m	03.3
8	Schwarz	(D)	Hyundai	+1m	07.1
9	Loix	(B)	Hyundai	+1m	13.6
10	Gardemeister	(FIN)	Skoda	+1m	20.9

FIA RALLY NEWS

RALLY OF TURKEY

Saturday, 1 March 2003

As the third round of the FIA World Rally Championship progressed into its longest leg with stages to the west of the event's base in Kemer, Carlos Sainz moved his Citroen Xsara WRC to the head of the field on the tenth stage. Previous incumbent of the number one spot Harri Rovanpera, suffered suspension failure after a collision with some rocks two kilometres into the Myra test. Rovanpera had been 22.8 seconds ahead of Sainz when they went into the stage, but the Finn's problem cost him close to eight minutes and his place in the top ten. He would retire from the event after the day's final stage.

Sainz was on fine form through the second leg, fastest on three of the day's seven stages to build a lead of 1m 19.5s by the close of play. Richard Burns enjoyed a similarly trouble-free day, to climb four places into the runners-up spot, with Ford's François Duval maintaining his leg one pace to take third. The Belgian had lost his podium position to Mäkinen on the second stage of the day, but suspension damage dropped the Subaru driver back down the field. Colin McRae moved in the opposite direction to hold fourth ahead of Gilles Panizzi and Toni Gardemeister.

Kosti Katajamäki took over the lead of the FIA Junior World Rally Championship category in his Volkswagen, following a power steering problem late in the day for Daniel Carlsson.

Citroen

Technical: The two remaining Citroen Xsara WRCs of Carlos Sainz and Colin McRae ran reliably today. Sebastien Loeb retired yesterday morning when his car ran out of fuel.

Sporting: Despite his status as rally leader, Carlos Sainz was refusing to make any predictions about a possible 25th FIA World Rally Championship win. The Spaniard had set a blistering time through SS10, beating the rest of the field by 25 seconds. On the next stage, however, he suffered a puncture and an overshoot at one junction. Sainz ends Saturday's stages with a 1m 19.5-second advantage over Richard Burns. Colin McRae was happier with the set-up of his car, having stiffened the suspension. McRae spun in stages eight and ten and admitted he was backing off in some places, particularly towards the end of SS11.

Quotes: Carlos Sainz said: "I'm still not 100 percent confident in the car, but it is getting better with every kilometre. Tomorrow is the longest day of the rally, so we will see where we are then. There's not a lot more for me to say, except that I'm happy now."

Colin McRae said: "The end of that 11th stage was atrocious. It was fast downhill for about four kilometres and there were big, big rocks everywhere – at that speed you just had to run over them. This is going to take its toll on the competitors, the difficult thing is trying to make sure it doesn't take its toll on us. The spin in stage ten cost us about 20 seconds, we had to reverse to get the car turned around."

Peugeot

Technical: The Peugeot 206 WRCs of Richard Burns and Marcus Gronholm ran reliably, but Harri Rovanpera's car suffered suspension failure on SS10. He retired three stages later with further suspension trouble.

Sporting: Harri Rovanpera dropped to 11th overall after hitting the rocks on the tenth stage. He attempted repairs after the stage, but there was nothing he could do as the right-rear damper had burst through its mounting. The Finn dropped another three minutes through the 20-kilometre Kemer test. Rovanpera then retired on the final stage of the day when the suspension problems re-occurred.

After the first two stages of the day, Richard Burns said he thought a podium position could be possible, two stages later he was there. The tenth stage wasn't without incident, however, as he slid off the road briefly. Marcus Gronholm moved up the order from an overnight 19th to hold 11th at the end of the leg.

Quotes: Harri Rovanpera said: "We went into a third-gear left-hand corner, slid a little sideways and smashed into the rocks. We weren't taking any risks or doing anything stupid – this is just Turkey, with rocks everywhere – or maybe it is just my luck at the moment, I thought I had left this behind in Sweden."

Richard Burns said: "We stalled when we slid off on SS10 and then we had to reverse, so we dropped time there. This is a rally where it really pays to be sensible. Top two or three stages times will pay off by the end of the event."

Marcus Gronholm said: "There is nothing to talk about today, we haven't had any problems. We went off the road after 15km of SS10 – but that's about all."

Ford

Technical: The oil-pressure warning light came on in Markko Martin's car during the middle loop of stages, but it didn't appear to cause any problems, while the steering on François Duval's Focus RS WRC was damaged on SS9. He also suffered from a sticking throttle in SS13.

Sporting: François Duval started the day well, closing to the gap between himself and Sainz to less than one second. Unfortunately for the Belgian, he spun in the next test and dropped back to fourth behind Mäkinen. Burns passed Duval in the tenth stage, but by then both Rovanpera and Mäkinen had hit trouble, so the Belgian retained third. Markko Martin continued his climb back up the leaderboard after his gearbox troubles on the opening leg. The Estonian moved into the top ten and ended the day in seventh place.

Quotes: François Duval said: "It was my mistake on the second stage this morning. I had to reverse three times to get the car straight and then it stalled twice. It was frustrating. On the stage where Tommi had his problem, I

caught him up, but he was moved over and didn't cost us time. In the afternoon it was hard to turn the car after I'd hit something and damaged the steering."

Markko Martin said: "We're getting closer to Freddy Loix and Toni Gardemeister with every stage, but I think that's as good as it can get for us. Stage 11 was terrible, it was like driving down a field with rocks rather than a road."

Subaru

Technical: Tommi Makinen's car suffered suspension trouble this morning after hitting a rock on the second stage. He hit another rock on SS10 and smashed the wishbone on the front-right wheel. Petter Solberg had retired yesterday with suspension trouble.

Sporting: Makinen moved past Duval and into third place on the second stage of the day, despite the left-front suspension damage. The four-times world champion posted second fastest time on the ninth stage, opening up a 12.1 second advantage over Duval, only to lose it when he clouted a rock on a fifth-gear downhill stretch. The impact smashed the front-right wishbone and tore a hole in the wheel arch where the suspension part was fixed to the car. Makinen stopped after the stage and tried to repair the damage using the strap used to keep the spare wheel in the car. The repair broke soon after the start of the stage, but he made it through the stage, but dropped over three minutes. He ended the day in eighth place.

Quotes: Tommi Makinen said: "The rock was right in the middle of the road in stage ten, there was nothing we could do. We managed to get it to the start of the next stage, but then I felt the strap break not far in. I drove very, very slowly through there after that. The front wheel was moving about a lot. I think our best chance of making up any places now comes with the weather, it would be good for us if it rained tomorrow."

Hyundai

Technical: Armin Schwarz retired with suspension damage on the first stage of the day. Freddy Loix's throttle problems continued this morning and the Belgian suffered a blown turbo on the day's final stage.

Sporting: Schwarz's car stopped in the first stage of the day. The rear suspension ball post broke and the wheel jammed back into the arch. Schwarz attempted to continue through the stage, but was forced to stop when a driveshaft broke. Loix said the sticking throttle on his car was getting worse. The team changed numerous parts at the lunchtime service, but to no avail. To make matters worse, turbo failure cost him even more time in the second run through Kumluca. Loix had started the day 11th and then hovered around seventh and eighth place throughout the day, eventually ending Saturday in ninth.

Freddy Loix said: "It is so hard to drive the car with the throttle problem. When you are trying to brake the car just wants to go straight on. Every time I get to the finish of the stage without spinning or going off the road I have to congratulate myself, it is like a victory. The team has changed so many things, but we still don't know what the trouble is."

Skoda

Technical: Toni Gardemeister's Octavia WRC broke a wishbone on the opening stage of the day, but was otherwise reliable. Didier Auriol retired yesterday, on the road section back to final service, with a blown engine

Sporting: Despite reporting some icy patches on the opening stage, Gardemeister moved into the top ten in stage seven. At service after the following stage, he made changes to stiffen the car's suspension – and immediately felt the car was better suited to the Turkish stages.

Quotes: Toni Gardemeister said: "The car was better this afternoon, but it is still sliding around a little bit too much for me. The traction is still not right, we need more, but this is the best the car has been for the whole rally. There are still so many rocks around, it is terrible trying to drive around them – that was why we broke the wishbone first thing this morning. I enjoyed that last stage, I was faster and there was more grip."

Other entries

Power steering failure on the final stage of the day cost FIA Junior World Rally Championship leader Daniel Carlsson six minutes. The problem for the Suzuki driver started just five kilometres into the test. Carlsson stopped on the stage and attempted to fix the problem, but couldn't do anything. He dropped to third place. Kosti Katajamaki moved to the head of the field despite his own power steering problem earlier in the day. The Volkswagen Polo man now enjoys a 2m 17s lead over Guy Wilks. Wilks was glad to get to the end of the leg following a worsening gearbox problem in his Ford Puma.

Gilles Panizzi maintained his impressive pace to keep fifth place overnight. The Frenchman was happy with his efforts on most of the stages, save for SS11 where he went off the road for one minute. Juuso Pykalisto made it two Bozian-run Peugeot 206 WRCs in the top ten. Pykalisto broke a roll bar on the tenth stage and struggled with bad understeer after that. The other problem for Marcus Gronholm's protégé was the rate he was using his Michelin tyres. Running a 2000-specification car, he didn't have the latest transmission which makes more economical use of tyres.

15/12/03 RALLY STATISTICS

STARTERS: 40 crews (37 Group A and 3 Group N) started this morning.

RETIREMENTS: Schwarz (D), Rovanner (FIN) and 10 other drivers

TODAY:**Saturday 1 March**

The second leg started from Kemer at 06h00 and covered 483.35km, including 158.52km on seven stages.

TOMORROW:**Sunday 2 March**

Leg 3 starts from Kemer at 07h00 and covers 320,95km, including 84,01km on five stages. The first car is expected to arrive at the finish in Kemer at 15h23.

WEATHER FORECAST:

Rain expected overnight, possibly continuing into tomorrow.

SS7 OLYMPOS 1 (20.44km)

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot		16m 45.1
2	Duval	(B)	Ford		16m 48.5
3	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru		16m 54.0

LEADERS AFTER SS7

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot		1h 31m 35.6
2	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		1h 32m 07.7
3	Duval	(B)	Ford		1h 32m 08.5

SS8 KUMLUCA 1 (28.92km)

1	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		24m 47.0
2	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot		24m 49.6
3	Martin	(EE)	Ford		24m 56.4

LEADERS AFTER SS8

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot		1h 56m 32.6
2	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		1h 56m 54.7
3	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru		1h 57m 20.9

SS9 PHASELIS 2 (15.49km)

1	Gronholm	(FIN)	Peugeot		11m 51.4
2	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru		11m 53.6
3	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot		11m 55.2

LEADERS AFTER SS9

1	Rovanpera	(FIN)	Peugeot		2h 08m 27.8
2	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		2h 08m 50.6
3	Makinen	(FIN)	Subaru		2h 09m 14.5

SS10 MYRA 1 (24.01km)

1	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		21m 45.4
2	Panizzi	(F)	Peugeot		22m 10.3
3	Martin	(EE)	Ford		22m 10.7

LEADERS AFTER SS10

1	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		2h 30m 36.0
2	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot		2h 31m 38.6
3	Duval	(B)	Ford		2h 31m 42.8

SS11 KEMER 1 (20.50km)

1	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot		15m 06.8
2	McRae	(GB)	Citroen		15m 07.7
3	Gronholm	(FIN)	Peugeot		15m 11.4

LEADERS AFTER SS11

1	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		2h 45m 49.1
2	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot		2h 46m 45.4
3	Duval	(B)	Ford		2h 47m 00.5

SS12 OLYMPOS 2 (20.44km)

1	Martin	(EE)	Ford		16m 29.6
2	Duval	(B)	Ford		16m 32.1

3	Sainz	(E)	Citroen		16m 33.7
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FIA RALLY NEWS

RALLY OF TURKEY

Monday, 15 December 2003

Carlos Sainz held his nerve through the final leg of Rally of Turkey, the third round of the FIA World Rally Championship, to clinch his first victory of the year – and his first victory for the Citroen team. The Spaniard's success on this Kemer-based rally makes him the joint most successful driver of all time, equalling Colin McRae's record of 25 world championship win. Sainz's Xsara WRC ran without fault for the final day's five stages and Sainz's win promotes him to third in the race for the driver's title.

Richard Burns took second place for Peugeot. The 206 WRC driver started the day 25.7 seconds ahead of François Duval, but fastest time on SS15 was enough for him to ease his way clear of the Ford man. Burns eventually brought his car home 58 seconds ahead of Duval to claim eight points and the championship lead. Duval's third place was his best ever finish on a round of the championship.

Citroen maintains its lead in the manufacturer's championship, now nine points clear of Peugeot, with Ford in third place six points further back.

The second round of the Junior World Rally Championship ended with victory for Finland's Kosti Katajamäki in his Volkswagen Polo. Spaniard Salvador Canellas moved up to second place in his Suzuki Ignis after Britain's Guy Wilks, third in his Ford Puma.

Citroen

Technical: The two remaining Citroen Xsara WRCs of Carlos Sainz and Colin McRae ran reliably today. Sebastien Loeb retired on Friday when his car ran out of fuel.

Sporting: Carlos Sainz's win on Rally of Turkey was his first success on a round of the FIA World Rally Championship for the first time since Argentina last season. The 40-year-old drove sensibly but quickly through the final day. He started the day the 1m 19.5s ahead of Burns and while the Briton narrowed the gap to 47.9 seconds through Sunday, Sainz's lead never looked under threat. McRae enjoyed a mechanically trouble-free day, but admitted his chances of catching Duval and the final the podium position were slim. McRae was happy to reach the finish of a rally and retain his second place in the driver's title.

Quotes: Carlos Sainz said: "Of course I am happy to have won here, but I am also very happy for the team. It is a fantastic result to give Citroen its first win on gravel."

Colin McRae said: "We couldn't afford to back off today. It would have been nice to have caught Duval, but at the same time we had to make sure that we didn't let Gilles past. It would only have taken a half-spin or something for that to happen. Again today some of the stages have been rough, maybe a bit too rough – this is supposed to be a sprint event. I'm happy for the team, though, we've shown what we can do on this type of rally."

Peugeot

Technical: The Peugeot 206 WRCs of Richard Burns and Marcus Gronholm ran reliably throughout today's stages. Harri Rovanpera had retired on the final stage of leg two with suspension damage.

Sporting: Richard Burns held on to his runners-up spot. He took time out of the leader on every stage today, reducing the deficit by 32.4 seconds. While it wasn't enough to pass Duval, it was enough to make his second place comfortable from Duval. Gronholm spent another day running first on the road following his power steering problems of the opening day. The team's decision for him to remain in the running was justified when the Finn collected a single manufacturer's point.

Quotes: Richard Burns said: "I pushed hard on the second stage of this morning's loop of stages, that was the plan. I wanted to try and pull out more of a lead on François Duval. We did that and set fastest time. After that it was okay, we drove for the finish without any problems. It's great to be leading the championship again, but at the same time we have to remember that this means we will be running first on the road in New Zealand – that might not be ideal if it stays dry."

Marcus Gronholm said: "The team was right for us to carry on, but it has been hard to keep the motivation up. Now I'm looking forward to New Zealand and not running first on the road for the opening day."

Ford

Technical: The Ford Focus RS WRCs of François Duval and Markko Martin ran without any problems today.

Sporting: François Duval started and finished the day in the same position. The Belgian said he was pushing quite hard in the faster stages to make sure he could maintain the gap between himself and McRae. Markko Martin moved ahead of Skoda's Toni Gardemeister to take sixth place, which he held until the finish, after a problem-free day on the event.

Quotes: François Duval said: "It is a great feeling to make the podium for the first time. Malcolm (Wilson, team director), told me the way he wanted me to drive and I did that. The stages have been okay, the car seemed to suit the twistier ones, but I preferred the faster ones."

Markko Martin said: "I am happy that we managed to recover and get some points for the team, from that perspective this is a good result, but it is such a shame that we lost the time on the first day. It's a little bit depressing that we were able to run so well after the problem, depressing because you can just imagine the result we could have had without the problem."

Skoda

Technical: Toni Gardemeister's Octavia WRC ran without any mechanical problems through the final leg of the event.

Sporting: A precautionary gearbox change at the end of the second leg forced Gardemeister to run with longer gear ratios through today's five stages. There were no problems with the transmission, but the Finn felt the ratios were too long for the twisty roads. He spun his Octavia twice on the third stage of the day, but enjoyed a clean run through the final two stages of the day.

Quotes: Toni Gardemeister said: "I did a little damage to the car today. After I spun, I reversed into a tree and dented the back bumper! I really wasn't driving so well in stage 16. I don't know what it was, it just didn't feel right – I was driving like my grandmother. I needed to go quicker, but there was nothing I could do to keep Markko Martin behind me. I've got the finish of the rally with some points for myself and for the team, though – that's good."

Subaru

Technical: Tommi Makinen's car suffered a minor gearbox problem on the third stage of the day, other than that it was mechanically sound.

Sporting: Makinen started and finished the day in eighth place overall. The four-times world champion enjoyed a trouble-free day for the most part, save for the gearbox glitch, which lasted a couple of minutes after the third stage. He made up one minute on seventh-placed Gardemeister, but still ended the day two minutes off the Skoda driver after losing a lot of time with suspension trouble on the second day.

Quotes: Tommi Makinen said: "The gearbox was a little strange. We went through a watersplash and then it started to do its own thing. I was in second gear and accelerating hard and it just selected fifth gear. It was being crazy like this for a few kilometres, then it sorted itself out. It's good to finish this event, it was much tougher than we expected. It's disappointing for me that before the problems we were making some good times."

David Lapworth said: "Obviously we're disappointed with the result, but we're pleased with many aspects of the of our performance and we go away from here full of confidence ahead of New Zealand. It's been a well-run event, which showed that it deserved a place in the FIA World Rally Championship."

Hyundai

Technical: The turbo on Freddy Loix's car, was slowly losing power through the final day, otherwise it was mechanically fine.

Sporting: When Loix suffered a blown turbo at the end of the second leg, the team was forced to refit his car with the turbo he'd used on the opening loop of stages on day one. Loix admitted that this compromised performance, but the team had no other choice. Loix started the day ninth, but dropped back one place when Marcus Gronholm passed him on the penultimate stage of the day, losing the final manufacturer's point in the process.

Freddy Loix said: "Obviously the team wanted me to try and hold Marcus off, but there is really nothing I could do when I am using the same turbo I started the rally with. The car was down on power, which makes the job very hard to do."

Other entries

Kosti Katajamaki won his first ever round of the FIA Junior World Rally Championship today. The Volkswagen driver suffered a clutch problem for much of the day, but he was able to drive around it on the stages. He admitted that he wasn't pushing as hard through the final day, given that he held a two-minute lead over Guy Wilks (Ford Puma). Wilks missed out on second place after his gearbox jammed itself in third gear in the penultimate stage. The British driver was forced to drive through the remainder of SS17 and all of the final stage with the car in this condition. Wilks' problems allowed Salvador Canellas to move up to second place, some consolation after his fellow Suzuki Ignis driver – and long time leader – Daniel Carlsson retired with suspension trouble. He was lying third at the time.

Renault Clio driver Simon-Jean Joseph won the A6 class overall, but he is not registered for the FIA JWRC.

Among the top non-works drivers, Gilles Panizzi finished fifth overall, his best finish on a gravel round of the championship. Panizzi said the final day had been without any problems aboard his Bozian-run Peugeot 206 WRC. Panizzi's team-mate Juuso Pykalisto suffered a clutch problem on the final day, but still managed 11th place overall.

15/12/03 RALLY STATISTICS

STARTERS: 29 crews (27 Group A and 2 Group N) started this morning.

RETIREMENTS: 2 drivers

TODAY: Sunday 9 February

Leg 3 started from Kemer at 07h00 and covered 320.95km, including 84.01km on five stages.

SS14 SIMENA 2 (13.40km)

1	McRae	(GB)	Citroen	1m 51.3
2	Martin	(EE)	Ford	1m 51.4
3	Burns	(GB)	Peugeot	1m 52.0

END OF RALLY PRESS CONFERENCE

2 March 2003 1645h

Mirage Hotel, Kemer

DRIVERS:	Carlos SAINZ – CS	1 st place driver	CITROEN
	Marc MARTI – MM	1 st place co-driver	CITROEN
	Richard BURNS – RB	2 nd place driver	PEUGEOT
	Robert REID – RR	2 nd place co-driver	PEUGEOT
	Francois DUVAL – FD	3 rd place driver	FORD
	Stephane PREVOT – SP	3 rd place co-driver	FORD

TEAM PERSONNEL: Guy FREQUELIN – GF Team Manager CITROEN

Q - Carlos, firstly many congratulations on winning the inaugural Rally of Turkey. You also won the Cyprus rally when it was new to the championship. Can you explain your talent of winning new events very quickly?

CS - To be honest I don't think it's any secret or anything like that. You just have to drive as fast as you can that's it. We try to not make mistakes - I don't think it's any other thing.

- Richard, congratulations on leading the championship thanks to your second place. It also means you're first on the road for New Zealand. Does this worry you?

RB - It's only a concern if it's not raining but I hope the first day of the rally is not one of the very few days that you don't get rain in New Zealand.

Q – Francois - congratulations on your first ever podium result. You must be very pleased?

FD - I am very happy. It's the first time for me on the podium. It's a very good rally for me. There has been no problem with the car and it's good for my team. Also I like to say it's a good new rally in the championship

Q - Do you think it has happened because it's a new event for everyone and nobody has any past experience of this event?

FD – Yes, it's easier for me as a new junior driver.

Q - Congratulations on another first! Your first win with Carlos - did you think it would come so soon into the season?

MM - I think it would come when it would come. I think this rally is new for everyone and for us and Citroen also because the car went very well,

Q – Stephane, obviously the best way to start your new partnership with François. What are the most impressive things from his driving from where you sit?

SP - I have to say he has been very cool and relaxed and I think that is the single things that surprised me quite a lot because I thought he was quite aggressive and more nervous but it's not at all like that and I'm very surprised.

Q – Carlos your time on stage ten yesterday on stage ten was amazing. You took 24 seconds out of everybody else in the very last section of the stage. How did you do that?

CS - I took a short cut!

Lots of laughter from the audience.

Q - Was that the moment that won the rally for you?

CS - I think it was You know at that time we were close to Harri and we knew it was a long stage and we really wanted to catch up. Before the rally I wasn't very confident because you know... first rally with the car, first time here, we didn't have a lot of time to test and we had bad weather when we were testing last week But then immediately after a couple of stages the confidence arrived and then I could push. And basically all the rally, except today where we could relax a little bit, it was just work work,

Q – You were one of the few people not to hit any major trouble. Was that down to luck or a deliberate decision?

RB - To be honest it was quite hard to avoid everything even if you try and drive carefully or try and drive flat out because quite often you can come over a crest and have the chance to have a stone in the road and you don't really have any opportunity to avoid the stone and sometimes you don't even see it. I've forgotten what the question was?!

Luck or judgment? Some judgment obviously I didn't attack one hundred percent from the beginning. It was obvious from the recce that it was going to be a very tough rally in the same vein as Greece or Cyprus so it was good to judge the pace and yesterday morning I set out to catch up with Francois who I think was third at that point. That is where is I set my aim I certainly wasn't driving so carefully yesterday morning.

Q – Francois, your first rally with Stephan, so what were your impressions of him on your first event together?

FD - He is very good co driver and has a lot of experience. As for me he is a very good choice for the future. He has a lot of experience with Bruno Thiry and it's very important for me.

Q - Marc from where you were sitting did you see many spectators on the stages and did it seem popular?

MM - Yes I think it's very popular. It's becoming more popular and will become more so in the future. Being from Spain, of course there was a lot of support for us!

Q - Robert, we've got Acropolis, Cyprus and Turkey this year. All three of them are quite similar. Do you think the WRC can justify three similar events in such a close geographical area?

RR - Thanks for the difficult question!

I don't know. It depends which other countries have events up to the standard. I think for a World Championship it should be exactly that. It should go to Canada and America and Japan. We should go to lots of different places and it just depends on the time which events will fit in the calendar. This event has been difficult for the organizers to organize at such short notice but they've done a fantastic job and for a first time in championship I don't think you could have expected better

Q – Stephane, just how rough were the conditions? Were there any times when you thought it might be all over?

SP - Yeah I think it was quite rough but I expected the stages to be more difficult the second time through. For sure it's not an easy one but like you said before it's like Cyprus and Acropolis - they're both quite slow rallies.

Q – Guy, you said before the start of the season that you wanted three victories with the Xsara. You already have two victories – will you adjust that perspective?

GF - Not exactly. Before this rally I had a question. To know where we are with the car and now I have the answer. For sure the car is strong, for sure the car is fast but I know that we need experience on this surface and the other teams are very strong and we need to work in a good direction. After the RAC Rally Colin did some tests and then gave us the direction we had to improve for the car and then Carlos just after gave us the same direction. So now the team have to work very hard on these directions and now we have a car which seems to work on this surface but we need to continue to work and give a very good car to the drivers on any surface.

Q - You said Turkey was a question mark. Next is New Zealand. Is that another question mark?

GF - It's a harder surface for us for sure because it's completely different but we try to do our best to improve the car and I hope we have a good car for New Zealand. Now for sure we need some more rallies on gravel to know exactly where we are.

Q – Carlos, you won the first Cyprus rally and now you win in Turkey for the first time. Do you think it's very important to have such a lot of experience to win a new rally?

CS - That has been a question that a lot of journalists asked me during this weekend and I don't know what to answer because when I am in a rally that I have done many times people say that I have the advantage because I know the stages very well and the young drivers don't have advantage. When I am coming to a new rally and it's the same for everybody, people also say I have the advantage - so I don't know what to do! The answer is you have to go quick and it doesn't matter if you have a lot of experience or no experience. I think the important thing is to go fast and take risks and push. Experience is important but I think a lot of drivers in the World Championship have a lot of experience and you don't have to look for any secrets when I'm winning.

Q – Richard, you had a new engineer here. How would you judge the first time co-operation?

RB - Our honeymoon has been very successful and Christian has done a very good job. It's difficult to say because if I say positive things about my new engineer it sounds negative about my old engineer. The main thing is we seem to be working very well together. Christian communicates well and has come up with some very good ideas on this rally already. I perhaps have been a bit stale the last six months. And I can definitely see a strong way forward if this continues.

Q – Francois, have you seen your father since the finish and what did he say to you?

FD - Yes my father is very happy. And yes he is very happy... yes he's very happy!!

Lots of laughter from the audience.

Q - Carlos, my question is, comparing the other thirteen countries what about the conditions in Rally of Turkey and what have been the differences?

CS - Before the rally we knew it was going to be tough and a hard rally but again I am surprised how people forget very quickly how Greece and Cyprus has been in the past years. I don't consider this rally harder than Greece for example and I consider this similar to Cyprus. The only big difference is that the big stones that sometimes were on the side of the road and depending who is driving in front of you and how lucky you are you can find surprises or not. Then obviously you can decide if you avoid the stone or go over the stone. If you avoid you can lose one or two seconds sometimes one and a half or one second. If you take the decision to go over the stone there is two possibilities 1) nothing happens 2) something happens and if something happens it can be again something serious or just a puncture or just a bend or something. It is a decision you have to make very quickly but sometimes there are times when you have no time to react. In this rally most of the time you can see the stones and for me the biggest difference is those stones on the side. But sometimes you find them on the stage and sometimes you don't find them on the stage. But it depends on who is in front of you and how lucky you are. But I don't consider the rally rough or more rough than Cyprus or Greece.

Q - Because of the conditions a lot of cars have retired from the rally. Do you think it will cause Turkey to be dropped from the WRC?

CS - I can give my personal opinion. A lot of people can give their own opinion but for me the rally has been technically very well organized. The control of stages were very well, the effort from the country in terms of police, in terms of marshals and time controls, service areas etc has been very good. The rest is not my decision. From the driving side it has been well organized. The roads are similar to Cyprus - the only thing is to come in this time of the year is a little too risky and it would be a little better to come after the summer or before summer when it's not very hot and when the rain is not so close.

Q - Guy French TV will be very happy they will be able to make a lot of filming?!

GF - I think for the rally it's very important for the media but for sure. We need more coverage because I think rallying is very good spectacle and I hope the television and the other media will come to the rallies to give very good coverage for the Manufacturer, drivers and co-drivers. I think it's very important at this time because F1 has some problems with the media. It's a good chance for us to have this opportunity for rallying and I hope it's good for coverage.

Q - If seems like if you win a rally you can be penalized for a very long time. It happened in Sweden, Turkey and again for Richard in New Zealand. Do you think everybody should think of something different for the starting order.

RB - I think to be honest there has been so many year where we struggled with the old system and this was always the main talking point and we used to have two days of driving slowly. Now I'm in the position that Marcus was in for most of last year and he managed to succeed very well. I will try and do my best in New Zealand because I believe the system how it is now it very straightforward. Of course I would be the person most likely to be against it at this moment but, like I say, Marcus did very well and I think it's still possible to succeed if you take a positive attitude. I know I'm going to lose time if it's dry on the first day of New Zealand but then I know I can make up time. So I think it's better like this to keep it simple and not to have to talk about it very gravel rally.