



**FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
RALLY OF TURKEY
Media FIA Pre-event Press Conference**

12.06.2008

Present:

**Sébastien Loeb, Citroën Total World Rally Team
Barry Clark, Munchi's Ford World Rally Team
Chris Atkinson, Subaru World Rally Team
Per-Gunnar Andersson, Suzuki World Rally Team
Toshihiro Arai, FIA Production Car World Rally Championship
Martin Prokop, FIA Production Car World Rally Championship**

Welcome to the pre-event FIA press conference.

Q: The last time this event took place you did not compete due to your shoulder injury, but you have won it twice in the past. So, is the fact that you missed a year going to make any difference?

SL: I don't know but I don't think so. Now we all have enough experience of the event to be fast even if you miss one rally. Maybe I have had to adapt my pace notes and do a little more modification than some of the other drivers but it shouldn't be a problem.

Q: You are back in the lead of the Championship now by one point over Mikko Hirvonen, how important will it be for you to hold the lead as we go into the mid-season break?

SL: It would be good to go on holiday still in the lead. It's one point at the moment and that's nearly nothing. Also we will be cleaning the roads on the first day and the surface is very loose so I could lose a lot of time. We will see on Sunday.

Q: In Greece we saw tactics come into play and also drivers conserving tyres, how much will that be a factor this weekend?

SL: It wasn't a question of tactics but for sure on one stage I thought if I went very fast I would destroy everything on the car so I took it easy. Here I will try to go fast and not lose too much time on the first day.

Q: This is the last rally before the WRC takes a break for five weeks - do you think it's a good idea to have a mid-season break or do you think the Championship loses momentum?

SL: No, for me it is good to have a bit of a holiday in the summer and I see Chris [Atkinson] is smiling so I think he agrees with me! For me it is good.

Q: We have had seven events with the brand new Pirelli tyres, is the performance better than you expected?

SL: The tyres have been good. The only thing for me was Argentina when we had to use a very hard tyre. In Greece the roads and heat were a big problem for the tyres and we have some punctures and I think that could happen here too. But overall, the result with tyres is good so far.

Q: Barry, it's the second time we've seen you in a WRC car this season with the Munchi's team, but this time it's not so last minute as in Jordan. You have had a least some time to prepare, how are you feeling ahead of this weekend?



BC: I'm quite confident at the moment and really, really pleased to be back in a World Rally Car. This time I've done a proper recce, I've got my own pace notes and I've got an English speaking co-driver! [Paul Nagle]

Q: The car you are using was last used by Aris Vovos in Greece and I understand you played a big part in not only rebuilding it but retrieving it from the stages?!

BC: Yes, the Ford team asked me to drive a truck out to Greece and it was the recovery truck. So I went out to get the car when Aris had his problem and took it back to the service park, popped it up on axle stands and started to rebuild it. It should be OK. I've got faith in my own ability as a mechanic as well as all the other boys.

Q: In Jordan it was a case of just getting the car through the stages, so will we get to see you at full speed here?

BC: The key to these events is experience and it is my first time in Turkey and I have little experience of the Focus. So I'll just drive along and try to pick up the pace from what we did in Jordan. If we could nudge the top 10 and maybe score some points for the Munchi's team that would be fantastic.

Q: You have a new co-driver in Paul Nagle and I believe during shakedown this morning it was the first opportunity you have had to sit together. He has slightly more experience than you at WRC level - do you think you can learn from him in some way?

BC: Oh yes: things are working well so far. We seemed to slot in with each other this morning and there haven't been any problems at all. Hopefully we can form a great partnership. When you are comfortable together that's when the times start coming.

Q: The new Subaru Impreza debuted in Greece and got off to a great start with Petter's second position. However you suffered an electrical problem. What were your first impressions of the car?

CA: Well, it has been a great step forward although I don't think we can fight for wins just yet. But we were about on the pace in Greece and we would have been in contention without our problem. Here the car is already feeling better for me and every step you make takes you closer to the front.

Q: Were there any glitches during shakedown?

CA: No, we just did three runs and parked up quite early because the feeling is good so no point in hurting the car.

Q: Is there a lot of work to be done with the car over the summer break?

CA: I think it will mostly be small things from now on - fine tuning, work on the diff settings, that sort of stuff. Those improvements get you the last few tenths of a second a kilometre that put you right at the top. Each improvement takes you nearer.

Q: When in your opinion will we see the car winning rallies?

CA: Hopefully soon: Everyone in the team is waiting for that moment. I think it might come a bit later in the year and if we can get both cars in the top five here, that will be great.

Q: We have seen some great performances from you so far this season and you still lie in third position in the Drivers' Championship but Jari-Matti Latvala is chasing you down. Can you stay ahead this weekend?



CA: Greece was unfortunate for us. Without our problem I think we'd have taken points from Jari-Matti. Here will also be difficult on the first day, running third, especially tomorrow when guys like Gigi Galli running further down the order will be very fast. Hopefully we can make sure we don't lose too much time and then we can attack the next two days.

Q: The SX4 has recently completed rallies without the use of SuperRally, with you in Italy and Toni (Gardemeister) in Greece. How much would you say the car has improved since its debut in Monte-Carlo?

P-GA: It has been making small progress all the time. Today we had a small problem with the gear change but now it's all OK. All our development has been on the rallies but this time here we have some new parts which should help with both the speed and the reliability.

Q: The team has had a limited testing programme this season, with all efforts ploughed into development. Do you think it would have been wiser and more beneficial to actually test the car instead?

P-GA: Of course it helps a lot when you do testing but we haven't had time - or something like that - and we just have to cope with that. Hopefully in July we can do some testing and fine tune the cars.

Q: You know what it takes to win here - in a super 1600 car at least. That good experience should be to your advantage?

P-GA: Well, at least it's not a disadvantage to have done it in JWRC. But all the other drivers have experience of the rally so we will just have to see what we can do.

QUESTIONS FROM THE FLOOR:

Markus Stier
Rallye das Magazin, Germany

Q: Barry, what chance have you had to test the car before today?

BC: Just before this rally I was shaking down the cars for here up in Cumbria. But there's been no chance to actually drive this one before this morning. In shakedown I was playing around with all the settings just trying to get a feel for the car.

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Q: It's not been the best start to the season for you Toshi. What can you do to turn it around?

TA: Yes but I have a test after Greece so I think it is quite good here.

Q: The new Subaru made its debut in Sweden, but it has got off to a tough start. What have been the problems so far and have they been resolved?

TA: It is very difficult to say the worst problems but the suspension has been one of them so far and also overheating in Greece.

Q: What parts of the car need the most development?

TA: Ah! Especially the suspension.

Q: It's been the first season with a new co-driver, Glenn Macneall now sits at your side. How



has that gone so far?

TA: I think it is going very well because he was with me five years ago, so we already know each other really well.

Q: The younger less experienced drivers seem to be having a good run so far in the Championship. How tough is it going to be to defend your title this weekend?

TA: I think it will be difficult now but the new car has good prospects for the future so I will try to defend it.

Q: What can you do here?

TA: If the car has no problems I can get a good result.

Q: You are eighth overall in the PWRC going into this event. Did you hope to be higher in the standings at this point?

MP: I think all the season we want to have better results because it hasn't gone how we wanted. So here we need a good result to get back in contention. I hope we can do this here in Turkey and make a good result. In Greece I made a mistake on the first stage and then the engine stopped on the second day. We are trying to do our best to fight for things but we haven't had a lot of luck so far

Q: It's your first full year in the PWRC - is it tougher than you expected?

MP: Actually, right now PWRC is better for us because in the JWRC we need 20 more points to be doing well. But in PWRC we can get a good result at the end of the season because a lot of drivers have only a few points and apart from Andreas [Aigner] no one is out in front too far.

Q: What is it like contesting two Championships (PWRC and JWRC)?

MP: When we test the cars it is OK even though it is a bit of a problem jumping from car to car. But we do have good experience of both of them.

Q: Greece was a bit of nightmare for you - can you turn it round here in Turkey?

MP: For me it's most important to finish the race without any difficulties. If I can do that, then the result should be good.

Q: What did you think of the stages on the recce - were they in good condition? How rough is out there?

MP: They are a little bit better than those in Greece because the roads have been graded more. They also seem a bit wider than last time we were here, although there are narrow and slow parts that will be tricky. But overall I have no problems with the roads.



News Bulletin - Day 1

After close-fought competition, which ultimately ended in tactical play, Sébastien Loeb (Citroën Total) leads the Rally of Turkey, round eight of the FIA World Rally Championship. No fewer than three drivers have headed the leaderboard throughout the day and the top five crews are split by less than seven seconds at the end of the first day. Behind Loeb, Henning Solberg (Stobart Ford) holds second position, with Jari-Matti Latvala (BP Ford) just one-tenth of a second adrift in third.

Turkey is the third hot weather and rough gravel rally in just five weeks and is another of the toughest rounds of the series, despite slightly cooler and smoother conditions than the gruelling Acropolis Rally two weeks ago. The event started last night with a super special stage in Antalya, won by Sébastien Loeb, but today the route took the crews into the Anatolian mountains for eight stages and 152 competitive kilometres.

Loeb has had the unenviable task of sweeping the roads clean of gravel today and while the Frenchman lost time to his rivals, he had climbed from seventh to third, despite only one fastest stage time. He was fourth going into the last stage, but when the Ford drivers slowed to ensure they weren't first on the road tomorrow, Loeb took the lead and will be faced with the same conditions tomorrow. Henning Solberg ran as high as fourth, before he too catapulted up the leaderboard during the final stage. He is just one second behind Loeb. Latvala briefly led earlier in the day, but has suffered two punctures. Slowing in the final stage, the Finn dropped from second to third in the hope of also benefiting from a better road position tomorrow.

Gigi Galli (Stobart Ford) is right behind him, in fourth, the Italian winning three of the day's stages to overnight 2.2 seconds off the lead. Mikko Hirvonen (BP Ford) has led for most of the day and he too dropped time in the final stage, leaving him fifth and only 6.8 seconds behind Loeb. Sixth and seventh are held by Petter Solberg (Subaru) and Britain's Matthew Wilson (Stobart Ford) respectively, and Dani Sordo (Citroën Total) is eighth, having dropped from fifth with rear suspension damage.

The leading retirement of the day was Chris Atkinson (Subaru), who was forced out with suspension damage.

Rally of Turkey - Results after Day 1

1	Sébastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citroën C4 WRC	2 hr 02 min 35.2sec
2	Henning Solberg/Cato Menkerud	Ford Focus RS WRC	2 hr 02 min 36.2sec
3	Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila	Ford Focus RS WRC	2 hr 02 min 36.3sec
4	Gigi Galli/Giovanni Bernacchini	Ford Focus RS WRC	2 hr 02 min 37.4sec
5	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Ford Focus RS WRC	2 hr 02 min 42.0sec
6	Petter Solberg/Phil Mills	Subaru Impreza WRC 2008	2 hr 03 min 24.3sec
7	Matthew Wilson/Scott Martin	Ford Focus RS WRC	2 hr 03 min 41.1sec



8 Dani Sordo/Marc Marti

Citroën C4 WRC

2 hr 03 min
42.0sec

News Bulletin - Day 2

BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team driver Mikko Hirvonen leads the Rally of Turkey at the end of the second day of competition. The Finn holds a 16.1 second advantage over team-mate Jari-Matti Latvala, and Sébastien Loeb (Citroën Total) holds third, despite sweeping the roads clean of loose gravel again.

Following tactical manoeuvres last night, Hirvonen started the day in fifth position but his beneficial road position helped him post fastest time in the opening stage to climb into fourth. Another fastest time in the following stage saw the Finn claim a lead he has gradually extended throughout the day. Having experienced no problems, he heads team-mate Latvala with three stages remaining on Sunday.

Despite the frustration of finding himself first on the road again today, Loeb has minimised the damage but nevertheless struggled to match Hirvonen's pace. He slipped back to fourth this morning but benefited when third-placed Gigi Galli (Stobart Ford) lost power and fell to a disappointing eighth position. Loeb therefore overnights in third, but 34.2 seconds adrift of the lead.

Henning Solberg (Stobart Ford) has slipped from second to fourth and Dani Sordo (Citroën Total) is hot on his heels, despite a puncture earlier in the day. He overnights fifth, 6.6 seconds behind the Norwegian. Matthew Wilson (Stobart Ford) retains seventh and Galli rounds off the top eight.

Leading retirements today include both Suzukis. Toni Gardemeister retired with a broken radiator while team-mate Per-Gunnar Andersson was forced out with electrical failure.

Rally of Turkey - Results after Day 2

1	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Ford Focus RS WRC	3 hr 47 min 37.8sec
2	Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila	Ford Focus RS WRC	3 hr 47 min 53.9sec
3	Sébastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citroën C4 WRC	3 hr 48 min 12.0sec
4	Henning Solberg/Cato Menkerud	Ford Focus RS WRC	3 hr 49 min 46.2sec
5	Dani Sordo/Marc Marti	Citroën C4 WRC	3 hr 49 min 52.8sec
6	Petter Solberg/Phil Mills	Subaru Impreza WRC 2008	3 hr 50 min 11.4sec
7	Matthew Wilson/Scott Martin	Ford Focus RS WRC	3 hr 51 min 18.9sec
8	Gigi Galli/Giovanni Bernacchini	Ford Focus RS WRC	3 hr 52 min 57.8sec



News Bulletin - Day 3

The final day of the Rally of Turkey provided a thrilling showdown to the finish, with no fewer than three crews capable of winning the eighth round of the FIA World Rally Championship. The BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team crew of Mikko Hirvonen and Jarmo Lehtinen ultimately triumphed to take their second win of the season. Team-mates Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Antilla finished second, just 7.9 seconds adrift, while reigning World Champions Sébastien Loeb/Daniel Elena (Citröen Total) took third.

In the FIA World Rally Championship for Drivers, Hirvonen regains the lead and takes a three point advantage over Sébastien Loeb into the second half of the season and his home rally. Second position for Latvala moves him ahead of Chris Atkinson, into third in the standings. In the Manufacturers' Championship, maximum points for BP Ford ensure it retains its lead over Citroën Total.

Today's route took in just three stages, however the longest stage of the event was run twice, sandwiching a short 5.50 kilometre stage. Overnight leader Hirvonen lost time in the first stage, stalling on the start line but managed to hold on to his lead, despite a puncture in the final stage. One-two for Ford also represents its 100th consecutive point-scoring finish in the FIA World Rally Championship.

Behind the leading trio, Dani Sordo (Citröen Total) overhauled Henning Solberg (Stobart Ford) in the first stage when the Norwegian had minor brake problems. All other positions remained unchanged, with Conrad Rautenbach (Citröen C4) rounding off the top eight.

Gigi Galli (Stobart Ford), who ran in third position for most of yesterday before dropping down the order, withdrew early this morning. The Italian was forced out due to exhaustion and dehydration.

The FIA World Rally Championship crews now take a six week break prior to Rally Finland (1-3 August).

Rally of Turkey – Final Results (subject to routine fuel analysis and final scrutineering)

1	Mikko Hirvonen/Jarmo Lehtinen	Ford Focus RS WRC	4 hr 42 min 07.1sec
2	Jari-Matti Latvala/Miikka Anttila	Ford Focus RS WRC	4 hr 42 min 15.0sec
3	Sébastien Loeb/Daniel Elena	Citröen C4 WRC	4 hr 42 min 32.8sec
4	Dani Sordo/Marc Marti	Citröen C4 WRC	4 hr 44 min 32.7sec
5	Henning Solberg/Cato Menkerud	Ford Focus RS WRC	4 hr 44 min 40.8sec
6	Petter Solberg/Phil Mills	Subaru Impreza WRC 2008	4 hr 44 min 55.3sec
7	Matthew Wilson/Scott Martin	Ford Focus RS WRC	4 hr 46 min



8	Conrad Rautenbach/David Senior	Citroën C4 WRC	31.3sec 4 hr 49 min 53.8sec
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FIA World Rally Championship for Drivers (after 8 of 15 rounds)

Mikko Hirvonen (FIN)	59 points
Sébastien Loeb (F)	56 points
Jari-Matti Latvala (FIN)	34 points
Chris Atkinson (AUS)	31 points
Dani Sordo (E)	30 points
Petter Solberg (N)	20 points
Gigi Galli (I)	17 points
Henning Solberg (N)	16 points
Matthew Wilson (GB)	12 points
Federico Villagra (RA)	8 points
Urmo Aava (EE)	6 points
Conrad Rautenbach (ZW)	6 points
François Duval (B)	5 points
Andreas Mikkelsen (N)	4 points
Toni Gardemeister (FIN)	2 points
Jean Marie Cuoq (F)	2 points
Per-Gunnar Andersson (S)	1 point
Juho Hanninen (FIN)	1 point
Sébastien Ogier (F)	1 point
Andreas Aigner (A)	1 point

FIA World Rally Championship for Manufacturers (after 8 of 15 rounds)

BP-Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team	99 points
Citroën Total World Rally Team	90 points
Subaru World Rally Team	53 points
Stobart VK M-Sport Ford Rally Team	41 points
Munchi's Ford World Rally Team	19 points
Suzuki World Rally Team	10 points



**FIA WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP
RALLY OF TURKEY
Media FIA Press Conference**

15.06.2008

Present:

**1st – Mikko Hirvonen, BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team
1st – Jarmo Lehtinen, BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team
2nd – Jari-Matti Latvala, BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team
2nd – Miikka Antilla, BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team
3rd – Sébastien Loeb, Citroën Total World Rally Team
3rd – Daniel Elena, Citroën Total World Rally Team
Malcolm Wilson, Team Principal, BP Ford Abu Dhabi World Rally Team**

Welcome to the post event FIA press conference.

Q: Congratulations on your second win of the season Mikko, you now lead the Drivers' Championship going into the second half of the season. A thrilling end to the event - pleased with the result?

MH: It's a fantastic way to end the first half of the season. It's been a great effort from Ford. What can I say? I'm really pleased to lead the Championship.

Q: A stall on the start line of the opening stage, but you didn't lose a huge amount of time despite the fact that you were sweeping the road. Was it a huge push on that stage?

MH: It gave me a boost. I thought: "I'm not going to let that ruin my rally." After that, I did a fantastic time.

Q: That final stage was incredible; to see three drivers battling for the win, you won't forget that stage for a while...

MH: We had a fantastic time for the short stage. I managed to take a little time out of Jari-Matti, but Sébastien did a good time as well. I wasn't 100 per cent confident. When we had the first split, 5 kilometres in, and Sébastien caught us by five seconds – I had to push. But then the tyres were going and on the last three kilometers I was so slow. I was sure Jari-Matti would be coming past me.

Q: You are back in the lead of the Championship going into the summer break and will lead going into you home event in Finland for the first time – that will be special?

MH: It's definitely going to be special. I can't wait to get to the second half and start again. Hopefully we can keep the consistency. That's the key for me, that's what we've been doing. We can fight for the win in Finland and we hope to do the same on Tarmac.

Q: What was it like waiting at the end of the stage waiting to see if you had sealed the win?

JL: The splits helped. We knew already. We saw Seb's splits going down and we knew he must be losing his tyres as well. When we crossed the finish line I was 100 per cent sure we had done it, but of course you still need the times to be sure.

Q: How do you feel about the second half of the year?

JL: The next gravel rallies are better for us. These Mediterranean rallies are tough for us, we knew we had to survive these. But we are happy to be leading. Okay we know Tarmac is coming, but there are events which are good for us.



Q: Another strong performance from you here which puts you into third position in the Drivers' standings; what a fight on the final stage...

J-ML: I am very pleased with the result. Today was a fight I have never been in before. It was unbelievable to see the split times when Sébastien was eight seconds ahead. Incredible. The first 15 kilometres, I was slow. After that, I start to push. It was very exciting. I gave all I was able to do. Mikko was faster. I am very happy.

Q: It's great for the Championship to have a finish like this, don't you think?

J-ML: For the television and spectators and for even the drivers, it's very exciting to have a last long stage like that. I don't remember when it was such a good fight for the top three drivers.

Q: How do you feel about the second half of the year?

J-ML: I'm really looking forward to rallies like Finland, New Zealand and GB those are the ones to push hard on for me, and maybe Japan: it's a new one. Also the Tarmac, I need to improve my driving there. I'm really waiting for the second half.

Q: Looking back over your performance in the first half of the season, have you been pleased with what you have achieved?

J-ML: I am very pleased. Now we climb to third on the Drivers' Championship and we got some very important points for the Manufacturers'. The first half of the year has been up and down; the speed was good, but there were a little too many mistakes. We need to work with the consistent level and get more victories.

Q: The first half of the season in a works team with some great results – has it lived up to your expectations?

MA: Already last year we were in the Stobart team, we were with professionals in a proper car. The only difference this year is that we have proper tests. This is the biggest change and not so many days at home!

Q: How have you seen Jari-Matti improve this year?

MA: That comes with the kilometres we have done in testing. In one day of the test, you can do 250 kilometres. Doing that in a World Rally Car cannot make you go the wrong way.

Q: Seb, third overall at the end of the rally. That final stage was incredibly exciting for us all to watch. At the service earlier, you seemed resigned for third, but you were chasing down the Ford boys on the final stage, what made you push on that stage?

SL: We all knew it will be difficult for the tyres in the stage. My position, I was 25 seconds behind Mikko and 13 behind Jari-Matti, I had to try. It worked well in the start of the stage, but in the middle I feel it's too much for the tyres and we destroyed them. It's the same for everybody. We had to give up. I only had one spare wheel. We wanted to be light. For me it was really important not to have two punctures because I wanted to make it back to the finish. So I understood that it's finished and I drove to the end.

Q: When we had a finish like this, would it be good to finish with a super special instead?

SL: Sometimes the long stage is just before the super special, so the final super special will be just for fun. If the gap is more than five seconds then it's not important in the super special.



Q: It's been a tough event for you having to sweep the road clear on two days, the Ford boys played tactics on Friday night to ensure that. How did that make you feel?

SL: It feels like, for sure, it's not nice to clean the road, but I think if you look at the tactics it's really good. They are first and second. The regulation is not completely right. For the sport it's not so nice to see that, but it's normal for Ford to use it. Everybody is talking about the tactics, it would be nice to talk about the speed. Something is a bit wrong. In this race, Ford played it well and we lost. It's normal.

Q: Citroën still trails BP Ford in the Manufacturers' standings, but could the second half of the season prove a stronger playing field for Citroën with the Tarmac events?

SL: We will try. Usually me and Dani (Sordo) are good on Tarmac. This would be good for the Manufacturers' Championship. For me we have to try and score more points also on the gravel as well. We need to finish all of the rallies and not make mistakes. We need to score points everywhere. We look at the Championship now: we win five and we are second, it proves we need to be consistent.

Q: Looking back over the first half of the season are you happy with what you have achieved?

DE: Yes, so far it's a very good first half season with five wins. Mikko has just two wins and he's leading. The rule with the points is not so easy. It's the same for everybody. In the second half I try to push hard for the finish.

Q: A great result for the team, which puts you back in the lead of both Championships and Turkey marks your 100th point scoring event. It couldn't really have gone better could it?

MW: I have to say it's definitely one of my best days since running the team. To see the work put in back at base and here, it's great. Everybody knows we were expected to win in Greece. The guys and team have learned a lot since Greece. It's okay for people to say you have to do tactics, but we have to be brave – that was a big lead to throw away. This is the dream result, though. It's great to go into the second half of the season leading the Championship. It's also important for Ford to get the 100th point-scoring finish. This is something which started in Monte Carlo, 2002. To get the 100th finish is testament to the strength of the Focus.

Q: The second half of the season is shaping up to be very interesting. We know from previous experience that Citroën is very strong on Tarmac – with regard to team strategy, are you on course?

MW: We are ahead of schedule. I didn't expect to be here at the mid-point. I always said the guys would be better in the second half of the season. It's a bonus to us and I guess we'll be sweeping the road in Finland...

Q: How was the last stage for you?

MW: After 11 kilometres it wasn't looking very good. I knew the guys were going to try and look after the tyres – Jari-Matti in particular, of course. But when we see Sébastien do the times he did, it was worrying. When they got to the 16 kilometre split and Seb had not taken more time out of them I relaxed a bit. I kept flashing back to the previous split on the first time through the stage to see that Mikko was on course. Then he dropped four seconds and Colin came on rally radio to say he'd had a puncture and we had no idea how much he'd lost in that last sector. That was all a bit worrying and a bit stressful then.

FIA PRODUCTION CAR WORLD RALLY CHAMPIONSHIP



Present:

1st – Andreas Aigner

1st – Klaus Wicha

Q: This is becoming a regular occurrence – your third win of the season – three in a row, something that I believe has only been done once before by Toshi Arai.

AA: We are in really strong position now. But Jari [Ketomaa] has done two rallies less than me. We will have to see in Finland and Japan how he does. Thirty points is really good. In New Zealand, I must try to be more careful. Maybe fourth or fifth place is good for me.

Q: You have shown great consistency this season...

AA: We did a good job. The car is so strong. On these rough rallies, you need the car to be strong. All of the team did a very good job.

Q: When we spoke on Friday you said a win wasn't your priority, but it does mean now that you have a good lead in the Championship, doesn't it?

AA: I tried to be careful from the start. We see we're on the pace. On Friday we say: "Okay, Patrik (Sandell) is quite close, we see if we can push." But it's difficult, you have to be careful between pushing and making mistakes. It's been very good though.

Q: What about the rallies to come, it's looking good, Klaus?

KW: We have to wait for Finland. Ketomaa is very strong there. It will be a key rally for us in New Zealand. From my point this Championship's not over.

Q: Did you have any problems?

KW: Sometimes we have a little bit of problems with the brakes and then in SS15 we had some small gearbox problems – at the same place as Sandell. Also, there was some overheating. Maybe we had some kind of luck.

Q: Which is the most satisfying win?

AA: It's difficult to say. Every one is important. Every rally has been hard and tough: Argentina in the fog, rain and mud. In Greece it's rough like this rally. These are the kind of rallies I like.

Q: Your confidence must be sky high now.

AA: It's quite high now. I'm sure in Finland and NZ I'm not so quick as here. I'm going to be careful and not go off the road.

Q: What's the reason for your success this season?

AA: Maybe it's my driving style. The new strong Pirelli tyres have helped me. Last year I had a lot of punctures and I was quite hard on the tyres.